

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 105362
Inspection date 14 August 2007
Inspector Anne Jeanette Faithfull

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1997. She lives with her husband and their child aged 12 years in Warfield, Berkshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and she is currently minding seven children all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The family have a pet rabbit and hamster. The childminder walks to the local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler group and takes children to the local library and park. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and the Bracknell childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children clearly thrive because the childminder follows highly effective and robust procedures and practices. These meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Children are kept safe from illness and cross infection because the childminder has excellent routines in place to maintain their health and wellbeing. For example, each child has their own towel which

is attached to an animal peg, so when the children take the towel of to dry their hands the peg makes an animal noise, each child has a different peg so the childminder can hear who has dried their hands without being in the toilet with them. The childminder follows current guidelines for first aid and administering medication. She holds relevant well written policies and procedures which she effectively puts into practice.

The childminder effectively uses the "Birth to three matters" framework and her own excellent knowledge to provide suitable and stimulating physical play opportunities for children to enable them to grow and develop. Children enthusiastically explore and develop physical control in stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences, such as, building their own shelters out of wood and using a range of different utensils, including a whisk when playing with the cornflour. The childminder promotes children's physical development daily, no matter what the weather is like for example, photos displayed around the home show children playing in the rain, building a snowman and swimming in a paddling pool. This encourages children to develop a positive attitude to physical exercise as part of their daily routine.

Children benefit from a healthy, varied and nutritious diet. They enjoy lots of fresh fruit and vegetables and healthy snacks. All meals and snacks take account of the children's individual needs. Children benefit from the childminder's increased knowledge and training on healthy eating including registering with the environmental health and food standards agency. Children are actively involved in food preparation such as making their own fruit smoothies. Any food provided by parents is stored and prepared appropriately. Snack and mealtimes are a sociable occasion where children have the opportunity to choose which place mat they would like and all children have their snacks together, talking to each other, the childminder and inspector.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Risks of accidental injury to children is skilfully minimised, because the childminder is extremely vigilant and uses thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. The use of suitable safety equipment, such as safety gates to prevent accidents ensures children's safety and wellbeing is promoted. The childminder conducts daily checks of both indoor and outdoor play space prior to the children's arrival, this significantly enhances their safety. High priority is given to close supervision and safety at all times and particularly when out with the children, for example, the children wear wristbands and the childminder wears an identity badge explaining she is a childminder. Excellent procedures are in place when transporting children in the car for example, the car has a sticker in the back window stating minded children are in the car and the childminder's emergency contact details.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. The childminder works exceptionally hard to introduce children to safety issues for example, arranging a "beep day" road safety event at a local hall for her and other childminders, where a policeman explained about safety helmets, using pelican crossings and other safety issues. Regular discussion, procedures in place and evacuation practise of the premises gives children a clear understanding of the importance of staying safe in an emergency. For example, the childminder has a bell in place which is only rung in the event of an emergency and children are aware if they hear the bell they immediately have to stop what they are doing and listen to instructions from the childminder.

Children use a wide variety of good quality equipment, appropriate to their age and stage of development. It is regularly monitored to ensure it is safe, well maintained and appropriate.

Toys and resources are replaced, cleaned, updated and added to, when necessary. Resources are organised exceptionally well, for example, the childminder has two playrooms so one is set up with younger children's resources and the other for the older children so younger children do not have access to small toys which may harm them. The childminder has put a toy inventory in place which informs her of all the resources she has to ensure children have a wide variety of different resources for them to choose from and use daily.

Children are expertly protected by the childminder who has a very clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures. She gives top priority to children's welfare. She has an excellent written statement about child protection and she makes sure that this is discussed with parents. This actively contributes to children's safety and wellbeing.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the childminder's home. They achieve extremely well because the childminder is highly skilled and uses her exceptional understanding of child development, to provide high quality care and education to the children in her care. Children gain immense enjoyment from the excellent range of activities they take part in. These are age appropriate and provide good levels of challenge. They benefit from regular outings and excursions, enjoying features of the local community; such as, the park and trips to the shops. The childminder meets with another childminder once a week to plan and participate in a "Birth to three matters" day, providing activities for the children linked to the guidance to ensure younger child's needs and development are fully met. Activities within the childminders home are diverse, interesting and fun. Older children develop good levels of confidence through being able to make choices about how they spend their time, they are given the choice to participate in an organised activity or choose independently what they would like to do, and for example, one child decided they wanted to dress up as a fireman rather than take part anymore in a planned activity.

