

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507283
Inspection date	30 January 2008
Inspector	Amanda Jane Tyson

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 was registered in 1999. She is currently caring for six children aged under eight years, of whom three are aged under five. Three children aged over eight also attend. Children attend a variety of part time hours.

The childminder lives with her husband, son aged over 16, and daughter aged 11. Her home is situated near to Worcester Park Town Centre which has a range of public and community facilities, including British Rail direct links to London.

The whole of the ground floor is available for childminding. Toilet facilities are on the first floor and there is an enclosed back garden for outdoor play. The childminder is a member of the 'Surrey Childminding Association'.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children participate in a wide range of daily outdoor activities that keep them physically active. They are challenged by the trim trails and obstacle courses that the childminder sets up in her garden and have fun playing football with her. Children practise climbing skills when they use the fixed apparatus in the local parks and explore nature in wide open spaces as well as when they are digging in the childminder's garden. On wet weather days, the childminder draws on local indoor facilities, such as a soft play centre or toddler group where children have access to bikes and scooters. Occasionally, depending on numbers of children in attendance, they go swimming as well. Activities, such as these help children develop confidence, balance and coordination. The childminder provides a nutritious and well balanced daily diet of fruit snacks, fresh meat and fish, with carbohydrates and plenty of vegetables. Children keep well hydrated with drinking water which is accessible throughout the day. The foundations for children to adopt a healthy active lifestyle and eating habits are, therefore, being firmly laid.

The childminder demonstrates a mostly very secure understanding of the importance of record keeping to support children's health and well being. A record of their health and medical history, including any specific conditions or requirements, is obtained and fully agreed with parents prior to placement. For example, she has their written consent to seek emergency treatment for children. All accidents and administered medication are recorded and the entries are signed in acknowledgement by parents when they collect children. The childminder obtains prior written consent to administer prescribed medication, but written consent for the administering of non prescription medication is not sought. Although the childminder has a clear procedure for telephoning parents if children show signs of becoming unwell and agreeing treatment, for example to administer Calpol whilst waiting for them to collect children early, their consent is not verifiable.

The childminder teaches the children the importance of good personal hygiene, such as hand washing and ensures good practice herself. She rigorously follows Department of Health food preparation guidelines, is aware of the signs and symptoms of the flu pandemic, and takes instant hand sanitising gel and nappy changing equipment with her on outings to avoid having to use public facilities. This, along with her exclusion policy for children with contagious illnesses, helps to prevent the spread of infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure, warm and well maintained environment. Access to potential hazards, such as sharp knives, electrical sockets and the stairs are prevented by a number of safety gadgets. Good quality perimeter fencing keeps children safe when playing in the garden. Play and learning resources are maintained in very good condition and the childminder ensures that small parts are kept out of the reach of younger children. The childminder tests her smoke alarm once per month and involves the children in this to strengthen and reinforce their knowledge of the evacuation procedure.

The childminder ensures robust supervision of children when she takes them on outings and has well implemented procedures for the prevention of, and response to, a lost child. For example,

children wear wrist bands with her mobile telephone number detailed to enable a speedy reunion with her if they do become temporarily misplaced but found by a responsible adult. She carries information that identifies her as a childminder, the names of the children and parental contact telephone numbers. This proactive planning means that if she herself became unexpectedly unwell, a reunion between parents and children can be quickly organised by a third party.

Children's welfare is very well safeguarded by the childminders secure knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures, which she has consolidated further through specific training. All injuries sustained to children outside of her care are routinely recorded and monitored, and parents understand the reasons for this because it is well explained in her written policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit greatly from the childminder's flexible organisation of activities and innovative ways in which she builds on their current interests and learning. For example, when school aged children were learning about the Tudor period, the childminder took all the children on an outing to Hampton Court Palace. Here, their learning was brought to life by the costumes, scenery and activities provided. Younger children thoroughly enjoyed this treat which included a train journey, face painting, exploring the wide open spaces of the grounds and seeing the river boats nearby. Children enjoy playing board games with the childminder where they use counting and number recognition skills and are helped to understand the concept of turn taking. The childminder exploits opportunities to encourage shape and colour recognition, for example, when they are making modals from discarded boxes, tubes and paint. Children meet up with their friends at toddler group, and the development of musical skills is being firmly established through the weekly 'Monkey Music' sessions that the childminder takes them to. Children have regular opportunities to explore using their senses, for example, hand painting, and moulding sand and exploring weight, volume and capacity with water. The childminder describes how her treasure basket of natural and household objects keeps babies absorbed as they follow their natural impulse to explore it's contents which all feel different when touched. Children build models with construction and then use them for a specific purpose, for example, jumping over.

