

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	160969
Inspection date	14 January 2008
Inspector	Daphne Angell
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 April 2000. She lives with her husband and two sons aged 16 and 14 years in a detached house in the small rural village of Ludgershall. Childminding takes place primarily on the ground floor; upstairs is only used to rest babies. There is a large enclosed garden to the rear of the house.

The family have one cat and a dog. Currently there are 13 children on roll who attend at various times throughout the week.

The childminder attends several local toddler groups with the minded children. She holds the National Nursery Examination Board (NNEB) certificate.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle. Children can easily access the downstairs toilet; the childminder is always on hand to offer support if this is needed.

Children have access to individual towels when washing their hands. Liquid soap, suitable for children with sensitive skin, is also available. The childminder has an up to date first aid qualification. She has fully stocked first aid boxes available in the home and on outings for use in the event of any emergencies. There are good nappy changing procedures in place, for example, disposable gloves are used and used nappies are double bagged. The childminder maintains records relating to any accidents or administration of medication. Accidents are recorded in a book and the relevant page is countersigned by parents, although individual sections of the book are not identified for each specific child. The childminder also records details of the administration of medication in a book, with entries countersigned by parents. However, currently the specific consent, to link to the occasion when medication is given, is stored separately.

The childminder is proactive in encouraging discussion about healthy eating. Children discuss fruits which they like to eat and there is discussion about healthy teeth and keeping them clean. The childminder offers them snacks of fruit, such as, apple as well as biscuits and breadsticks. Parents provide other meals and drinks, which are in line with their child's specific dietary needs. The childminder discusses how she prepares bottles of milk for babies in line with parents' instructions. The childminder discusses that she is in the process of registering with the Food Agency, and is to attend a Basic Food Hygiene Course very shortly.

Children have opportunities for fresh air and exercise. For example, the childminder takes the children for walks in the local countryside; they have access to the large garden at the rear of the property. Children are also able to have opportunities for rest and relaxation appropriate to their age and development. For example, there are good arrangements in place for any baby to have a sleep in the travel cot in the bedroom upstairs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children have access to a very welcoming environment. The areas which children use are clean, well lit and extremely suitable for young children. Children have space to play in comfort and extend their play. Examples of children's paintings and drawings are displayed on walls to reinforce the welcoming atmosphere and celebrate the efforts of the children attending. There is an extensive range of well maintained play materials available. Any resources which are not in use are stored within easy access, so that the children are free to choose for themselves.

The childminder maintains very high levels of safety to give maximum protection to the children in her care. She has a check list which she uses for risk assessing each area of the property to ensure ongoing safety. She discusses that she is currently reassessing the safety of the outside climbing frame before children use this again. She has very effective safety measures in place to continually protect the children in her care. For example, there are safety gates across the entrances to the stairs and utility room; young children at lunch and snack time are safely secured in their seats. The childminder's husband is a Fire Safety Officer, so fire safety is given a particularly high profile. In addition to the home having excellent fire safety equipment in place, the childminder also ensures that children take part in regular fire drills. The records kept show good recording and evaluation to ensure that fire exiting times are as low as possible. The childminder has very good procedures in place to secure maximum safety for children on outings. This includes carrying relevant contact details in the event of an emergency.

The childminder has a very secure knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures and issues. She is proactive in regularly updating her knowledge and understanding and attended a 'Safeguarding Children' course in 2006.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a wonderful time in the setting. They are very happy and chatter with the childminder. The childminder's 'Mission Statement' includes details of topics available within the setting. This is a 'working document' which is adjusted as required. The childminder has written plans of activities for each month of the year which she uses as an overall guide of what she will be offering the children. Again, this is adjusted to meet the ongoing needs of the children attending. The childminder also has a secure knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework.

