

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY349871
Inspection date	23 July 2008
Inspector	Nicola Hill
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 2007. She lives with her husband and their two children aged five years and 21 months in a detached house in Horsell, near Woking. The property is close to local schools and amenities and there is a park nearby. The ground floor of the house is mainly used for childminding, with toilet facilities available on this floor and provision for children to sleep available on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends the local carer and toddler groups. She holds a valid first aid qualification. She is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding five children aged between three and seven years, who all attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also minds children over the age of eight years. She is not registered to provide overnight care.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder implements highly effective practices and procedures so that all children can enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Children gain an excellent awareness and understanding of hygiene through discussion with the childminder and through the consistent daily routines, such as hand washing after visiting the toilet and before mealtimes. The childminder has a very good understanding of how to protect children from illness and infection and clearly explains her sickness policy to parents. She holds a current first aid certificate and is clear on the recording methods for accidents and prescribed medication.

The childminder has an excellent attitude towards the benefits of being outside and encourages children to be out in the fresh air every day. They go for walks, play in the garden and visit the local parks. This enables the children to develop a positive attitude towards exercise and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Children wear sun hats and sun cream when playing in the hot weather and they often eat their snacks outside when the weather is good. Garden activities such as riding on wheeled toys, throwing balls and climbing on the climbing frame, as well as using large scale equipment at parks and play centres, improves children's physical skills and helps them to develop control of their bodies. Children are able to rest and be active according to their needs.

The food provided by the childminder is highly nutritious and freshly prepared, which promotes children's good health. They try foods that are new to them, such as humous, salmon fishcakes and Indian lamb burgers, and enjoy fruit and vegetables that the childminder incorporates into snacks and freshly cooked hot meals. The childminder is careful to discuss parent's wishes and children's dietary needs, to ensure she meets the needs of the individual children. Drinks are readily accessible to children throughout the day, and all children enjoy the social interaction at meal times, with the childminder sitting with them, encouraging language and generally providing a vibrant atmosphere where children feel free to chat and smile. Children are developing a very good understanding of healthy eating, by helping to grow fruits and vegetables in the garden and taking part in cooking activities, such as making homemade pizzas, pancakes and gingerbread biscuits.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit enormously from the well organised and vibrant learning environment. Children feel very much part of the family, they have the freedom to explore and play freely, which encourages independence and self help skills. The childminder has created a stimulating, dedicated play area with displays of children's work, child-height furniture, a role-play corner and labelled boxes of toys and other resources. Children use a very wide selection of play equipment which is safe and suitable for their use. They are able to choose what to play with, promoting their independence and free choice. Equipment is presented thoughtfully and attractively at a level where children can self-select or easily point to what they want.

The childminder identifies and minimises areas of risk to children, taking into account their ages and their differing stages of development. She has implemented sound security precautions as the garden is secure and children are only released to authorised known carers. This is supplemented by well written policies for uncollected and lost children. However, the front

door is not kept locked which may allow children to leave unsupervised. Children understand why rules are in place and are learning to keep themselves safe, as the childminder discusses road safety with them when out on walks and invites the Fire Brigade to visit the home and talk to the children. There are effective procedures in place for emergency evacuation. The childminder ensures fire drills are practised and recorded on a regular basis.

The childminder ensures that children are well cared for and kept safe from unvetted persons. She is aware of her professional duty to safeguard children and understands the procedures to be followed in the event of a child protection concern. A clear written policy is in place which the childminder shares with parents. However, although the childminder is now aware to do this, she has not been recording details of existing injuries when children arrive at the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely confident and secure in the childminder's care. The childminder is very enthusiastic about her work and clearly enjoys working with the children which results in them feeling settled and happy. The childminder puts the children first and her dedication for the children's well-being and happiness, means children feel valued and listened to. Children have formed warm and trusting relationships with the childminder. They receive lots of praise, cuddles and warm smiles. The nurturing environment and the sensitive, caring nature of the childminder helps children feel totally secure.

Children make excellent progress as the childminder has a very positive and enthusiastic approach to childcare and to the children's overall development. She has already made exceptional use of the new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to guide the activities she plans and assist her in observing the progress of children under the age of five years. Planned activities are based around various themes, such as 'dinosaurs', 'cooking', 'machines' and so on. The current theme is dinosaurs, and the children have made dinosaur fact books with drawings and short pieces of writing about different dinosaurs. They also have gone on an 'archaeological dig' in the sandpit, looking for fossils. The childminder makes observations and records children's achievements under the six different areas of learning in individual development profiles for each child. She then uses her observations to record planned learning targets for the children, which she uses to inform her next month's planning.

