

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	111977
Inspection date	12 February 2008
Inspector	Carole Gronow
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 satisfactory. 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 1989. She lives in Alton with two children who are over eight and at school and an adult daughter and her child. Childminding always occurs downstairs and children do not go upstairs at all. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight at any one time and is currently minding two children under five during the day and two six year olds after school. The childminder walks to local schools to collect the children. She regularly meets with other childminders and takes children to the local park and the library. The family have a dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment where they are encouraged to develop good hygiene practice. Older children are supplied with separate hand towels and reminded to wash their hands at appropriate times, younger children have their hands cleaned with wipes. Tissues are

supplied for runny noses and when soiled are disposed of appropriately, which helps to minimise any risk of illness through cross-infection. This is further reduced because the childminder ensures that her home and all the equipment that the children have access to is kept in a clean condition. The childminder has obtained the necessary consents for children to be able to receive prompt attention in the event of a medical emergency. She maintains an in date first aid certificate and carries a first aid kit with her at all times. She also keeps children's individual details with her and all of this ensures that children receive the most appropriate treatment without delay.

Children have daily opportunities for outside play and physical exercise. They enjoy playing in the garden and they walk to and from school. They visit soft play centres and local parks where they play on a range of equipment that helps develop their balance and coordination. Although the childminder does not provide children with meals, she fully understands the importance of healthy eating. She gives her own children snacks of fruit and this helps re-enforces to other children that it is good for them. Children have water to drink and they have their own cups which are kept topped up and are always accessible to them. This means that even very young children can help themselves whenever they wish, thereby ensuring that they remain hydrated.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides toys and equipment that are modern, in good condition, age appropriate and suitable for the age and stages of the children cared for. Only the downstairs of the premises are used for minded children and all the areas that they have access to are both safe and suitable. This is because the childminder has addressed all the hazards that she has identified. For example, doorways are gated and socket covers are in place. Young children are not allowed in the kitchen area unless they are with the childminder, which further ensures that they remain safe. All children enjoy playing in the garden. Younger children are always accompanied by the childminder and they learn, from her, how to go down the steps to it safely. Older children do play outside on their own and even use the trampoline without supervision, however, this is in contradiction to the printed guidance on it.

Security of children is given a high importance and the childminder has suitable systems in place to protect children from being handed over to the wrong person. All children are fully aware that it is only she who answers the front door and children can only be collected by people that she has already met and has been informed about. The many fire alarms that are fitted throughout the house are regularly checked and these, along with the accessible fire blanket, help to protect children in the event of a fire. However, both the childminder and the children only practise the emergency evacuation procedure once a year, which means that the children are not sufficiently familiar with how they must respond in the event of an emergency. Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted through the childminder's very good awareness and understanding of child protection issues. She is fully aware of her responsibilities to protect all the children in her care and is confident in how to do this.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident. They are very well settled because the childminder has developed a good settling-in procedure. She encourages parents and children to make as many visits as are needed before a child is left. This helps ensure that when they start with her they

feel at ease because they are in surroundings that are familiar to them. Children take part in activities and play opportunities planned to develop their physical, social and intellectual capabilities and they have access to a range of well-maintained toys and resources. Children have many opportunities to meet with other children because the childminder takes them out a lot and they often meet with other childminder or carers with young children.

Children's independence develops as they choose between a variety of age appropriate toys, books and activities that are laid out for them to access. The childminder rotates the toys that are available so that children's interest is sustained and they do not get bored. The childminder spends her time with the children talking to them and asking them questions to make them think. For example, 'where is your car?' and 'can you find your cup?' and this helps children's language and listening skills develop. Children listen to the childminder counting one, two, three strawberries, one, two caterpillars, and then try to copy what she is saying. The childminder's readily praises their attempts thus boosting their self-esteem and giving them the confidence to try again.

The childminder plans a range of activities to encourage children's creativity, for example all children enjoy painting and cooking. Children learn about how things grow and change; they plant cress seed and watch them grow and the older children have had fun making volcanoes erupt by using bicarbonate of soda.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides some resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others, for example there are books, small world figures and puzzles. Children learn about their local community; they go on walks and they make visits to the local parks, they enjoy feeding the ducks and they go to the library, as well as making routine outings to the shops and school.

All children's needs are appropriately catered for because the childminder ensures that she always discusses each individual child with their parents so that she can make sure that the best possible care is offered. Children are well behaved. They know how they should behave because the childminder's tells them about her house rules and consistently applies them. This helps children learn to understand behaviour boundaries and play together harmoniously. The childminder works with parents to develop strategies for managing behaviour, in order to ensure that there is consistency in how this is handled and that children are aware of the expectations made upon them.

Parents are kept informed about the provision through daily talks, when children's achievements, their daily activities and care issues are discussed and shared with them by the childminder. A wide range of signed parental consents are obtained by the childminder so that children are cared for as their parents wish. The childminder has a suitable form to record any complaints that she receives, but is unaware of which specific ones must be recorded and responded to.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of the children for whom she provides. Children are cared for by an experienced, long established childminder. She maintains all the necessary documentation that she is required to have, plus additional parental consents. The childminder

formally reviews the information that she holds on all children annually so that she is sure that she has the most accurate details, however, she also reminds parents and carers to inform her of any changes to children's details as they occur.

The childminder has written documentation which she share with parents and she displays her certificate when she is working. She is fully aware of the importance of maintaining confidentiality in all areas of her work. To ensure this she not only stores children's details away in a file but she uses separate notebooks for each family. In these she records any accidents or incidents that the children have been involved in, which she shares with parents and they sign. The childminder keeps an accurate record of attendance of all minded children, however, she does not record any details about other children for whom she is responsible whilst she is minding.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to keep a sufficiently detailed record of significant issues and share this with parents and also to make sure records of accidents and medication administered are confidential. She now has individual books for each family she cares for and only issues regarding those children are recorded in them. This ensures parents are kept fully informed about all aspects of their children's care in a confidential manner.

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 satisfactory. 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 improve children's safety by more frequent practises of the emergency evacuation procedure and by undertaking a risk assessment concerning children's use of the trampoline
- improve knowledge and understanding about when complaints must be recorded and responded to
- ensure that records of attendance clearly show details of all children who are being cared for.

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