

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 150024
Inspection date 01 November 2007
Inspector Sylvia Crawford

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 registered in 2001. She lives with her husband and their three teenage children. They live on a well established estate close to central Milton Keynes within walking distance of local shops, pre-school, and schools.

The childminder uses all downstairs for childminding. There is a front garden and rear garden available for children's outside play. The childminder takes children to the local pre-school and attends a toddler group on a regular basis.

The family have one rabbit, tropical fish and stick insects.

The childminder is registered to care for six children. She currently has three children on roll. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle and promote their physical development as they play in the garden, at the local park or in the soft play area. They get lots of fresh air and are able to improve their skills of balancing and co-ordination on equipment such as the see saw, bikes and sit and ride toys.

Children's health is of a high priority, they have access to a clean and well-maintained home environment in which good hygiene routines help minimise risks of cross infection. For example, children understand that they must wash their hands after using the toilet or before eating. Younger children enjoy a lot of attention and interaction with the childminder at nappy changing time, which promotes their development. The childminder safeguards and promotes children's welfare through her knowledge, experience and sick child procedures. She has records in place to ensure children's individual needs are met. Children are protected because she has a current first aid qualification and consequently feels confident about dealing with emergencies.

The childminder works closely with parents to provide the children with a nutritious diet. She provides healthy snacks and drinks and values the wishes of parents and the children's likes and dislikes. Consequently, children develop healthy eating habits. She supports children to eat well and have good manners at the table. The childminder offers frequent drinks, so that children have enough fluids throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children have a safe and secure environment where they have good opportunities to enjoy playing and learning. Children access age appropriate, safe resources, which are well organised to develop their independence skills. The childminder's very good knowledge of health and safety issues and vigilant monitoring of the children ensures that they are very safe and secure in their play and can move about the house freely. The children always play within sight of the childminder who makes herself aware of what the children are doing all the time.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where any risks are identified and minimised. This is because the childminder is very vigilant and carries out regular risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Appropriate safety precautions are in place such as stair gates and socket covers. The childminder ensures that children are safe in the event of an emergency with smoke alarms on each level, a fire blanket in the kitchen and an effective evacuation plan in place. The children learn about road safety when out and how to keep themselves safe when crossing the road.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted by the childminder who has a good understanding of child protection policies and procedures. She has completed child protection training and understands her role in safeguarding children. The childminder is aware of the procedure to follow if she has concerns about a child in her care. She shares information with parents through her written policy to ensure they are aware of her duties as a registered childminder. However, she has not updated her policy to include a procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against her or her family.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very settled and happy in the childminder's care. They enjoy the welcoming, child-orientated environment and this contributes towards their sense of belonging. The childminder is highly skilled and uses her extensive knowledge of child development to provide high quality care. She maintains an excellent relationship with the children, knows them well and is able to meet their developmental needs. New children settle well because the childminder takes the time to gain all necessary information from parents to follow their individual routines.

Children's self-esteem is given high priority as they are offered praise and acknowledgment for their efforts and achievements. This helps to promote children's confidence and make them feel valued. Children benefit from the childminder's highly skilled ability to balance her time, interacting with children effectively and at times allowing them to play alone. This enables children to explore and develop their own skills. Babies receive lots of cuddles and tactile experiences, which increases their sense of well-being. She supports children's early communication skills extremely well through good quality adult-child interaction; this means that children receive good quality care and progress well.

The childminder effectively uses the Birth to three matters framework in her planning of activities to support babies and younger children. Children take part in a very wide range of interesting and exciting activities and experiences that help them to make progress. They are motivated, eager and actively participate in the activities and experiences offered to them. For example, children enjoy a story using a large owl puppet with babies; they are supported by the childminder to complete puzzles. During the activities, the childminder supports children's development by talking about different colours, shapes and numbers. She encourages the children to share and take turns as well as supporting them to resolve differences. They attend a variety of child-centred settings away from the childminding premises. These encourage children to relate well to each other and socialise with others.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children receive an excellent standard of care because the childminder knows them extremely well and develops a warm and loving relationship with them. The childminder treats children with equal concern, care and regard and they look to her for support and guidance. Children have equal access to all the toys and the childminder encourages them to play together, sharing toys and building good social interactions.

The children are learning about their own community through regular outings and walks. They are supported to understand the wider world and diversity through a wide range of resources, celebrating festivals and meaningful discussion with the childminder. The childminder helps children to understand the world of nature through ongoing discussion while they are out, growing cress and sunflowers and caring for the rabbit and stick insects.

Children's self-confidence is evident and is very well promoted by the childminder as they receive lots of positive praise and encouragement. This results in children developing a high sense of self-esteem. Children's behaviour is excellent, which is a result of the childminder's support and encouragement. The childminder is clear about the need to promote children's positive behaviour and she does this through appropriate behaviour management strategies. Children feel comfortable and at ease, they are learning to respect each other and their

surroundings. They are beginning to develop a good understanding of what is right and wrong through the childminder's very positive role model.

An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being and continuity of care. Children's individual needs and requirements are discussed carefully and in detail with parents prior to placement and on an on-going basis as they develop and progress. The childminder also uses photographs very effectively to convey to parents what their child has been doing while in her care. The childminder shares all her written policies and procedures with parents to ensure they are well informed and made to feel welcome from the beginning. The childminder also has her own website, which contains a lot of information for prospective families about her service. She has lots of letters of support from parents and carers which are all very positive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel at home and at ease in the child-orientated environment. They benefit from a good daily routine that the childminder shares and discusses with parents. Space is organised well to enable children to play confidently and appropriately. The childminder organises time well and provides a good balance of indoor and outdoor play, which extends children's learning and development. The childminder is very clear about her role and responsibility in providing a high quality service to the children and their family.

The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of the National Standards and an interest in updating her training by attending courses. She has the necessary documentation in place for childminding and shares her written policies and procedures with parents. She has all required parental permissions in place but they do not clearly show the name of the child. The childminder maintains confidentiality and all paperwork is well organised into files and kept secure. This helps to keep children safe and promote their care and learning. 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 recommended to improve accident records to include details of any pre-existing injuries to children and to improve her knowledge and understanding of child protection issues, with regard to reporting allegations of abuse to the appropriate authorities.

Since the last inspection, the childminder now uses a specific book for recording pre-existing injuries. She has attended several courses and workshops to improve her knowledge and understanding of child protection and is aware of the procedure to follow if she has any concerns.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 written permission from parents shows clearly name of child
- ensure that the written policy contains the procedure to follow if allegations are made against the childminder or her family

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