The childminder spends a lot of time talking and listening to the children. Her subtle suggestions and initiated conversations inspire their ideas and encourages speech and language. As a result, children are becoming confident and articulate communicators. The childminder has systems in place to monitor children's progress and development, but this tends to rely on workbooks as a tool for gaining evidence of their learning, which is unnecessary. The childminder is not making enough use of her observations of children when they are naturally engaged in learning through play. The childminder is currently working towards establishing a system to plan for children's next stage of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are welcomed and valued as individuals and for their contributions. This is superbly demonstrated by the way in which the childminder adapts activities to enable full inclusion, for example, the exciting trip to Hampton Court Palace. The childminder provides excellent opportunities for children to learn about diversity. A wonderful arrangement of posters around

the childminder's home show people of different ethnicity, of both sexes and with disabilities in their professional roles within the community. This helps to promote equality of opportunity. Children's awareness is further broadened through constant access to anti-discriminatory play resources, for example, books, games, small world figures and dolls. The childminder engages the children in interesting and highly worthwhile conversations and practical hands on experiences, such as going to the supermarket to buy noodles as they prepare to celebrate Chinese New Year, and introducing them to the world map during a board game. The childminder visits children in their own home before they visit her for the first time. She operates a gradual settling in procedure for new children and encourages parents to provide their preferred comforters. Children have their own cot/bed, coat hooks and toothbrushes and they made their own mealtime placemats. As a result, children are developing a strong sense of belonging and are highly secure.

Children benefit greatly from the childminders strong, communicative and professional relationship with parents and outside agencies. She shares her observations of children with parents on a daily basis, including any possible developmental concerns so that early intervention is initiated where appropriate. Parents report that the developmental information shared with them about their child helps them to provide consistent care and learning support, and stress that her commitment towards children with physical and/or learning disabilities is outstanding. Parents are provided with a high level of written information that secures their knowledge and understanding of the childminder's regulatory responsibilities, such as towards child protection or responding to a complaint, and of her operational policies and procedures. A notice board in the childminder's hallway ensures that all relevant information and documentation is prominently displayed for parents perusal.

The childminder's consistent use of praise using specific language ensures children know exactly what they are doing well, for instance, "good listening". The childminder skilfully redirects unwanted behaviour whilst making sure that children are helped to understand the possible consequences to their actions. For example, when a young child kicks over a tower of bricks, she explains that the brick might fly in the air and hurt someone. Moral messages are consistently delivered through stories and as the childminder responds to situations as and when they arise. Children are encouraged to use common courtesies. The wide range of activities and opportunities to let off steam during outdoor play helps to reduce squabbles and overall they play very cooperatively together.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder's professional approach towards caring for children is well demonstrated by her commitment towards developing her knowledge and skills and keeping up to date on legislative changes. For example, since the last inspection the childminder has attended numerous health and safety and child development workshops. These include 'working with under threes' and the 'Birth to three matters' framework, behaviour management, and implementing policies and procedures.

With the exception of parental consent for the administering of non prescription medication, all records and documentation required for the safe and efficient management of the provision, and that promote and support children's well-being and care, are comprehensively maintained and well shared with parents. In addition, the childminder has devised a full set of written policies and procedures which underpin her operational practice.

Children benefit greatly from the childminder's enabling environment. Excellent use is made of the available space, including the garden and local and wider community. Play and learning resources are well organised to encourage children's independence; they can choose and help themselves. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection raised one recommendation for improvement which related to the detail recorded in the accident book. Along with the date and time of the accident, the childminder now records how and where the accident happened, a description of the injury and the action taken. Both parents and the childminder sign the entry.

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:

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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):

- obtain prior written parental consent for the administering of all medication to children.

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