

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	117002
Inspection date	04 December 2007
Inspector	Sheena Bankier
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Childminding

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1997. She lives with her family in Reading. The ground floor is mainly used for childminding with access to toilet and sleep facilities on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have two dogs as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight at any one time and is currently minding four children, all of who attend on either full or part-time basis. The childminder walks mostly to the local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler group and takes children to the library and park.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from fresh air and physical exercise. They play outside in the garden, go out for walks and visit local parks and country parks further away. The childminder grows fruit and

vegetables with the children which develops their interest in good health. This promotes a healthy lifestyle.

The childminder gains information about children's health needs from parents. This means she is aware of any medical conditions or allergies children may have and is able to meet their health needs. Records of accidents children have are recorded and parents are informed. The childminder has a current first aid certificate which enables her to attend to children's minor injuries appropriately. Written emergency plans are in place, including a back-up childminder and consent to seek emergency treatment for children. As a result children's well-being and good health are ensured. She carries a first aid kit on outings and regularly checks and updates the first aid kit. This ensures appropriate first aid supplies are always available. Children's health records are mainly completed in line with the requirements of the National Standards, although a medication record lacks detail of the name of the medicine, dosage and administration information.

The childminder develops children's understanding of good personal hygiene. There is a sign up in the bathroom reminding children to wash their hands. Children regularly wash their hands, such as after touching the pets or being outdoors. Individual hand towels prevent cross infection. Occasionally hand washing routines are overlooked which means at times children eat without cleaning their hands first. The childminder's dogs are cared for appropriately alongside the children. They have the necessary treatments and vaccinations and children are supervised at all times with them.

Children develop their understanding of healthy eating through discussions. They grow vegetables and fruit to eat and take part in cooking activities. This builds their confidence to sample new foods. Parents provide meals for the children and through discussion the childminder encourages them to provide nutritious and healthy options for their children. Snacks of fruit and plain biscuits are provided by the childminder. Drinks are available at all times to the children and the childminder encourages healthy options of water, juice or milk. Children's social skills are developed as they eat together with the childminder.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is given a high priority. The childminder has a written risk assessment, safety policy and appropriate equipment which includes safety gates and socket covers. Children are closely supervised at all times. Sleeping children are regularly checked and a listening monitor is also used. The childminder ensures children travel in appropriate car seats and uses straps in equipment, such as highchairs to maintain children's safety. A written evacuation plan is in place which is practised with the children to promote their safety. The childminder has also considered other emergencies which may affect the area she lives in, such as a gas leak. She has a written emergency plan detailing the action she will take in this type of situation. Children become aware of keeping themselves safe through discussions and actively participating in road safety procedures.

Children and parents benefit from the very warm and welcoming environment provided. Children's photos, pictures, posters are displayed and there interactive activities, for example, a magnet board and weather chart displayed on the wall. Low child size furniture enables children to sit and play comfortably. Children gain a sense of belonging as their photo's are displayed along with their name and they have storage boxes to keep their bags and items from home in. Children are able to make their own decisions and choices from the toys and resources.

These are set out in low boxes and units for children to self-select. There are a large range of toys and equipment to meet the age and developmental needs of the children who attend. These are well-maintained through regular checks.

The childminder has a sound knowledge of how to safeguard children in her care. She has undertaken regular training and has updated this as new training has become available. The childminder has a written policy and procedure in place. She has a very good understanding of how to manage any concerns which arise and has up-to-date information about local procedures along with relevant contact numbers. This means children's welfare is effectively safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of toys, activities and outings which supports their development. Children are happy and settled with the childminder and enjoy her interaction as she joins in play and chats to them. She supports the pre-school children's understanding, for example, numbers and colours as they count the bricks in the tower or rings as they are stacked. Children are encouraged identify colours as they play. Children's interests are followed and they are able to initiate their own play and ideas which the childminder supports and encourages.

Children use their imagination as they make a birthday cake from the blocks and sings 'Happy Birthday' and then finds plates to hand out slices of the 'cake'. Children take part in art and craft activities, such as painting, drawing and gluing. This develops their creativity. Children explore and investigate as they play with sand, bug hunt and use magnets. The younger children have toys which are attractive and encourage their interest and thinking skills, for example, a bead threading activity toy, shape sorter and toys which make noises and have mirrors.

Children learn about their local area and community through local walks and using facilities nearby. This includes visiting the library and observing the local fire and police station. Outings further away are undertaken, for example, to the seaside, country parks and animal parks. This develops their understanding of the world around them. Children regularly attend toddler group and the childminder drop-in sessions. These increase their confidence away from the home and develop their social skills in a safe environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about others through play and activities, for example, natural play with dolls, small world toys and musical instruments. Children also take part in celebrations of religious and festival dates and food tasting. This develops their knowledge and understanding of people different to themselves.

The childminder has a good understanding of children's individual needs. She obtains information, such as cultural or religious needs and also keeps up-to-date through regularly exchanging information with parents. This results in children's needs being met. The childminder is able to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities well. She has a good understanding and knowledge of how to meet their needs and enables children to progress and develop through her support.

Children's behaviour is managed appropriately and consistently. Children behave well. There are ground rules in place which provide clear boundaries. Children learn about being responsible

as they help with basic chores, such as setting the table and help tidy up. The childminder supports and helps children to develop self-esteem and confidence as she regularly praises children for their efforts and achievements.

The childminder has good partnerships with parents. She keeps in regular communication with them and uses 'two-way' diaries to keep them well-informed about children's days and progress whilst in her care. Parents receive comprehensive information about the childminder's business processes, including written policies and procedures. This ensures parents are clear about the childminder's service on offer.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has attended many training courses and holds a recognised early years qualification. She belongs to a local network of childminders which means she has regular support and visits from an early years advisor. This means that she has been pro-active in her self-development. As a result this has increased her knowledge and understanding of good childcare practice which benefits the children in her care.

The childminder organises her home and activities well. This meets the children's needs. Children benefit from appropriate space and furniture to ensure they can play, eat and sleep suitably. Overall the childminder has suitable procedures in place, although occasionally hand washing routines before snacks are overlooked.

The childminder has all required paperwork in place and this is mostly well maintained. However, at times some paperwork lacks the necessary detail.

She has her own written policies and procedures which support her service.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were made. One was in regard to completing paperwork in ink and ensuring children's full names are on their records and the other was in regard to her understanding and knowledge of child protection.

The childminder has addressed these by ensuring paperwork is completed in ink and mostly the full names of children are used. The childminder keeps all children's individual paperwork together in separate files which ensures the information relates clearly to the individual children. This ensures the children's records are accurate and permanent. The childminder has obtained information from Surestart and the local authority regarding child protection procedures. She also attends training as it becomes available to keep her up-to-date with current practice. This has updated her knowledge and understanding and ensures children are safeguarded.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure medication records are completed with details of medication and dosage/administration details
- ensure hand washing routines are consistent

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk