

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	108292
Inspection date	06 March 2008
Inspector	Louise, Caroline Bonney
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 as a childminder since April 2000. She lives with her husband and two school-aged children in the semi-rural district of Holyport, near Maidenhead. The ground floor of the property is used for childminding, which includes a downstairs toilet. The upstairs is used for sleep purposes. There is a secure garden for outside play.

The childminder currently cares for three children under five, and one over five occasionally during holidays. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. The childminder attends various activity groups, such as cookery club, toy library and music club.

The childminder qualified as a nursery nurse in 1991, which is the equivalent of a Level 3 qualification. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and the local network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children receive effective protection from illness. The childminder shares her written sickness policy with parents, as well as documentation about contagion periods and notifiable diseases. This helps to ensure unwell children do not attend and reduces the spread of infection. Children have their medical needs met very well. The childminder seeks out additional training for administering specific medication, such as allergy pens. She fully discusses children's medication with parents and maintains accurate records which parents share. This provides very good continuity of care.

Children have excellent opportunities for more energetic activities. They go out daily to various activity clubs, parks and groups, where they access larger apparatus and soft play. In the garden they play with wheeled toys, the trampet and trampoline, bats and balls. This contributes to their very good health.

Children play in premises that are warm and clean. Their toys are in excellent condition and if a child develops sickness the childminder is careful to wash resources to sterilise them. Children learn about hygiene through the excellent procedures. Each child recognises their own brightly coloured hand-towel in the toilet and preschool children carefully wash their hands with soap after toileting and before meals with little prompting or support necessary. Children recognise and use their individual cups. They sit up at the table for their meals and help to clean the table and put out their place mats. Babies wear bibs and are cleaned with wipes after their meal. This promotes children's awareness of how to maintain hygiene very well.

Children enjoy their meals. They talk about their favourite foods and where their food comes from during shopping games played with the childminder, and enjoy cookery activities at a weekly club and at home. They look forward to their lunch, which is a sociable and relaxing time. The childminder provides some children with meals, as agreed with parents, and shares her sample menu with parents. Preschool children enjoy a wholemeal savoury sandwich, fruit and yoghurt for lunch, with an orange at snack time. Should younger children refuse food for any reason, the childminder quickly provides them with healthy alternatives, such as wholemeal sandwiches and a variety of fruit and yoghurt. This ensures they receive plenty of nourishment. Children have their drinks of water available at all times and the childminder frequently offers it to them to ensure they are well-hydrated. Younger children follow their home routines and have comfortable sleeps in their cot with their snuggly cloth. The childminder liaises with parents and knows when to expect them to be tired or energetic and adapts her activities accordingly. This ensures children thrive well in her setting.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children arrive to find some of their toys and resources set out ready for them. They safely access other toys from low storage boxes and are obviously familiar with doing this independently as they initiate their own play. They use toys that are in very good condition and regularly checked by the childminder for safety. The childminder rotates equipment with more held in store and children find those available stimulating and interesting. Older children have good opportunities to play with toys less suitable for younger children while toddlers have their nap

or by sitting up to the kitchen table. This provides a welcoming and friendly environment for the children.

Children play in safe premises where most hazards are quickly and effectively reduced through the childminder carrying out and acting upon her written risk assessment. However, exposed bolts on the fence post in the garden have not yet been removed and are a hazard. The childminder logs smoke alarm checks and evaluates fire drills undertaken with the children. Children go on outings to places the childminder knows to be safe or where there are known risks, such as to parks or the canal museum. On outings children wear wrist straps with her contact number on in the unlikely event they become separated. This protects the children's safety.

Children learn how to be safe as they participate in cookery activities, when they talk about hot surfaces and food, and use knives to cut ingredients with. On outings they know to walk on the inside of the pavement and to hold onto the buggy. The childminder teaches them safety in the park, such as not walking in front of the swings. Children have very good opportunities to be adventurous with daily opportunities to climb, balance and swing on large apparatus, such as in parks and indoor activity centres. This helps children learn to evaluate and control risk.