The childminder is enthusiastic and experienced and knows the children very well; she uses her wealth of experience and knowledge to provide experiences for the children which are fun and challenging for example, letting the children experiment with cornflour and water, children excitedly talked about the mixture and used a range of plastic kitchen items to make pretend cakes. The childminder displays lots of photos around her home of the children participating in activities and outings including newspaper cuttings, children readily point to these with the childminder and talk about the activity and the fun they had. The childminder has a flexible approach to planning and an excellent balance between adult-led and child-led activities allows children to learn at their own pace. She uses highly effective systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements, for example, tracker books to record observations and informs parents of their child's progress. The book also helps to identify any areas of development children in her care are not achieving so she can plan activities around those areas to ensure children have the opportunity to begin to develop those skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy an excellent close and loving relationship with the childminder. She has an excellent attitude towards equal opportunities and actively promotes this with all the children in her care. New children are made to feel welcome as the childminder provides a range of

activities to ensure they feel settled and included for example, the children paint their hands and place them on the 'Angela's Angels' canvas picture in the shape of an angel and their names are printed underneath. The canvas is displayed in the kitchen showing the names of all the children attending.

Children have access to a wide variety of good quality resources that reflect diversity. For example the childminder provides a 'round the world box' which has items from different countries including Russian dolls and clothes and shoes from Turkey. Children learn to appreciate and respect others' similarities and differences through an excellent range of planned topics and activities, for example, Chinese New Year celebrations, when children pretend to paint the doors in the house red as part of the tradition and participating in ranger days at the local country park where they where they build shelters out of wood, join in tribal fun and make wigwams.

Children behave extremely well and play together harmoniously, in a very calm and settled environment. They spontaneously help to tidy up, take turns, help and care for each other. They learn by having a positive role model and understand the clear and consistent boundaries. Positive behaviour is promoted extremely well with very good use of ongoing praise and encouragement. This results in children who are confident and secure, and who enthusiastically participate in activities. The childminder makes effective use of "Angel Ted" who is a teddy bear that all children have the opportunity to take home for a variety of reasons for example, sharing the toys and having good manners. The childminder take photos of the children with Angel Ted and records the reasons why the child took the bear home, to remind them of their achievements. This further promotes children's self-esteem and sense of belonging.

The relationship with parents is outstanding. The childminder works very closely with parents to ensure that their individual children's needs are met and gives them good daily information about their children's activities, routines and progress they have made. She provides very high quality information about her childminding service so that parents feel well informed and secure about the environment in which their child is cared for. Parents written comments in the comment book are superb and reflect on the exceptional care and learning she provides for their children. For example, one parent commented on how they are prepared to drive an extra 30 minutes each day after they moved to ensure their child could still attend. The childminder has numerous thank you cards from children who have left and the childminder on occasions still meets up with children who used to be in her care. The childminder provides a newsletter every quarter to inform all parents of any events, outings and general information about the childminding service can be also found on the childminder's own website.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder is very well organised, arranging space and resources to maximise care, learning, and play opportunities for children. Children are happy, confident, secure and settled in a calm and well-organised environment. Meticulous risk assessments and planning of activities and routines help keep children safe and enables them to make exceptionally good progress in all areas of their development. Children can easily access many of the toys and resources from either of the dedicated play rooms independently. Well organised visits to parent/toddler groups, places of interest and contact with other childminders widen children's play opportunities and help them socialise with others.

The childminder shows an extremely professional approach to her practice, she is highly motivated by the many training courses undertaken and she intends to access future training in the care and education of young children. She is a member of the Bracknell childminding network and regularly meets with other network childminders to offer support, share ideas and concerns. This enthusiasm enhances her existing excellent good practice and supports children's progress and development.

All relevant documentation, policies and procedures are in place and used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. Personal information regarding the children and their families is filed securely to ensure confidentiality. Observations relating to the child's development and general wellbeing are fed back to parents informally as they collect their children. Children benefit from the excellent communication between the childminder and their parents. The childminder evaluates her childminding practice in a variety of ways, including a self-evaluation, asking parents and completing questions from the safe and sound website. The care, support and commitment she gives to children and their parents is outstanding. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom care is provided.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop an inventory of toys and resources held. An inventory is now in place, which lists all the toys and resources the childminder has.

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

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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