

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	112989
Inspection date	22 July 2008
Inspector	Deborah Jaqueline Newbury
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 has been registered since 1998. She lives with her husband and three children aged 14, 11 and three years in Blackwater in Hampshire. The home is close to local schools, parks and shops.

Childminding takes places on the ground floor of the home with toilet facilities provided in this area. Sleeping facilities are available on the first floor. The children have access to an enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for five children under eight. She is currently minding one child aged three years, who attends two days a week.

The childminder takes children to and from local schools and pre-schools. Children regularly visit local parks and the library.

The family has a pet cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, appropriately maintained environment. They stay healthy because the childminder implements suitable practices and procedures to ensure good hygiene and minimise the potential for cross infection. Children are supported in wiping their noses and are encouraged to cover their mouths when they cough. They each have their own towel on which to dry their hands, and choose which one they would like to use each day. Children learn about good personal hygiene practices through consistent daily routines; such as, washing hands before and after eating and after using the bathroom. There are suitable procedures in place to ensure the family's cat does not pose any healthy or safety risk to children.

The childminder and parents share responsibility for the provision of food and drink. Parents supply drinks and fruit whilst the childminder provides most meal items. She seeks information about children's individual dietary needs, their likes and dislikes and parents' preferences. She discusses and agrees any specific arrangements, such as an outing to a favourite fast food restaurant as a special treat. Children enjoy fruit at snack time and they drink regularly as their water bottles remain within easy reach.

Children spend time outdoors every day. The childminder walks them to and from school, thus ensuring they benefit from fresh air and physical exercise. Garden play, going for walks and outings to the park enable them to be active and develop their gross motor skills. Children rest as necessary on the sofa. The childminder provides suitable facilities upstairs for any younger children who require a sleep.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are accommodated in a welcoming environment that is appropriately organised to allow them to sit and play in comfort. The childminder identifies and minimises most areas of risk although at the time of inspection some sockets in areas accessible to children were not protected and a plastic toy box was badly cracked. Children cannot leave the premises unsupervised as doors and gates remain locked. However, measures for ensuring security of the garden may not fully preclude the possibility of unauthorised persons gaining access. Appropriate fire safety features are in place; the childminder has devised a fire evacuation plan and she practises this with children to develop their understanding of the procedure they should follow if it is necessary to evacuate the premises. Children learn about keeping themselves as the childminder talks to them about road safety when they go out and about and they sometimes look at books that relate to safety issues. The childminder supervises children appropriately; she intervenes to stop potentially unsafe practices but does not however, always explain possible consequences of children's actions to aid their understanding of hazards. The childminder has put together written procedures and consent forms to cover the eventuality of children using the trampoline or swimming pool although these resources are not currently accessible to minded children.

Children are reasonably well safeguarded as the childminder has some awareness of issues relating to child protection. She has completed relevant National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children safeguarding awareness training via the internet and has some relevant information to guide her in the procedure she should follow if she has a concern. However,

some of this is not sufficiently relevant and she does not maintain a record of pre-existing injuries children may arrive with. The childminder talks to parents about her responsibility in respect of child protection.

Children play with a suitable range of age appropriate resources; these are checked regularly to ensure their cleanliness and safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder plans the childminding day around the needs of children and their usual routines. She is guided by the way they are feeling and their likes and dislikes. Art and craft is a popular activity and hence, offered on a daily basis with the childminder allowing children to make their own decisions about what they do. Children have opportunities for free exploration of the available toys, to engage in active play in the garden and to go and about to local places of interest, such as the park, library, going to feed the ducks and visiting a nearby animal park where they can see and feed the animals.

Children enjoy being outside in the garden; they jump up and down on the bouncy castle and attempt to throw a ball through the basketball net. The childminder watches their efforts and offers encouragement. They play with the cars and show interest in completing jigsaw puzzles. The childminder sits alongside them and offers support and help, as she encourages children to remember that they need to do the edges and corners first.

Children are relaxed and content in the company of the childminder; they refer to her by her name and are happy to express their needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Arrangements for children's care are discussed and agreed with parents, with written consent in place for most aspects of this. There is an informal exchange of information on a daily basis and the childminder ensures that she passes on any information given to her by staff at the pre-school minded children attend. Parents are given their own copy of the childminder's written complaints procedure; this includes contact details for the regulator and she shares some of her other written policies and procedures with them at the start of a placement.

Children's self-esteem is fostered as the childminder praises and encourages them. She supports their developing understanding of the need to take turns and share resources through discussion and explanation.

The childminder displays a basic awareness of issues relating to equal opportunities. She treats children with equal concern and ensures that they have the freedom to make their own selections from the range of play materials available. Currently, however, there are few items that reflect different aspects of diversity and positive images to help children gain awareness of the wider world in which we live.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. They are familiar with their surroundings and receive appropriate levels of support which helps them feel secure and at ease. The childminder is currently in the process of re-organising those areas of the home used for minding to make it easier for supervision and is considering different options for storing toys so they can be more easily accessed by children.

Required documentation is in place as are most other records relating to childminding activities. There are a number of written policies and procedures available although the childminder has not reviewed these to ensure they are pertinent to her practice.

Improvements since the last inspection

The outcome of the childminder's last inspection was inadequate and actions were imposed requiring her to improve the quality and standard of care in respect of health and safety issues.

The childminder has completed an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children, which means that she has appropriate and up to date knowledge of the action she should take if a child sustains a minor injury or has an accident whilst in her care. She has made some effort to obtain contact details of the Local Safeguarding Children Board although the information gathered does not relate specifically to the area in which she lives. Further attention is necessary to ensure that this area for improvement is addressed fully and a recommendation has been made to review documentation to make sure it is relevant.

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):

- obtain relevant contact details of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (Hampshire/Surrey) and maintain a written record of any pre-existing injuries children may arrive with

- assess the risks to children in respect of the side gate, accessible sockets and the cracked toy box and take steps to minimise these
- expand further the range of resources that reflect positive images of different aspects of diversity
- review policies and procedures to ensure these relate to actual practice.

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