

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 116518
Inspection date 10 March 2008
Inspector Susan Victoria May

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 1994. The childminder lives with her husband and three teenage children, close to the villages of Wooburn Green and Bourne End. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder may care for six children at any one time and is currently caring for five children on a part time basis. The childminder is prepared to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools. The family have two dogs, a cat, a rabbit and guinea pigs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children begin to learn about good hygiene and follow good practices as they play in a clean and well-maintained home. Personal hygiene is promoted, for instance, as the childminder offers discreet support to children as they begin to use the bathroom independently and reminds them to wash their hands after handling the play dough. The family have several pets that the children have contact with and there are clear procedures in place to ensure the children's

health and welfare is protected at all times. The childminder holds all of the required documentation to accurately record all accidents and administration of medication. She has a valid first aid certificate in place to ensure she can deal with minor accidents effectively. This promotes children's well-being at all times.

Children's dietary needs are met because the childminder records and discusses the parent's preferences regarding food and individual children's needs. This ensures she meets the needs of the children in her care. When providing children with snacks or lunches, she ensures they have a variety of healthy options, for example, fruit, toast and spaghetti. This helps children to begin to learn about healthy eating. Children have access to drinks throughout the day and begin to recognise their bodily needs as the childminder asks them regularly if they are thirsty.

Children have access to an interesting and challenging variety of activities, which they enjoy and promote their good health. The childminder considers the individual routines of the children when planning activities and children are able to rest according to their needs and parental preferences. Opportunities for the children to increase control, co-ordination and physical skills are available daily through activities in the home such as playing board games and handling malleable materials like play dough. Outdoors; children have opportunities to extend their physical activities as they play in the garden and go on regular outings and routine visits to local parks, soft play centres and walks in the local area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The children move around the childminders home freely and independently as the childminder successfully identifies and minimises risks in her home and on outings. For example, the garden is fully enclosed and gates are kept locked to keep children secure. The childminder keeps a close eye on the children at all times, taking precautions to ensure they are safe while not stifling their natural curiosity in wanting to explore the environment. To keep children safe on outings, the childminder ensures children remain close to her at all times and begin to learn about safe places to cross the road such as at pedestrian crossings. All fire safety precautions, smoke alarms and a fire blanket are in place and checked regularly to help protect children and keep them safe.

The childminder provides a range of well-maintained resources suitable to the children's age and stage of development, from which children can easily self select. The childminder carries out regular checks on all toys, resources and equipment and implements procedures to clean and maintain all toys and resources. This ensures they remain safe for the children to use.

To safeguard children's welfare, the childminder has a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and her role in protecting children. She is aware of whom she should contact if she has concerns about a child in her care, however, she does not have contact numbers accessible nor does she have the "What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused-Summary" in line with Local Safe Guarding Children's Boards procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are happy and content in the calm atmosphere of the childminders home. Children are relaxed and confidently make their own choices and express personal preferences as they enthusiastically self select from a broad range of easily accessible equipment.

The childminder is warm and affectionate, making children feel comfortable and valued. She has good relationships with the children; enjoys their company and knows them well. The childminder suggests toys that the children may wish to play with and this helps ensure they have a wide variety to enable them to develop new skills. For example, the youngest children show developing control, co-ordination and concentration as they move around the road on the play mat, play with board games and sit quietly looking at books. Children learn about the environment as they go on regular trips to the library, school, river and park. This helps children learn about their community and the wider world.

The childminder has an obvious understanding of the developmental needs of young children and of providing them with a broad range of experiences. For example, helping develop imagination and self-expression through role play as they 'cook' and serve the play dough food and regularly visit groups where they can express themselves through music and songs. The childminder provides good opportunities for children to learn in all areas. Daily verbal information is shared with parents to help children make effective progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are relaxed and happy in the childminders home. The childminder has regard for each child's individual needs and has all the relevant information about them to enable her to provide activities that are suitable for their age and stage of development. This helps children to feel good about themselves. Children develop a sense of place and learn about where they live through regular outings within the local community, for example, to the library where they choose books and join in with organised events. The childminder has a positive understanding of equal opportunities issues, however, resources and activities promoting positive images of the diversity of the society in which we live are limited.

The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; through working with parents and other professionals to help them reach their potential. Children respond well to the childminder and her family and readily take part in activities; help clear away and behave well. The childminder adopts a positive approach and manages children's behaviour calmly and patiently. This encourages children to respond effectively to any guidance and praise.

Relationships with parents are friendly; this contributes to the children's well being. The childminder shares with parent's, information about daily events and children's progress through verbal communication. The relationship between parents and the childminder help provide the children with continuity of care

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder provides a wide range of stimulating activities, attractively set out to allow the children room to play comfortably and freely in defined areas. Children feel comfortable and are clearly at ease in the childminders home. The garden offers further opportunities for a variety of supervised play experiences. The childminder ensures she is on hand to offer support to the children at all times and ratios are always observed. Attendance records are kept; these accurately reflect the times of children's attendance.

The childminder understands the importance of maintaining documentation confidentially. Parents are informed of the childminder's practices verbally, prior to minding. Parents have access to all information about their child and all documentation which is legally required is in place. However, the childminder's knowledge of how to implement the regulatory requirements of recording complaints is limited. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom he provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and update knowledge of child protection procedures. To achieve this the childminder has ensured that she obtains the necessary written consents prior to children being cared for. To safeguard children, the childminder has increased her knowledge of protecting children by acquiring information from a variety of sources, including the National Society for the prevention of Cruelty to Children. She is able to discuss procedures to be followed. However, this is an area that continues to need updating to bring in line with Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures.

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):

- increase resources which reflect diversity and show positive images of gender, disability and a variety of cultural backgrounds
- improve knowledge in line with regulations of recording complaints
- obtain 'What to Do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused-Summary' and relevant contact numbers in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures

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