

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 510224  
**Inspection date** 31 January 2008  
**Inspector** Rosemary Davies

**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](http://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 1995. She lives with her husband and their two teenagers in Thatcham, West Berkshire. Shops, parks, a library, toddler groups, children's centre and other amenities lie within walking distance. The childminder can take children to and collect them from, local schools and pre-schools. The family keeps guinea pigs, a rabbit and a cat as pets.

Minded children may use the entire house, although in practice remain downstairs, apart from use of the upstairs bathroom. A fully enclosed rear garden is available for outside play. Her registration permits her to care for six children under the age of eight years, at any one time. She currently minds two children, both aged two years, who attend on a part-time basis.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children use a very clean home environment in which the childminder follows methodical daily procedures to maintain cleanliness. She keeps her pets in healthy condition and vacuums carpets frequently to remove cat hair. Parents receive clear information about when their children must

be kept at home, owing to illness. The childminder uses good nappy changing routines, encouraging children to clean their hands afterwards, as she does. All these procedures help to prevent the spread of cross-infection well. The childminder keeps her first aid skills up dated through taking suitable refresher courses. She looks after children appropriately if they become unwell when in her care. She does not, however, record pre-existing injuries in her accident book as required.

Children tuck in to healthy fresh fruit for their mid-morning snack. However, they also have sweet biscuits, which are not a healthy option. The childminder does not share a healthy eating policy with parents to make clear her responsibilities to them. Children drink sufficient fluids when in her care but the childminder does not make clear the importance of drinking fresh water. Children benefit from daily fresh air and exercise. The childminder helps children understand how to dress for cold winter days and encourages them to protect themselves in bright sunlight.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children use a very well maintained, homely environment. The childminder makes it welcoming to children by putting out different daily selections of appropriate toys and resources. All are of good quality. Children reach toys easily and are free to make their own selections. The childminder provides child sized furniture too, which children enjoy using.

The childminder places good emphasis on maintaining children's safety. Her home and garden are secure, so visitors cannot enter uninvited. She identifies and minimises potential risks to children's safety well, keeping items such as sharp knives and medicines out of children's reach. In the garden, she removes the rotary washing line after use and the greenhouse is safely fenced off to prevent children falling against it. The childminder supervises children closely and remains vigilant for their safety. She teaches them how to keep themselves safe, such as waiting for 'the green man' when crossing roads. The childminder is fully aware of her duty and responsibilities for safeguarding children's welfare. She keeps up to date contact details of the Local Safeguarding Children Board agencies readily to hand.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy warm, relaxed and friendly relationships with the childminder, which help develop their confidence to try new experiences and learn. Children benefit from a range of well-chosen outings and activities in the local community. These help them socialise with others and learn about the wider world around them.

In the childminder's home, children often take the lead in deciding what to play with and all find something to interest them. This is owing to the childminder observing children closely and noting their personal interests. She plans what she offers accordingly, hence children quickly become absorbed in purposeful play, thoroughly enjoying what they do. Activities support children's all round development well, being appropriately matched to their individual needs. The childminder devotes her time to the children. The high levels of individual attention received help their speech and language skills develop well. Children enjoy sharing books and stories with the childminder. She often links these to her theme for learning, which is currently 'animals'. She asks children questions, such as the names of animals and prompting them to predict what might happen next. Such effective questioning encourages children to think.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The childminder welcomes all children warmly to her home. She understands that some have additional needs and knows how to accommodate them, although none currently attends. The childminder knows the individual characters and needs of children in her care, very well. Children are treated equally and as individuals. They learn about the diversity of modern life through outings in the local community and through using suitable resources, such as books.

Children behave very well. This is because they have lots of things to do that they enjoy and owing to the childminder making clear her expectations. Children know where they eat their meals, for example, and that they do not jump on the sofa. They help tidy away toys willingly when asked. They learn to take turns through playing suitable games, such as picture dominoes. The childminder gently supports them in playing the game properly. She takes a consistent and positive approach and children respond well to her praise.

The childminder establishes positive relationships with parents, taking time over initial visits and settling in periods, so that everyone can understand her methods. However, she does not write down her policies, so parents cannot peruse these in their own time at home. Parents receive regular details of what their children do when with her and of their progress in development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder understands her responsibilities to safeguard children's welfare and does not leave them alone with persons who have not been checked as suitable to be with children. She keeps required skills updated and reads about the Birth to three matters framework, although it is some time since the childminder last undertook any additional training to improve her practice further.

The childminder organises her home and time well for childminding purposes. She offers sensibly structured days that help children feel secure but also provide plenty of opportunity for stimulation outside her home as well as inside. All required paperwork is in place, although some details have not been recorded. Documentation is well organised, kept securely and is ready for inspection. The childminder works well with parents to understand children's needs, although not all policies are made sufficiently clear to them. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Following the last inspection, one recommendation was made for improvement, relating to documentation. The issue has been addressed successfully, with the outcome that paperwork is kept up to date, so that parents are clear about Ofsted being the regulator for her work as a childminder. Consequently, parents know who to contact, should they wish to do so.

## **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):

- further promote children's good health through developing a clear policy on healthy eating, which is shared with parents and carers, and includes encouraging children to drink fresh water
- ensure pre-existing injuries are recorded in the accident book.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)