The childminder has high expectations of what the children can achieve. She interacts well with the children, giving them lots of attention, encouragement and motivation to play and enjoy activities. Children learn and develop their understanding of numbers, shapes and colours in age appropriate, educational and fun ways. For example, whilst taking part in potato printing, the childminder reinforces the shapes that she has cut into the potatoes, such as triangle, circle and star. The childminder helps the children to mix different paints together to see what colours they make. One child mixes blue and red together and comments they have made purple. The child then decides to paint a picture of a dinosaur. The childminder takes the child to look at a dinosaur poster on the wall to get an idea of how it should look. The child comments that it needs a long neck and a long tail, so they stick sheets of paper together so that they can make a big picture, and the child is very proud of the end result. The children clearly enjoy playing together. For example, they busily dig outside in the stones and work together to fill a toy truck. They then play indoors with the Tomy 'Aquadraw' and draw a track on the mat for the Thomas the Tank Engine to follow. It is clear that children love their time spent at the childminder's home.

Children thrive in the exciting range of activities and experiences offered to them. They regularly take part in messy play, cooking and art and craft activities, such as making clay pots and collages from items they find on their walks. When making gingerbread biscuits, the children talk about ingredients they mixed together to make the biscuits. They roll out the dough and use different cutters to make the biscuits. The childminder also provides many opportunities for children to develop skills and increase their understanding of the world about them through varied trips, for example, taking children to Brooklands Scooter Park, Polesden Lacey, Hever Castle, Birdworld, Bocketts Farm, and the Lookout Discovery Centre. They have plenty of opportunities to mix with other children through visits to play centres, toddler groups and childminding groups, which develops their ability to relate to a wider group of adults and peers. Older children also enjoy their time at the end of the school day when they can relax or be active in accordance with their interests. They join in with planned activities and outings, and are provided with activities suitable to their age group, such as the computer or the Nintendo 'Wii'. The childminder ensures children are given time to do homework if necessary, but makes sure that they also have plenty of time to play and enjoy themselves. All children spend their time purposefully and are fully absorbed in their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are treated with concern and respect. Children are valued as individuals by the childminder and she seeks information from parents to help her meet their needs effectively. She knows the children well and provides activities which are appropriate for their needs and interests. Children are learning to value diversity in society through regular outings, mixing with children and adults from a variety of backgrounds. They benefit from the inclusion of some resources that promote equality of opportunity, for example, books, play figures and dressing up clothes. Children also celebrate a variety of festivals so that they learn to respect others. For example, they decorate biscuits and make cards at Christmas, and try origami and find out which Chinese sign they are in the Chinese calendar for Chinese New Year.

Children behave extremely well, in a very calm and settled environment. The childminder gently and sensitively supports, praises and encourages children in their daily routines and activities, which enables them to develop their confidence and sense of belonging. Children's creative work is valued, as their artwork is displayed around the playroom. This enhances their self-esteem and helps them feel good about their abilities. Children benefit from a childminder who notices and acknowledges when they are behaving well and is committed to giving them her time and attention. She uses a very good range of age appropriate strategies for dealing with children's behaviour. For example, she uses sticker charts to reward good behaviour and adds a cube to a jar each time the children are good. When the jar is full, the children get a sweet treat to take home.

There is a very good rapport between the parents and the childminder, which has a clear beneficial effect on children within the setting. The childminder has developed well written policies and procedures for parents to ensure they are fully informed of all aspects of her business. Individual daily diaries for younger children, give detailed information about the child's day and daily discussion with parents of older children, keeps them well informed of their child's progress and welfare. In addition, parents have access to a portfolio of photographs showing different outings and activities the children take part in, and they also receive regular newsletters and a copy of the childminder's planning so that they can see what the children have done and why, whilst in the childminder's care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel very secure and at home in an imaginative environment, where they have a dedicated playroom which allows them optimum access to a wide range of good quality resources which stimulate learning and play. The childminder's forward thinking and planning takes children's needs into consideration when organising space and resources. Their development is monitored as the childminder engages with the children and records their achievements and planned learning targets. She uses this information to ensure children are constantly challenged with new experiences and activities. The childminder prepares and organises her time successfully in order to meet the needs of all the children in her care. For example, she plans more complex activities for the older children when her youngest child goes to bed.

The childminder is experienced, enthusiastic and enjoys her work with the children. The fact that the childminder is a qualified teacher is a significant attribute, and children are clearly benefiting from her experience and approach to promoting children's learning. The childminder generally keeps good records and maintains confidentiality by ensuring they are secure. However, some weaknesses in the use of documentation have been identified. The childminder does not accurately record children's attendance in the register, and there are no written parental consents in place for the childminder to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- further improve safety practices and procedures within the home by making sure the front door is secure at all times, and ensuring any existing injuries when a child arrives at the setting are recorded

- further improve organisation of documentation by ensuring that written consents are obtained from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment, and that children's attendance is accurately recorded in the register.

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