

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	111752
Inspection date	30 August 2007
Inspector	Nikki Whinton

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 satisfactory. 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 two children aged 16 and 12 years on the outskirts of Andover, Hampshire. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six minded children at any one time and is currently caring for three children, of whom two attend on a full-time basis. She attends the nearby carer and toddler group. The childminder has experience of caring for children who speak English as an additional language.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to experience fresh air and exercise whilst playing in the childminder's fully enclosed garden. In addition, they visit local activities such as Jungle Jungle, Archie's World

and the local park. These age appropriate opportunities enable children to use a wide range of play equipment and thus help to develop their large muscle skills.

There are measures in place to promote the children's health. For example, the childminder has a current first aid certificate and correct administrative procedures are followed if accidents occur. Written parental permission has been obtained for seeking emergency medical treatment or advice, although it is not clearly recorded. However, parents do not consistently sign the record book to acknowledge when children have been given medication and children share the same towel when hand drying after toileting. As a result, they are at risk from cross contamination.

Parents provide lunch boxes for their children, which are correctly stored in the refrigerator. Allergies or dietary needs are discussed with parents as part of the registration process. These discussions are recorded and any needs met as appropriate. Drinks flasks are prepared for the children's use. However, they cannot always access the containers independently and therefore may not be consuming fluids in sufficient quantities to meet their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are very clean, well maintained and of an appropriate temperature. There is a designated bedroom available to enable children to have uninterrupted sleep. The childminder has a good understanding of safety issues when taking children on outings and strategies to minimise risks. She has a written emergency care plan, which has been approved by the parents, the fire blanket is easily accessible and smoke detectors are maintained in working order. Children are encouraged to tidy away toys after use and thus minimise trip hazards. However, hazardous materials, such as sharp knives and cleaning materials are accessible to the children in the kitchen. As a result, their safety is at risk.

Children help themselves to a suitable variety of clean, well-maintained, age appropriate resources. They benefit from the childminder's understanding of safety issues concerning the purchase and ongoing maintenance of resources. Children are able to play with toys that are safe and suitable.

Parents are made aware of the childminder's child protection responsibilities as part of the registration process. The childminder is aware of possible signs or symptoms that may indicate that a child is being abused. However, she does not have a secure understanding of the correct procedures to follow if she is concerned about the welfare of a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children appear confident, settled and very relaxed within the welcoming family environment. They happily make independent choices concerning the activities they wish to explore. For example, one child decides to investigate small world figures whilst another dresses a baby doll before taking her for a ride in a buggy. Children's enjoyment is enhanced by the active involvement of the friendly childminder. For example, she joins in children's imaginative play when making tea and reinforces children's colour recognition skills whilst they build a pirate ship from coloured bricks.

The children have a very positive relationship with the childminder. They are developing their social skills as they learn to share resources and take turns, such as when playing with ride on vehicles in the garden. They regularly visit a number of local carer group activities, which enables them to widen their circle of peers and experience an increased range of resources and equipment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The children benefit from the childminder knowing them very well and from having a good understanding of their varying home circumstances. Children attending who speak English as an additional language receive appropriate support to assist their development. All children are valued as individuals. They have access to an extremely limited range of resources to help them gain an awareness of diversity.

Children behave very well, as appropriate for their age and stage of development. Any minor disagreements are sensitively handled by a childminder who understands positive strategies for encouraging appropriate behaviour. Techniques are discussed with parents, as appropriate, to ensure a consistency of approach between home and the provision.

There are daily, informal opportunities for parents and the childminder to discuss informally each child's day or any care issues. Separate appointments are arranged to consider any confidential matters. Children's care needs are appropriately met.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder is an experienced early years practitioner with the skills to offer appropriate care to children. She has a clear understanding of her role in protecting children from unvetted adults.

Meticulous records are kept of children's daily attendance and their personal details sheets are easily available to support their care, such as in an emergency. However, the childminder's certificate of registration is not displayed, which is a statutory requirement.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the last inspection, the childminder was given non-regulatory actions and recommendations to help improve the quality of the provision. The non-regulatory actions requested the childminder to establish a written agreement with parents that sets out the expectations of both parties as to the care of the child, activities provided and business arrangements and to make available to parents a written statement of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint. The recommendations asked the childminder to ensure accidents are clearly recorded and to keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children.

A suitable written agreement is now in place with parents. They are made aware of the procedure to follow should they wish to make a complaint and accidents are clearly recorded. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of care offered to the children.

However, parents do not always sign the record book to acknowledge when children have been given medication.

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 satisfactory. 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 parents always sign the record book to acknowledge when children have been given medication and that positive steps are taken to promote children's good health when hand drying
- make sure potentially hazardous materials in the kitchen are inaccessible to children
- develop knowledge and understanding of the correct procedures to follow if concerned about the welfare of a child
- make sure the certificate of registration is displayed.

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