

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	159073
<b>Inspection date</b>	01 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Marie Thompson
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 was registered in 2001. She lives with her husband and three children aged 15, 12 and nine years old in Lower Earley, near Reading. The whole of the downstairs of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

There are currently four children on roll. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group.

The family have two guinea pigs.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children keep healthy in the childminder's care owing to the good procedures and practices she uses. The childminder has devised a menu of the food she offers for lunch, dinner and snacks which demonstrates her clear understanding of providing a healthy, balanced diet for

the children. The menu is flexible to take into account the children's dietary requirements, likes and dislikes and the weather, during the summer months the children enjoy sandwiches, pitta bread with cheese and ham and fruit and yoghurts. In the winter they have a hot meal like soup or beans on toast. All the children sit at the table in the dinning room for their meals and snacks. The childminder encourages them to sit properly at the table and to have good table manners. The children are competent at helping to set the table and at taking their dishes to the kitchen when they have finished. They enjoy healthy snacks which include lots of fruit, cheese biscuits, cucumber and carrot sticks. They eat nutritious, home-cooked meals at 'dinner time', made with fresh produce. Sometimes the children have a picnic lunch when the childminder spreads a large picnic blanket on the living floor and the children tuck into 'party food' especially when it is one of the children's birthdays. Children drink according to their needs and the childminder reminds the children to take plenty of fluids on very warm days.

Children develop their physical skills well, enjoying daily exercise in the garden or taking walks around the local area. The physical play equipment in the back garden provides exciting challenges for older and younger children alike. For example there is a tunnel, slide, sand pit, small climbing frame and ride on toys. The childminder ensures that children play in a clean environment outside. The children enjoy some lovely outings which provide opportunities to extend their physical skills and gets lots of fresh air. They often go to Laurel Park which has a nature reserve where they can feed the ducks at the lake, Denton Pastures or Woodford Park which has a paddling pool. The children have lots of opportunities to develop their fine motor skills and hand eye co-ordination because the childminder provides a very good range of toys, games, puzzles and art activities which promote this.

The childminder informs parents of her Sick Children Policy which helps prevent the possible spread of infection. She would inform the appropriate authorities in the event of a child developing a contagious disease. She also has in place procedures for the safe administration of medication and recording accidents and parental consent forms. The childminder has attended a first aid course and has a specific first aid kit designed for childminding so she is able to treat the children appropriately if they hurt themselves.

Indoors too, the childminder's home is clean and welcoming to children. They move around the spacious downstairs rooms freely, choosing what they wish to play with from the wide range of good quality toys offered. Here, the childminder takes many positive steps to prevent the spread of infection such as using appropriate procedures for nappy changing, cleaning the house and keeping bathrooms clean. The children use the bathroom upstairs either independently if they are old enough or under the supervision of the childminder. They are provided with a step if they need it to reach the sink, soap dispensers and a towel or wet wipes to clean their hands. The same towel is used by all the children including the childminder's own children. The towels are changed everyday however providing separate towels for each child greatly reduces the spread of germs.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe environment both when inside the house or out in the garden. The childminder assesses potential risks well and does all she can to minimise them. The childminder has some very good policies and procedures in place which help to safeguard children such as a health and safety policy and procedures that provide details of what to do if a child is lost or uncollected. Indoors, young children cannot go upstairs, for example, unless accompanied. Equally, when taking naps upstairs, they cannot come down alone, as there is a gate at the top.

Such sensible actions help prevent possible accidents. The childminder has a good written fire evacuation procedure in place, however this has not been practised with the children. The childminder tests her smoke alarms regularly, however the fire blanket is kept on the shelf, behind some papers therefore it is not located appropriately where it can be easily accessed in an emergency.

Outdoors, the childminder remains vigilant to maintain children's safety in the garden. This is fenced securely with gates which children cannot unfasten. Children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe too as the childminder reminds them to stop at the curb and wait for the 'green man' when they cross the road. The childminder has appropriate seat belts and booster seats in her car so that the children can travel safely and she makes sure that the children are strapped into the buggy in a five point harness or holding onto the buggy when they go for a walk.

The childminder safeguards children's welfare by undertaking training herself. She holds a relevant first aid certificate and has a good understanding of child protection procedures and of her responsibilities in this area. The childminder has a very good child protection policy in place and supporting documents such as the HM Government booklet 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' as well as the Berkshire safeguarding children book, for reference if she needs them.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children play with a very good range of toys and resources, choosing for themselves which they want to use. They thoroughly enjoy exploring different materials such as sand, paint and play dough. The children have lots of opportunities to take part in activities which allow them to explore and investigate. For example they grew tomatoes, lettuce and strawberries in the garden. They particularly like cooking which gives them the chance to smell, taste, touch and feel. A particular favourite amongst the children are the crispy cakes or shredded wheat Easter nests with little chocolate eggs on. The childminder allows the children to be as involved as possible and the children like putting the icing on the cake and the coloured sprinkles. All their efforts are given lots of praise and encouragement.

The children's creative development is nurtured through lots of art and crafts activities. The childminder has an art and craft box full of lots of exciting goodies and the children are encouraged to rummage through and find things to enhance their creations with. Dressing up and role play helps the children to expand their imagination. The children go to toddler group regularly which provides them with different toys and activities, increases their social skills and interaction and gives them the opportunity of mixing with children of a similar age. They have enjoyed some lovely days out to Poultons Park and Lego land and Maiden Place Park at the end of the road is also easily accessible.

Young children, including children with disabilities or learning difficulties make good progress because the childminder joins in with their activities. She knows their individual capabilities and extends their learning through the range of activities and opportunities she provides.

