

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	120870
Inspection date	07 March 2008
Inspector	Deborah Jaqueline Newbury
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 good. 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. She lives with her husband and three children aged 14, 11 and four years in West Horsley, Surrey. The childminder's husband acts as her assistant on some occasions.

Minding mostly takes place on the ground floor of the property, with toilet facilities provided in this area. An upstairs bedroom is used for sleeping as necessary. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight at any one time. She has a total of 17 children on her books, whose ages range from four months to eight years of age. The majority of children attend on a part-time basis, with days and times varying.

The family keep chickens.

The childminder takes children to and from local schools and nursery groups. They regularly visit the park and other local places of interest.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All aspects of children's good health are promoted well. The childminder implements appropriate procedures to ensure good hygiene and to minimise the potential for the spread of infection. Children do not wear outdoor shoes inside the house and they are provided with their own individual towels. They do not attend if they are ill. Children follow good personal hygiene routines; such as washing their hands at appropriate times. Some children display understanding of the reason for doing this as they talk about germs. The childminder and her family keep chickens in a separate, enclosed area of the garden. Children do not have free access to these although they are permitted to stroke them if they wish, under strict supervision. The childminder makes sure that if children do this, they clean their hands immediately afterwards. The childminder maintains a valid first aid certificate, which means she is able to respond appropriately in the event of a child sustaining a minor injury. Parents are supplied with a copy of any accident report she completes on a child. This ensures they are well informed about the circumstances involved and any action the childminder has taken.

Children benefit from lots of fresh air and physical activity as outdoor play forms part of their usual routine. They really enjoy being outside in the garden where they explore the different play apparatus available. This enables them to climb, jump and swing and thus, develop balance and control. Children have fun as they jump on the trampoline. This is enclosed with a safety net and access is strictly controlled. The childminder abides by the manufacturer's instructions and has obtained written parental consent for children to use this. Some children also attend a weekly gym class. Children sleep according to their individual need and their parent's wishes. They rest in comfortable surroundings and their safety is assured as the childminder checks on them physically at regular intervals.

Children enjoy a well balanced and nutritious range of snacks and meals that take account of their individual dietary needs and particular preferences. The childminder aims to provide food that children will enjoy eating but also encourages them to try different things. Children chat freely about those food items they especially enjoy and those they do not like quite so much. The childminder includes fresh vegetables on a daily basis to encourage healthy eating and she promotes children's understanding of healthy and unhealthy foods through discussion and encouraging them to express their thoughts on the subject. Meal times are sociable occasions where children and childminder sit together at the table and lots of conversation takes place. Drinks are freely available throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder's home offers a warm and welcoming environment for children. It has a child-friendly feel due to the display of children's artwork, much of it positioned at a height where children can view it easily. This adds to their sense of belonging and helps them realise that their efforts are valued. Children have the freedom to move around those areas used for minding

Children are safeguarded because the childminder has a secure understanding of child protection issues and her responsibility. She maintains a record of existing injuries and ensures parents

are fully aware of the requirement placed upon her to ensure children's safety and to report any concerns about their welfare.

The childminder gives good attention overall to ensuring children's safety, inside and outside the home. She supervises children carefully and makes use of appropriate safety features such as protecting plug sockets in areas accessible by children, ensuring glazed doors have been made safe and using stair gates to prevent access to areas where she does not wish children to go unescorted. Arrangements for ensuring security and fire safety are good. Sheds in the garden are kept locked. However, currently the childminder stores some garden equipment and other items in one area of the garden. Whilst these are very neatly organised, they do remain accessible to children, which could be potentially hazardous.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe with the support of the childminder who talks to them about safety issues and sets clear boundaries that are consistently applied. She uses situations that arise during the course of the childminding day to promote their understanding; for instance, by explaining to children that they must not stand close to the swing when another child is using it.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and very much at ease with the childminder, her husband and with one another in a lively, happy atmosphere. There is lots of laughter as children have fun and enjoy themselves through play. They giggle with delight when the childminder's husband puts on some of the dressing-up clothes available to them. These are of good quality and include some interesting items. Children especially enjoy role-play and use their imaginations as they act out scenarios from the story of 'Peter Pan' whilst playing outside in the garden. They climb onto the climbing frame and excitedly announce that they can see the pirates. The childminder and her husband willingly take on the role of different characters themselves; this adds greatly to the children's enjoyment. Children also delight in finding different 'treasures' in the garden and they excitedly take their finds back to the childminder who places them in a treasure box. She shows interest in the different things they present her with. Everyone sits together at the table to play with 'plastercine'. Children concentrate well and remain involved as they use their imaginations to create different models. The childminder sits alongside them, joining in and making things for the children at their request.

