

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221503
Inspection date	09 November 2007
Inspector	Rhonda Foster
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 has been registered since 1998. She lives in the family home in a village near Banbury, with her husband, daughter aged 17 years and son aged 13 years. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. The areas of the house used for childminding include the lounge/dining room, conservatory, a bedroom to the rear of the house and a bathroom on the first floor. There is an enclosed garden available for outdoor play. There are a number of community facilities within walking distance of the house including pre-school, schools, library, shops and recreational areas. The family has a pet cat and gold fish.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a comfortable home where they learn to follow simple health and hygiene practices from an early age. For example, they wash hands regularly and are encouraged to use a tissue to wipe their nose. Children's health is promoted because the childminder records

relevant information from parents about children's health care needs. For example, allergies and dietary needs.

The childminder holds a first aid qualification and ensures that a suitably stocked first aid kit is easily available. A record of any accidents is maintained and shared with parents. If children become ill the childminder contacts parents immediately and only administers medication with parents' written consent. However, the childminder does not have parents' written permission to seek emergency medical treatment and/or advice. Consequently, children's health is compromised in an emergency.

The childminder follows parents' wishes when providing a satisfactory range of meals and snacks such as fresh fruit, raisins, fish fingers and pizza. Throughout the day children have free access to fresh drinking water and sugar free drinks. As a result, children are suitably nourished and do not become dehydrated. All children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs and parents' wishes. Younger children usually sleep in a travel cot and fresh bedding is supplied.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical play experiences that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They have access to a fully enclosed garden and go on regular walks in the local community. Children's large muscle skills are promoted through play on equipment such as a slide and climbing frame. Small muscle skills are promoted through craft activities such as painting, drawing with crayons and using stickers to make a picture. Consequently, children's physical development is promoted.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment, where they can move around freely and independently under the childminder's close supervision. The premises are welcoming and suitable facilities are available to support children's physical needs such as washing, toileting and sleep. The childminder has taken effective steps to minimise risks to children. For example, a stair gate is fitted to the kitchen doorway and hazardous cleaning materials are locked away. Fire safety precautions such as a fire blanket and smoke detectors are in place. The childminder has also considered an emergency evacuation procedure which she regularly practises with the children to ensure they know what to do.

Children have free access to a satisfactory range of good quality toys and equipment that meet safety standards. These are stored in toy boxes all around the ground floor and children are able to self-select what they would like to play with. The childminder regularly rotates the supply of toys and monitors their condition. Children are learning about how to keep themselves safe. They practise the fire drill and when out walking with the childminder they learn about road safety.

Children's welfare is not fully safeguarded. The childminder ensures that children's protection is her first priority and is able to recognise indicators of possible abuse or neglect. However, the childminder's procedure does not fully reflect the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's home. They enjoy spending time exploring the wide range of toys and resources provided by the childminder. In consultation with parents the childminder finds out about children's likes and dislikes. She follows their interests and supports their play. For example, she sits with the children as they play with stickers and encourages them to identify the numbers. Consequently, children are confident and their self-esteem is nurtured.

Children are encouraged to take part in a variety of activities which ensure all areas of development are promoted. For example, they enjoy brushing water over a 'magic' picture and observe the colours that appear. Children confidently communicate with the childminder, each other and visitors. They ask questions and show initiative. For example, when playing with electronic toys they eagerly press the keys and ask what to do next. They also initiate their own play with toys such as small world figures and a wooden castle. As a result, children are engaged in imaginative play.

The childminder takes children on regular walks in the local community and they attend the weekly toddler group where the children are able to socialise with others. Outings include visits to the farm park where the children enjoy feeding the lambs, collecting eggs and riding on toy tractors. Consequently, children are learning about the natural world through hands-on experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. The childminder has a sound understanding of equal opportunities and in a written policy she demonstrates her commitment to ensuring that all children are treated as individuals. Children develop a secure sense of belonging. They are all encouraged to take part in activities and make choices about what they wish to play with. Through a satisfactory range of resources showing positive images of diversity children become aware of the wider world. The childminder has a positive attitude to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She works closely with parents to provide individual care required to promote children's welfare and development.

Children learn about responsible behaviour because the childminder is a positive role model and uses age appropriate techniques to manage their behaviour. For instance, distracting younger children, giving plenty of praise for achievements and discussing consequences of actions with older children. The written behaviour policy and incidents of negative behaviour are shared with parents. As a result, children are learning right from wrong.

The childminder fosters positive partnerships with parents. They are able to view the childminder's written policies and encouraged to provide information to ensure children are cared for according to their needs. Information about the children's activities is shared with parents on a daily basis. The childminder has a written complaints policy in place that provides parents with the contact details of the regulator. However, it does not state how the childminder will respond to any complaints and the timescales outlined in the National Standards.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her home well to provide a child-friendly environment which promotes children's welfare and development. She is adequately qualified, experienced in caring for children and has been suitably vetted. Children's well-being is supported through the documented information kept, which is well-organised to ensure children's details are kept confidentially. Children's attendance record clearly details their hours of actual attendance. All records were available for inspection. However, not all permissions have been recorded. Consequently, children's health is not fully protected.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop written agreements with parents that sets out the expectations of both parties and keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children with written permission from parents before administering medication. The childminder now uses written agreements that are clear and detailed, including all legally required details such as emergency contact numbers and doctors' details. The childminder also effectively maintains a record of any medication administered to children, including parents' prior permission. As a result, the childminder has sufficiently addressed previous recommendations.

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' written permission for emergency medical treatment and/or advice is recorded
- improve awareness and knowledge of Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance and child protection issues
- review the complaints procedure so that it reflects the National Standards.

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