

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	154776
Inspection date	07 February 2008
Inspector	Rachel Edwards
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 outstanding. 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 in Greenmeadow, Swindon. The whole of the house may be used for childminding, although most care takes place on the ground floor. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play and they regularly visit several nearby parks. The house is within walking distance of local shops, parks, a regular bus service to the centre of town and other local amenities.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years, at any one time and is currently minding five children. The registration does not include overnight care. The childminder trained as a primary teacher and has several years experience as a teaching assistant. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and meets regularly with other local childminders.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children gain an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. They know they need to wash their hands before eating and after the using the toilet and they manage this extremely well due to the patient and fun approach of the childminder. They choose their own coloured towels and flannels and know this is to stop germs spreading.

Children benefit from very healthy meals and snacks which are attractively presented and the many opportunities the childminder takes to help them learn about healthy eating. Meals are really social occasions, sitting together at the table. They take plenty of time as they help prepare the meal, talking about the ingredients and exploring new smells, tastes and textures. For example, they love to cut open oranges and lick the juice and notice the lovely pattern inside. They talk about where oranges are grown and remember a story about fruit bats in Australia. Children enjoy learning about different fruits and vegetables when they go shopping and they help to prepare meals, such as chicken and rice, which they have fun trying to eat with chopsticks as they learn about the Chinese New Year. Children are able to help themselves to drinks throughout the day.

Children have lots of opportunities to play boisterously and develop excellent physical skills both inside and out. They have great fun stretching, climbing and rolling as they build dens or move to music as they all join in with a fitness DVD. They have suitable outdoor clothes so they can enjoy visiting one of the many nearby parks every day, regardless of the weather. If it is wet they take towels to dry the play equipment. If it is a nice day they often take a picnic. They help to feed the birds and recognise the regular visitors and they enjoy hunting for bugs in the garden.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder gives children's safety the highest priority; not only are they cared for in a very safe environment but they are also taught extremely well about how to keep themselves safe. Comprehensive and thorough risk assessments are in place for the home and garden and on outings to reduce any possible hazards. The childminder takes every opportunity to teach children about safety, for example, they check a room together looking for hazards before they start play. They learn to use equipment safely and a two-year-old knows he must never touch a sharp knife. The children talk about the dangers of fire and they practise leaving the house in an emergency and learn how to dial 999. Whilst out they learn how to behave near traffic and how to safely cross the road. They practise in the safety of the park and are gradually given more freedom as they become more responsible. The childminder uses stories, books and role play games to reinforce children's understanding.

Children are very well protected by the childminder who has a thorough understanding of all aspects of child protection. She has clear and detailed policies and procedures in place to safeguard children's welfare and she gives parents information about these. She ensures that children are never left with adults who have not undergone the relevant checks and she sensitively talks to children at a level appropriate to their age and understanding about the dangers of talking to strangers.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children relish the time they spend with the childminder. She shows the children a great deal of warmth and affection, with lots of cuddles and kind, encouraging words. As a result they are exceptionally well settled, happy, confident and eager to join in with all activities. They are involved in a wide range of enjoyable and stimulating activities that develops their imagination, creativity, curiosity and social skills very well.

The childminder uses her in-depth knowledge of how children learn and refers to guidance such as the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum to plan activities that interest the children and help each child make excellent progress in all areas of their development. She records children's progress and uses this information when she is planning suitable activities. Children's learning and enjoyment is significantly enhanced through the wonderful interactions they have with the childminder. All children can participate because she thoughtfully adapts activities for different abilities, for example, she uses a big plastic sheet so that children can paint on a large scale on the floor, where even the youngest can easily reach. Activities are often planned around a theme to help children make connections in their learning and to add interest to what they do. For example, whilst learning about 'big and small', children measure themselves and see how they have grown since being babies, and build towers, experimenting with different bases to make them more stable. They develop a love of books, enjoying choosing books at the library and snuggling up together to share favourite stories. Young children are encouraged to hear sounds in words and are beginning to link these to letters. Older children especially enjoy craft activities after school.

The childminder achieves an excellent balance between leading activities and leaving children to play independently. They are confident to fetch things they need and the childminder is ready to offer suggestions to extend their play. For example, they love using blankets and cushions to make dens and shine torches under the covers. They pretend to be monsters and shriek with laughter at the story the childminder invents around their play. They have many exciting outings that add considerably to the richness of their experiences, such as visiting the theatre or the very popular train museum. Sometimes, they simply sit in the park and watch the world go by, listening to different sounds and talking about what they see.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are warmly welcomed by the childminder and her family and made to feel very at home in her care. Each child is valued and fully included in every aspect of the daily routine. They demonstrate a strong sense of belonging as they talk fondly about other children who attend and move confidently about the house, choosing things they need. The childminder nurtures children's confidence and self esteem, their artwork and photographs are displayed and they are constantly praised and encouraged. She liaises very closely with parents so that home routines are followed and to ensure consistency at important times, such as toilet training. Parents are extremely well informed about all aspects of the care through clearly written policies and procedures and they exchange information through useful daily contact books and discussions with the childminder. The childminder is very accommodating of home circumstances and is flexible so that she can support families whenever possible.

Children have wonderful opportunities to learn about themselves, their community and the wider world. Imaginatively planned activities and visits to local places of interest help children

gain a very good understanding of their environment. For example, they help with recycling waste and enjoy visiting the recycling centre to watch the big lorry come and collect the waste. They regularly visit charity shops where they donate a toy and buy things made by people in other countries which helps them become aware of others' needs. The childminder's house is a treasure trove of artefacts from other cultures and children enjoy exploring the contents of the 'treasure basket'. They often visit the library and use the internet to find out about other cultures and areas of the world. The childminder talks sensitively to children about feelings and emotions, such as the death of her dog, which helps children understand and express their own feelings.

The childminder's management of children's behaviour is outstanding. She has high expectations for children's behaviour and through her warm, affectionate and humorous approach she very effectively teaches children right from wrong. They become very sensitive to the feelings of others and are very mature in their level of self control and ability to amicably resolve minor disagreements themselves.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from the exceptionally well organised routine and interesting range of activities that have been carefully planned. Children feel happy, settled and well cared for in this welcoming, homely and safe environment. They spend their time fully engaged in enjoyable and worthwhile activities that help them progress well in all areas of their development.

The childminder has put a great deal of effort into devising effective and comprehensive policies and procedures which ensure that children are safe and well cared for. All the required documentation is in place and is shared with parents so that they are clear about all aspects of the care provided.

Children benefit from the way the childminder continually strives to further improve her knowledge and the care she provides. She is highly reflective and regularly reviews and adapts all that she does. She is a member of the National Childminding Association, which helps her keep abreast of changes and new ideas in childcare and she regularly meets with other childminders to share aspects of good practice. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection, the childminder was asked to improve the information given to parents about how to make a complaint. She now has a clearly written complaints procedure, which is shared with parents, and this includes how to contact the regulator, Ofsted. The childminder is about to update the procedure to inform parents that they may ask to see her complaints log if they wish.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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