

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 134690
Inspection date 20 May 2008
Inspector Maxine Coulson

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 registered in 1999. She lives with her husband and two children, aged 13 and 10 years. They live on a residential road, in a three bedroom link detached house close to the centre of Bicester. The whole of downstairs is used for childminding with access to upstairs for use of bathroom only. There is a fully enclosed garden available for the children's outside play. Her home is within walking distance of local shops, parks, pre-school and schools.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under the age of eight years. She is currently caring for five children, two of whom are over the age of eight. Children attend for a variety of days and sessions.

The childminder has one hamster and one budgerigar. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities, such as regular outings to the local park and walks, to ensure they have a variety of opportunities for physical and outside play, fresh air and exercise. There are planned outdoor activities to help children develop physical skills and develop body control. During trips to the park, they use large play equipment, such as slides and climbing frames, that help them to develop control and balance.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn the importance of hygiene and personal care. Children follow good hygiene routines and are reminded of the importance of regular hand washing, helping to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. Children's health is further promoted by the childminder holding a current first aid certificate and maintaining accurate accident and medication records.

Children benefit from healthy food options as they eat their snacks and lunch provided by their parents. The childminder has a very good understanding of how to encourage a healthy eating policy and where appropriate discusses this with parents. Children are either offered or can ask for drinks at all times to prevent them from becoming thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained home where risks are identified and minimised. Children are able to move around safely and freely. They access a lovely range of varied resources to meet their needs and are happy, relaxed and secure in the calm and homely environment.

Children independently select from high quality toys and play resources, which meet safety standards. Their safety is well promoted by the childminder carrying out regular checks on toys and equipment. Children are well supervised both indoors and outdoors to ensure their safety at all times. Appropriate safety and fire-fighting equipment is provided within the home and emergency evacuation procedures ensure children can leave the premises easily.

Children's welfare is further promoted by the childminder as she recognises her responsibilities towards the children in her care and is aware of signs and symptoms of abuse. She understands the procedures to follow and has all the guidance for the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and contact telephone numbers in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident, independent and are developing a high sense of self-esteem by the childminder, encouraging them to try different types of activities and giving praise. Children relate well to the childminder and are well settled and happy in their surroundings. They are able to very easily access and choose from a good range of toys, equipment and resources helping them to develop their independence. Children are beginning to develop social skills by having opportunities to play with other children of a similar age through attending local toddler and activity groups.

Children have access to a variety of fun activities to encourage them to progress in all areas of development. For example, children sit on the floor with the childminder who supports the development of coordination skills, such as building with bricks. However, sometimes activities can be rather adult-led, which means children are not always making their own decisions during their play. They have access to play areas that allow them to move around freely and take part in spontaneous play. Children clearly enjoy the toys and resources that are provided, helping them to learn, develop and progress through their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder enables children to develop a sense of belonging whilst in her care, for example, by responding to a child wanting a cuddle or sitting close together during play time. She has developed a close and loving relationship with them and they look to her for support. All children are valued and cared for according to their individual needs and are consistently praised for achievements and helping, which enhances their self-esteem. The childminder encourages children to share and take turns. She has developed strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour which are appropriate to the ages of the children and their levels of understanding. Children are well behaved and are beginning to develop a good understanding of what is right and wrong.

Children are beginning to develop their independence through making their own choices of toys and activities. They have opportunities to learn about their local community through visits to parks and libraries. However, children have a limited access to toys and resources that help them learn about different lifestyles and promote a positive view of the wider world. The childminder has a good understanding of how to care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, although none currently attend.

Children's continuity of care is effectively promoted through the childminder's valued relationship with the parents. The childminder builds good relationships with parents and carers, which contributes significantly to children's well-being. She ensures records of activities and procedures are comprehensive and clear, and continually shares information to ensure consistency and help parents and carers feel actively involved in their children's development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel at home within a relaxing environment that contributes to their sense of security. They have good adult support to help them feel confident and secure within the setting. They demonstrate a real sense of belonging as they enjoy their time in a warm and happy home. Children benefit from play areas being well organised, with ample space to allow them to move around safely, independently and be able to participate in spontaneous free play.

Parents are kept very well informed about their children's day through regular verbal communication. The childminder provides parents with details about her services and this helps to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. They regularly share and swap news about home life which contributes to continuity of the children's care. Documents are stored away securely from all persons not connected with childminding activities and this ensures confidentiality is maintained at all times. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to comply with the conditions of registration, regarding the number and ages of children, at all times, and to maintain a working smoke detector on each level of the house.

The childminder complies with conditions of registration at all times and maintains a working smoke alarm on each level of the house. This ensures the children's continuing care, welfare and safety at all times.

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):

- ensure activities are not adult led and that children can develop through making their own choices
- develop range of toys and resources that reflect diversity and promote positive images

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