

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110591
Inspection date	13 August 2007
Inspector	Anne Gunston
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 has been registered since 1989. She is registered to care for a total of six children under eight years; currently there are seven children on roll who require part-time care. The childminder lives with her husband and two adult children. They live in a house in Andover, which is within walking distance of local shops and amenities. The childminder can collect children from Portway School.

The ground floor of the house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have two cats. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and her local childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely well protected from risk of infection in the childminder's care. The policy of excluding children who are unwell is made available to parents. There is an efficient system for caring for children who have accidents or require medication. The childminder maintains

comprehensive records of these occurrences, and shares them at the earliest possible time with parents to ensure children's well-being remains a priority for all. The childminder pays thorough attention to detail to protect children's health. Older children use individual paper towels when washing their hands after using the toilet. All children learn that it is important to 'wash between the fingers'; the childminder is consistent with these reminders and displays a poster in the toilet as an additional prompt. The provision of equipment, such as a step stool enables children to be independent in their personal care. Children are provided with their own easily identifiable cups, and drinks are always within reach to keep them fully hydrated. In addition, the childminder purchased a water dispenser to encourage children to drink more frequently. The childminder's own hygiene practice is exemplary. For example, she disinfects children's highchairs and nappy changing mats after every use. Children in her care observe this practice, which reinforces their understanding of the importance of hygiene in the home.

Children use a wide range of equipment during frequent, active play in the childminder's garden, or at local parks. The childminder provides many opportunities for children to enjoy fresh air and exercise, for example, on trips to local amenities, such as Finkley Down farm. When in the home, the childminder always encourages children to be active and energetic. They enthusiastically take part in activity songs, such as Five Little Monkeys, jumping up excitedly when it is time to 'jump on the bed'.

Children's dietary needs are very well catered for; the childminder takes great care to promote healthy eating. Children benefit from well-planned, healthy menus throughout the day. For example, breakfast of a boiled egg and 'soldiers' is offered, and snacks of fruit, cheese or a cereal bar are a regular occurrence. The childminder keeps precisely to instructions given by parents, concerning any food allergies or preferences. Children enjoy sociable meal times as they sit together, with the childminder, at the breakfast bar. The childminder promotes the emotional well-being of very young children and babies, who are held comfortably close while being bottle-fed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children use an excellent range of age appropriate toys and play materials while in the childminder's care. The home environment is well organised, children can easily select items for play, promoting their independence and free choice. The childminder has extremely good routines in place for ensuring all resources remain clean and safe for children to use. Children enthusiastically help themselves from books stored on low shelving, and select from dressing up clothes, role-play or construction toys. These are labelled clearly and within reach in the playroom. Children feel very welcome in the home. The childminder prepares thoroughly for their arrival. Colourful posters are displayed at child height throughout the ground floor; photographs of children currently and formerly in the childminder's care are framed and displayed proudly. The 'Who Is Here Today' board in the hall displays a photograph of each child present, which makes each one feel valued and included.

Children are given complete protection, as the childminder takes thorough precautions to keep them safe. Children are always carefully supervised to reduce the risk of accidents. Although the garden is a safe environment, the childminder does not allow children to use this unless she is present. Children practise evacuation from the home, in preparation for emergencies. The home is secure, and maintained to a good standard with safety equipment, such as stair-gates, in daily use. Children know the importance of listening and obeying the childminder's

instructions to keep themselves and others safe. For example, children willingly tidy away toys with small, intricate pieces because younger children are now awake and active.

Children benefit from the childminder's considerable knowledge of child protection issues. She has a secure understanding of her responsibility to safeguard children; parents are fully informed as the childminder makes her policy available to them. She has completed specific training and has up-to-date contact details of the relevant authorities. The practice of recording existing injuries, and sharing this record with parents, enables children's welfare to be closely monitored over a longer period.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop high levels of confidence and independence as the childminder listens closely to what they say, and organises her resources well. Children are completely involved in their play because the childminder uses excellent judgement when deciding if she should intervene, or allow children to use their initiative. Children become competent language users when the childminder joins them in play. For example, when children practise stacking blocks the childminder prompts them to describe each colour, and questions them about the animal characters on each one. Children pay close attention to the childminder, and are keen to demonstrate their skills, secure in the knowledge that their contribution is valued.

The childminder is never complacent, but does recognise that children require time to complete tasks to their satisfaction. Children are well motivated, and often state that they 'haven't finished yet'. The childminder allows children to play without interruption as long as their interest is sustained. Her exceptional planning ensures that an attractive alternative activity is ready. For example, children are encouraged to be creative and imaginative with dough or become immersed in meaningful role-play. The childminder's substantial knowledge of each child's likes and dislikes enables her to provide them with wide-ranging experiences and activities.

Children have many first hand learning and play opportunities. They learn about their local environment during visits to the library or shops, and have excellent opportunities to socialise within larger groups of children. The childminder meets regularly with others in her childminding group.

Children benefit from the childminder's substantial knowledge of child development. She accurately assesses each child's progress, and identifies what action she needs to take next. Children's development is significantly enhanced by the childminder's care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's wishes are of prime concern to the childminder, who is skilled at ensuring that all in her care benefit from equal amounts of her time and attention. The childminder really values each child as an individual. She obtains comprehensive details about parents' wishes and children's individual routine, and makes sure that this is followed without exception. Children are very secure in her care, and develop high levels of self-confidence. Children have trusting relationships with the childminder; for example, they seek a comforting cuddle as they wake from a sleep, and receive affectionate re-assuring strokes as they play. The childminder demonstrates an unreservedly positive approach towards caring for children who have additional

needs. This attitude, and provision of resources for play, ensures children in her care learn to look positively on differences in society. Children use resources, such as books, puzzles, and small world figures freely in their play.

Children behave extremely well in the childminder's care. They take turns willingly and without question, for example, when selecting the toy and subsequent song from the Song Sack. Children receive constant praise for their achievements. The childminder consistently puts her behaviour management policy into practice. The very rare occurrences of unwanted behaviour are dealt with calmly and quietly; children are asked to think about the action they took and given time to consider its' impact on others. The childminder has high expectations of children and promotes the use of simple good manners. Children learn to say 'please' and 'thank you' and are spoken to respectfully by the childminder in turn.

Parents have access to the childminder's policies and procedures, which fully explain her practice and support a smooth transition into her care. The childminder feels it is vital to gain parents' opinions on the service she provides. Questionnaires are given to parents regularly; the childminder looks positively on any comments they make. Children's progress is carefully monitored by the childminder, who demonstrates active commitment to working with parents for the benefit of the children. She shares each child's individual folder, containing examples of their work, with their parents and asks that they contribute comments of their own. Written agreements exist with all parents, which enable an open and frank working relationship and provide a secure base for discussion of any issues affecting the child.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is enhanced by the high quality of the childminder's organisation. Children are self-motivated and independent because space and resources are extremely well organised, in preparation for their care. Children are very well supported by the childminder, who is dedicated to meeting their needs in full. The childminder already has a great deal of experience of caring for young children, and holds more than adequate qualifications for her role. She is committed to continually updating her knowledge of all aspects of childcare practice, and is proactive in seeking out further training opportunities.

The childminder has a thorough understanding of the requirements of her registration. She is vigilant in ensuring that she complies with these at all times. All essential documentation is in place; the childminder is meticulous when using this to support her practice and promote children's welfare, care and learning. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to revise and implement a retention procedure for her documentation. The childminder purchased a lockable filing cabinet, and stores all records securely in this in her hall. This method ensures that documents required on a daily basis are easily accessible, but that information about children and parents is stored in a confidential manner, out of casual view.

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