Children are well occupied and benefit from different activities and experiences, inside and outside the home. They chat about doing drawing, painting and cooking and going out on the bikes and scooters. Visits to the park, the shops and library and having friends come round for lunch enables them to explore and become familiar with their local community and to develop their social skills as they mix with other children and adults. Children often visit a nearby National Trust property where they explore the grounds and collect things such as sticks and pieces of chalk.

Children have access to a huge selection of toys, books and games in the playroom and an easel and white board for drawing. They are able to access some items independently; for instance, those stored in boxes on the floor and on the lower levels of a shelving unit. The childminder gets down other resources at the children's request.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are treated with equal concern. Relationships are very caring and children enjoy lots of cuddles. They clamber onto the childminder's lap when she sits down and are happy to be scooped up for a hug. The childminder is very good at including everyone. For instance, she encourages everyone to speak and contribute their thoughts and gently explains to those children who are very keen to answer her questions that everyone needs to have a turn. Children are included and consulted about things that affect them. For example, at lunch time they are invited to choose which cup and spoon they would like to use. Older children are encouraged to undertake small tasks for the childminder, such as helping to lay the table for tea. Children have access to resources within the home that reflect positive images and their awareness of the wider world in which we live is promoted through discussion. Suitable procedures are in place to support children with additional needs.

The childminder displays her registration certificate and the Ofsted parent poster prominently in her home where they can be easily seen by parents. Her policy file is kept on a shelf by the front door and parents are encouraged to look at this whenever they wish. There is a daily informal exchange of information with parents which is supplemented by completion of a daily diary for younger children. The childminder also meets up with parents approximately every six months to discuss how both parties feel things are going. This helps to ensure continuity of care. Detailed written consent is obtained for all aspects of children's care, including permission for children to be left in the care of the childminder's husband, for whom approval has been given to act as her assistant.

Children learn acceptable ways to behave with the support of the childminder. She encourages good manners, turn-taking and sharing and adopts a consistent approach to behaviour management. Thus, children know what is expected of them and where they stand. Children put their name on a rota to use the computer, which ensures that everyone is able to have a turn. Children feel good about themselves because the childminder gives them lots of praise. Some children also have sticker cards; the childminder notes down on a card something she is trying to encourage with individual children, such as remembering to flush the toilet and wash their hands. Every time they remember to do this, they choose a sticker to put on their card. Children enjoy receiving these and proudly announce to the minder that they have done as they have been asked.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. Children display confidence in a warm and welcoming family home. They benefit from the good levels of support and interaction they receive from their carer which helps them feel settled and secure.

Required documentation and other records which promote the health, safety and welfare of children attending the setting are mostly in place. However, it is not clearly evident from the information recorded those occasions when the childminder's assistant undertakes tasks at her request; such as, collecting children from school. Paperwork relating to childminding activities is well organised and stored securely to ensure confidentiality. The childminder has put together a range of written policies to underpin her practice. These include details of the procedure

parents should follow if they wish to make a complaint and the way the childminder will deal with this. This reflects the latest revisions to the National Standards.

The childminder develops her knowledge by attending training courses so she is up-to-date with current practice.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder was asked to improve some aspects of record keeping at her last inspection. These issues have been addressed appropriately. The childminder has obtained written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and she has improved the organisation of her paperwork. All records relating to childminding activities are readily accessible on the premises and available for inspection. The measures taken contribute positively to the welfare of children and the overall organisation of the setting.

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):

- ensure that potential hazards in the garden are inaccessible to children
- ensure a record is maintained of any occasions where the assistant is left alone with children or undertakes any school or nursery runs.

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