The children enjoy and learn from a good range of activities which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development. The childminder is aware of the educational content in the activities and resources she offers. For example, independence, awareness of others, table manners, road safety, number and letter recognition. This is incorporated in daily routines and promoted each day in a variety of stimulating activities. The toys are kept in see through storage

boxes which allow the children to access what they want easily. They have great fun making the puzzles, looking at the different dinosaurs and whizzing the cars around on the car mat or just sitting quietly to look at books.

The childminder has attended an extensive range of courses which provide her with new ideas for activities which will interest and challenge the children. She is also very keen to continue updating her knowledge through further training so that she is continually providing exciting and varied opportunities and activities for the children.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

All children, including those with special needs, receive equal care and attention. They may use all resources suited to their stage of development including those, such as dolls, including the Balamory figures, dressing up clothes and books, which reflect the diversity of modern life. The children take part in activities which celebrate different festivals such as Chinese New Year, Diwali, Easter and Christmas. The childminder is committed to making sure that she is able to address any questions or issues that arise at an appropriate level for the children's understanding. For example when a child recently asked her about Eid, the childminder was not sure of all the details of the celebrations so she made a every effort to look on the internet and CBBC website so that she was then able to provide the children with all the correct information. The childminder talks to the children about things that are important and takes time to make sure that all the children's birthdays are acknowledged and celebrated with a cake and a party lunch.

Children with special needs, disabilities or learning difficulties thrive in the care of this childminder. She liaises closely with parents to learn all she can about their specific needs so that minded children are cared for appropriately. The childminder has been working closely with a special needs co-ordinator to consolidate her existing knowledge and to enable her to discuss and implement some different ideas and strategies which will further enhance the children's development and progress. She gives lots of individual attention so that they make good progress. The childminder has attended an excellent range of courses to help her meet the children's needs and offer the parents support. She has implemented ideas from the training courses to provide better opportunities for the children she cares for. For example, she has put all her toys into see through boxes so that the children can see what each box contains and utilise their visual communication skills as well as communicating vocally which enhances their ability to make choices. The childminder is exceptionally committed to making sure all the children have equal inclusion on all levels. The children go to the Crescent as part of their routine outings where some of the staff and customers have disabilities and learning difficulties which the children readily accept. The commitment to including all children regardless of ethnic origin, background, gender or ability ensures children feel welcome, that their particular cultural background is respected and, as a consequence, they learn to respect others.

Parents learn of their children's activities and achievements through in a variety of ways, such as talking face to face with the childminder when they drop off or collect their children, by text throughout the day or phone calls in the evening which allow a confidential and personal discussion between the parents and childminder. The childminder makes sure the parents are provided with copies of her policies and procedures. She devised a parents questionnaire so that she can evaluate her practice and make sure that she is meeting the needs of all the children and their parents. The responses from the parents were extremely positive and they are clearly very happy with the service she provides. They have a long standing relationship which is friendly and supportive. The parents obviously feel welcome and value the childminder's

congenial and consolatory approach to caring for their children. This strong partnership with parents underpins the care provided very well.

Children demonstrate that they feel relaxed and 'at home' with the childminder. They behave well, clearly understanding the daily routines such as snack time, toddler groups, school pick-ups and sleep time. Good, calm and sensitive explanation helps children learn right from wrong and teaches self-discipline. Frequent praise raises their self-confidence and this approach ensures children feel secure and develop empathy for others. Conversations, hugs, endearments and smiles are frequent, kind, warm and genuine. Children are developing a healthy self-esteem and confidence. They enjoy their play, are engaged in their activities and take great pride in their efforts and achievements. Children's pleasure in their activities is facilitated by the childminder's knowledge and understanding of development and play, while her care and kindness ensure they feel valued and accepted without reservation.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to improving her practice. She keeps up to date through attending a variety of courses such as 'Learning together - adult and child interaction strategies', 'I've told you a million times', 'Conflict resolution', 'Policies and procedures', 'An introduction to autism' and 'I can' which are organised through Wokingham Borough Council. The childminder is keen to gain more qualifications and is hoping to start her NVQ Level 3 in childcare and education in January as well as attend several more courses which include food hygiene, child protection, a course which explores the benefits of scrap art in relation to children and a course which will help her to identify issues and opportunities effectively in order to support parents. In addition to this the childminder has booked a place on the early year's Foundation Stage framework training. She is dedicated to improving and consolidating her own learning and development and consequently her own practice. The children benefit from a very knowledgeable practitioner.

The childminder organises her time and her home very well. She manages to give all children special attention through careful organisation of her time. The established daily routines help children feel settled and secure. Planned regular outings to toddler groups and a variety of venues, provide further breadth to their experiences. They play in a child-centred environment in which toys and materials are readily to hand.

All required documentation is in place. The childminder has devised some very comprehensive and well presented policies and procedures which she shares with the parents. There is an appropriate complaints procedures and record in place. Each parent is given a copy of the childminders certificate of registration which is kept in her portfolio and not on display for parents and visitors to see. Records and documents are kept securely, confidentially and readily available for inspection. These contribute to the safe care of the children, as does the very close relationship with parents. 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 extend resources to reflect positive images of disability, provide parents with written information to ensure that they are fully aware of policies and procedures, including details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint and to review and update documentation, to ensure full names of the children are

recorded in the attendance register and that it is signed by parents, and to ensure appropriate record forms are in place for recording existing injuries.

The childminder has extended resources to reflect positive images of disability and provides opportunities for the children to interact with other people who have disabilities or learning difficulties. The information received by parents ensures that they are fully aware of policies and procedures, including details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint. All documentation has been reviewed and updated and the full names of the children are recorded in the attendance register which is signed by parents. The childminder has devised and implemented appropriate record forms for recording existing injuries.

These measures contribute to ensuring children's continued health, safety and wellbeing.

### **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 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):

- further develop the fire evacuation procedures and assess the location of fire safety equipment

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)