Children receive good protection from possible abuse or neglect. The childminder ensures her procedures are correct and her knowledge is up to date by attending training for child protection. She has full documentation on safeguarding children which she shares with parents. She records existing injuries the children arrive with and parents sign the record. She has contact numbers, recently checked and amended, for the local support agencies. This safeguards the children well.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in this home-from-home environment where they receive love and care from the attentive childminder. They have excellent relationships with the childminder and confidently ask for a cuddle when they want one. They play contentedly and enjoy a wide variety of activities and outings. Each day they have an outdoor activity, such as toddler group, cookery or music club, indoor activity centres or the toy library, as well as visits to the park to feed the ducks and use the apparatus. Other planned excursions include visiting the children's farm or canal museum.

Indoors, children make choices about their play, with the childminder giving them various options to choose from if they have not already selected their own activity. Children show vivid imagination, such as when making junk models of boats and cars from various cartons, paper plates, tubes, wool and cut out shapes, and describe in detail what each piece is for. The childminder adapts activities so that all ages participate at a level suitable for their development, so that toddlers too enjoy sticking and painting alongside preschool children.

While toddlers sleep, preschool children find their favourite games to play with the childminder, such as card and board games. They match and count their 10 counters and compare number with encouragement from the childminder. Children take turns and show consideration and kindness as they hand cards they win to those that are losing and celebrate achievement together. During activities the childminder constantly extends children, encouraging them to make connections and develop their communication skills. Children look at the writing on game

cards and persist with sensitive support from the childminder as they guess what the first letter is and then the word. Children fetch dinosaur models as they name them and match them to pictures cards.

Children look forward to playing with each other and get on very well together. Toddlers have space to develop physical control as they push along wheeled toys and access all rooms downstairs freely. They sit at their child-sized table for a tea party and pretend to answer the telephone. The childminder assesses children's development using the Birth to three matters framework and the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and informally identifies activities to provide to further support children's development. The childminder is beginning to consider how to develop written planning to further support children's learning and development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the very good relationships the childminder establishes with their parents. She shares information about children's individual care through the completion of contracts, child detail forms and consent forms and reviews these annually. She provides written information about her provision for parents through her portfolio, which includes policies and additional informative leaflets about childcare. Parents show how highly they regard the childminder's provision through written testimonials. These praise her outstanding and flexible service, the way they feel well informed of their children's progress, and how well their children settle and feel loved.

Children feel they belong at the setting. They arrive to find a selection of toys out ready for them and see their work on display. Toddlers know where they sleep and the childminder follows their home-routines, such as by giving them their dummy and snuggly. Children look forward to seeing each other and greet each other warmly. They develop very good self-esteem and confidence through the warm interaction of the childminder, who values them as individuals as she interacts with them thoughtfully and sensitively. Children respond well to the praise they receive for being kind or trying and succeeding in doing things slightly more difficult for them. This helps them develop good levels of self-esteem and confidence. Children show high levels of care and thoughtfulness towards others. Preschool children recognise that younger children are not ready to share their 'special' games, such as card and board games, as they are 'too young to understand'. The childminder is consistent and does not allow children to turn on the television except for a short time after lunch, and soon distracts them with other activities they enjoy. The childminder provides them with many opportunities to take the lead about their activities and choices. Nonetheless, they also know when they need to do as they are asked with brief explanations from the childminder. This creates a happy atmosphere where children have a clear understanding of the boundaries.

Children learn about their own culture. They visit Father Christmas and make gifts and cards for Mother's Day. They learn about other cultures, such as when a visitor at the childminders' group introduces them to traditional Caribbean songs, dances, dress and foods. At cookery club they make foods from around the world. This raises children's awareness of diversity and helps them appreciate differences and similarities. Children access a wide range of toys at home which prevent gender stereotyping and promote awareness of other cultures. However, there are no resources to reflect positive images of disability to further raise their awareness of diversity.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of the provision. The childminder develops policies and procedures and implements them effectively. She collects information to support the care of the children, such as leaflets about safety and childhood illnesses. She maintains documentation very well, and shares all records with parents. She maintains children's developmental records through tracker books and scrapbooks and shares these with parents each term. This supports the children's care and learning well.

Children receive good support through the childminder attending regular training each year, such as for child protection, positive behaviour management, disability equality and English as an additional language. She is a member of the local National Childminding Association's network and receives support from their coordinator. This helps the childminder effectively review and develop her practice for the children's benefit. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the provider was recommended to provide smoke detectors at every level of the house. There are now smoke alarms on each level of the property. This supports the children's safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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

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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):

- reduce hazards in the garden, such as the exposed bolts on the garden fence post
- provide opportunities for children to use resources that reflect positive images of disability.

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