

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	134690
Inspection date	21 August 2007
Inspector	Jan Leo
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder registered in 1999 and can currently care for up to six children. She lives with her husband and two children, aged 13 and nine years, in a house on the Southwold estate in Bicester. The property is approximately two miles from the town centre, and is located close to all local amenities including primary school, nursery, shops and park.

The childminder currently looks after four children under the age of five years on a full or part time basis. The children play and rest on the ground floor of the house, and only go upstairs to use the bathroom. A small, enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play and children are also taken to the nearby park.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children bond well with the childminder because she treats them as part of the family to ensure they feel emotionally secure. They spend their time in a clean environment and follow good practice regarding hygiene to reduce the spread of germs. They wash their hands regularly and

have a step to help them reach the washbasin to promote independence from an early age. The childminder changes children's nappies promptly to keep them comfortable and she places soiled nappies in the outside bin to remove unpleasant odours. Children eat healthy snacks including fresh fruit and water to sustain them between meals. The childminder introduces new varieties of fruit to broaden children's tastes and develop an interest in food. All bring their own packed lunches from home, which they eat sociably together in the kitchen to prevent resources becoming sticky. Children get regular fresh air and exercise while walking to local places of interest such as the park or visits to other childminders. Young children sleep according to their needs, under the watchful eye of the childminder to keep them safe.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children play in a homely environment with ample space to move about freely. They access toys and equipment independently, without risk of injury, from around the edges of the rooms. All resources are in good condition because the childminder checks them regularly and removes damaged items. The childminder completes a visual risk assessment of her home to review hazards as children grow and develop. She uses stair gates, safety harnesses, and cupboard catches to supplement supervision and prevent accidents. The childminder does not always comply with the conditions of her registration, accepting more younger children than she is registered for, compromising safety. The childminder has thought through her evacuation plan in case of fire, but does not always have a working smoke detector on each level of the house and the fire blanket is difficult to access. The childminder has a good awareness of child protection issues because she has experience of liaising with the local authority to safeguard children. She is fully aware of her responsibility to take prompt action if she has concerns about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children integrate totally into the family with all members showing pleasure at their presence. The childminder joins in floor play to stack and count bricks while young children watch, wide eyed, as the tower gets taller. Children climb onto the childminder's lap for a story and she envelopes them in her arms as she reads softly. The children choose what to do throughout the day, and the childminder shows great interest in their games. She talks to the children as they play to develop their understanding of numbers and colours. Young children frequently repeat what the childminder says, eager to improve their language skills. The children are relaxed and very contented within this homely, calm environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children feel valued because the childminder treats them with respect and is fair. She offers all children the same opportunities and provides the support they need to be fully included in the activities. The childminder is eager to increase her skills to cater for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by attending training courses and researching specific conditions through the internet. Children follow a few simple house rules and behaviour is very good. They learn to share toys and respect resources in order to play harmoniously together. The childminder has a clear behaviour management policy, which she shares with parents, and she works with families to find workable strategies to promote good behaviour. Parents and carers receive

clear written policies about the service on offer to make sure they know what to expect. They have daily opportunities to discuss their children's care in order to feel part of their children's development, and essential information is on display for them to see.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The childminder does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. Children play within a caring and homely environment where they follow a healthy lifestyle. They form close bonds with the childminder and her family and receive the attention they need to ensure they settle well and feel emotionally secure. The childminder addresses some aspects of safety successfully through informal risk assessments and daily checks, but at times, she exceeds her registered numbers and does not fully promote fire safety, jeopardising the welfare of all children. The childminder provides families with clear expectations by way of written policies, and she follows effective procedures when recording essential information. As a result, all of the documentation, required by regulation, is in place, clear and easy to follow.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were seven recommendations set at the last inspection relating to first aid training and supplies, confidentiality of medical records, security of the property, attendance records, and updating information to keep parents and carers up-to-date with changes.

The childminder has completed suitable first aid training and updated the supplies in her first aid box in order to be well equipped to treat children's injuries. She now ensures each child has a separate page for medication records in order to make sure information remains confidential. The childminder keeps the front door locked while minding to ensure children cannot escape, and she keeps accurate records of who is present which she makes up promptly at the beginning and end of each day. The childminder now reviews her procedures and documentation from time to time, to ensure they continue to reflect how she operates. She provides parents and carers with a copy of her policies to keep them up-to-date with changes.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- comply with the conditions of registration, regarding the number and ages of children, at all times
- maintain a working smoke detector on each level of the house.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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