The childminder cares for a number of children throughout the week, of varying ages and requirements. The large photograph album available includes examples of the vast array of activities which the childminder is able to offer. These include details of visits to places of interest to children, such as, Warwick Castle and the Cotswold Wildlife Park; varied craft activities, such as, 'welly' printing, mask making, cake decorating; opportunities for fun outdoor play, such as, using the paddling pool. The childminder discusses how she ensures that activities are appropriate for the age and stage of the children attending. For example, older children do model making and decorating plaster of paris models, which extends their skills. Photographs also show children putting on a Magic Show for the other minded children and the childminder's own family.

Young children use a very good range of age-appropriate play materials to promote their development. The young children present use the varied array of play materials, including small world resources, to extend their imaginative and large and small muscle skills. They develop their problem solving abilities, as well as reinforcing their fine muscle skills, when they play with a range of age-appropriate jigsaws. They make a den, using a large sheet of cardboard that is requested from the childminder. They use interesting spaces, such as, behind the small settee, to make a hiding place from which to play 'peek a boo'.

Children are very confident. The childminder reinforces this by encouraging them to practise their skills. For example, individually children sing nursery rhymes with confidence. The childminder constantly talks to the children, asking questions to extend their knowledge and understanding. At snack time children discuss the colour of plates; children are able to recognise blue and yellow. They discuss the shapes of biscuits, and whether apples could sink or float.

Children's social skills are extended as they meet with other adults and children. They regularly visit local Mother and Toddler groups, a local Music group and the library. The childminder also ensures that she and the children in her care meet up on a weekly basis with her emergency cover, another local childminder, so that contact is maintained.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and treated as individuals. The childminder ensures that she has the relevant information, such as, their specific health needs, to provide quality care for the minded children.

Children have access to a range of resources to help them learn about diverse society. This includes a good range of books and play people, including non stereotypical roles. Children celebrate festivals; photographs show how they make crowns for the Festival of Light. The childminder discusses using a local resource centre to access materials to help children celebrate additional festivals in the future.

The childminder is proactive in extending her knowledge and understanding of any child with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example, she has attended a conference in November 2007 relating to this specific area of childminding. In addition, the childminder works closely with the parents of all children to ensure that any specific individual needs are identified and addressed appropriately.

Children are well behaved. They are encouraged by the childminder to say 'thank you' and 'please'. The young children are encouraged to be helpful; they assist with tidying up the toys before lunch. They play co-operatively when putting the jigsaws together.

The childminder promotes a very positive partnership with parents. She ensures that new parents are fully informed of the service she offers. This information is set out clearly in a relevant folder for parents to view. In addition, they are offered an opportunity to look at the large photograph album showing examples of activities. She also provides current parents with a good range of information. For example, she completes a daily diary for the parents of babies and provides verbal feedback to those of older children. She also provides regular written updates for parents on the progress children are making within the setting. The childminder discusses the possibility of using a notice board as an additional source of information for parents. The childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding of her duties in the event of a parent wishing to make a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a well organised setting. She has produced a handout which gives an overview of the aims of her childminding service. The childminder is very enthusiastic. She states that she loves her job and this is reflected in the quality of the service that she offers and the happiness of the children in the setting. Children's opportunities for enjoyment and achievement and the arrangements for keeping them safe are outstanding. The childminder is NNEB trained and is proactive in updating her knowledge and understanding. She maintains a very positive partnership with parents which underpins her care of the minded children.

The childminder keeps an accurate record of children's attendance. She has a good range of policies and procedures in place to support her work. These include policies relating to child protection, equal opportunities and health and safety issues. All required documentation is maintained, although minor areas for improvement have been identified relating to the current format used for recording accidents and the administration of medication.

The provider meets the needs of the range of children attending.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were made. The first recommendation related to having a procedure to follow if parents have a concern or complaint. The childminder has addressed this issue and a relevant procedure is now in place. The second recommendation

related to obtaining written permissions for the administration of first aid and emergency medical advice or treatment, plus consent for children undertaking specialist activities. The childminder has also addressed this issue and the relevant consents are now in place. These improvements show the willingness of the childminder to take measures to further improve the quality of the care she provides.

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 complaint 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):

- review the current format used for recording administration of medication and accidents

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