



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY268449
Inspection date	21 November 2005
Inspector	Elly Bik-Kuen Wong

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 was registered in 2003. She lives with her husband, and their three school-aged children in Eastleigh, Hampshire. There are local amenities close by, such as schools, pre-schools, parks, and a sports and leisure centre.

The whole of the property is available for childminding, although the main areas used are downstairs. The fully enclosed garden is temporarily closed, and will be available for outside play again when improvement work is completed. The childminder currently minds 4 children including 3 children under 5 years during the week.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She regularly attends the local parent-and-toddler group, tumble tots, and swimming sessions with children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, light, and comfortable environment. Children's well being is promoted by the childminder's good hygiene practices. Areas and surfaces used by children are regularly cleaned or disinfected. Disposable gloves are worn by the childminder while nappy changing; and children are put on personalised nappy mats to prevent cross infection. Older children can access the adult-sized toilet and hand basin upstairs with a footstool to practise good hygiene. Toddlers' hands are wiped clean regularly to prevent infection.

Children enjoy a good range of nutritious snacks and wholesome meals prepared on the premises, which contribute to their balanced diet and good health. They are asked about their preference, and are offered food and drinks that appeal to them, and which meet with parents' approval. Children can access drinks readily such as water, diluted squash, and milk, to prevent dehydration.

The childminder places emphasis on physical play, so children have good opportunities for developing their physical balance and co-ordination, through structured visits to the local park, playground, and leisure centre for tumble tots and swimming. The garden is temporarily closed due to improvement work, but children have benefited from playing there until recently on the various large and small equipment to develop their skills for climbing, sliding, swinging, and jumping.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children enjoy safe exploration and movement on the premises as risks have been reduced. A stair gate, socket covers, smoke alarms, and kitchen cupboard locks, have been fitted to prevent accidents for them. There is organised storage of toys and books, some of which are easily accessible for children to select by themselves safely. Young toddlers have suitable and safe space to push their dolls' prams in the house while having fun. Children's safety while playing in the garden (temporarily closed) has been enhanced by a special chipped bark surface under the large equipment such as swings and slides. The childminder is trained in first aid, and is able to protect children by handling any accidents and emergencies effectively.

Children receive appropriate attention and support from the childminder. While playing on the premises they are accompanied or watched within her sight or hearing to ensure their safety. Sleeping children are protected through the use of a baby monitor. Children are taught safety awareness, for example, about where not to go in the kitchen due to hazards around the cooking area. The childminder shows sound

knowledge and skills in most safety practices, but is not secure in her understanding of child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children settle well into the structured routine, and have their needs for sleep, feed, and play met effectively. They feel secure and confident to explore and play in the homely environment. With adult support young toddlers can select toys of their own choice, for example, baby dolls play set, and enjoy satisfying free play while developing new skills. They benefit from a good variety of stimulating toys such as imaginative role play and dressing up; small world; books; construction; and creative play, including painting, cutting, sticking, sand, and water. Toddlers also have extra play and learning opportunities during local outings in the morning, before they come back for a restful sleep in the afternoon. Children have fun while visiting the local toddler group; parks; tumble tots; and swimming sessions. They also develop good social skills while mixing with other children and adults.

Young children are happy and involved; they are able to concentrate when playing imaginatively with the different components of the dolls house, or while 'bathing' the baby doll. Babies and toddlers are well supported through one-to-one interaction with the childminder. With her support, they learn to communicate meanings through expressions, gestures, babbling sounds, words and sentences. Some of them become skilful communicators through her skilful questioning, using language appropriate to their maturity. For example, a young toddler has developed a good command of vocabulary and sentence structures to recall her meaningful experiences, and talk about current events in a competent manner. The childminder acknowledges that for further development of good practices, some of the activities can be made more purposeful if the Birth to Three Framework is used to help her plan.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's needs are met effectively because of good communication and partnership between the childminder and parents. New children benefit from initial trial visits with their parents so that they can settle in smoothly. Children's needs and parents' preference, for example, regarding children's diet and rest, are discussed and recorded to ensure appropriate care. Where necessary, the childminder also visits new children at their own home in order to be clear about any special routines, health and other requirements. She shares information well with parents about their children's progress, for example, by feeding back orally at handover time, and with the help of daily diaries in the case of babies.

Young children feel settled and happy with the childminder. They thrive on her clear boundaries for good behaviour; and practise playing socially by sharing and turn taking. They respond well to her constant praise and encouragement, and develop

their self-esteem. They show increasingly confidence in expressing their own needs; linking up with others for support; and in asking for and accessing play resources for their own enjoyment.

The childminder is caring and friendly; she values children and treats them with respect and equal concern. Children follow her good role model and explanations, and learn about respect for others. They learn to appreciate differences such as gender and culture through sharing books, celebrating festivals, dressing up, and enjoying creative art and craft with diversity themes.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the childminder's sound organisation of time, space and resources. They feel secure and confident with the welcoming and stimulating environment, which is conducive to their play and learning. The childminder is suitably trained and experienced with children, and holds a current first aid certificate. Children's welfare is promoted by her good procedures generally, for example, on behaviour management, fire emergency, and complaints. However, the current procedures for obtaining prior written consent for medicines, and for seeking emergency medical treatment, are not implemented accurately.

Most paper work is in place, easily accessible, and stored securely, such as children's records, contracts, and other written parental agreements. The childminder is committed to reflect upon and improve children's care and development through continual self-learning, for example, by becoming familiar with relevant reference publications; searching for new information on the internet; and seeking early years professionals' advice. However, some reference materials are not always organised effectively to allow easy reference, for example, in relation to the National Standards and legal requirements for childminding. Overall the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, there were three recommendations. The first one related to the hazard posed by the lead in the cupboard under the stairs, which has since been made safe for children. The second was about keeping incident records regarding significant issues, and sharing with parents. Appropriate stationery is now in place for recording significant events and issues that impact on children's wellbeing. The third recommendation was about obtaining written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. The childminder has designed a form for this, but due to a gap in understanding, it was not implemented accurately.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted have received three complaints since the last inspection. The first two complaints related to National Standard 6: Safety, in that the childminder had left

mindful children unattended in a car. Two childcare inspectors made an unannounced visit on 19 May 2005 to the childminder to carry out an investigation. As a result of the visit, the childminder was set an action as follows: ensure that children are never left in a vehicle unaccompanied. The childminder was also sent a warning letter. The childminder remains qualified to be registered.

The third complaint related to National Standard 6: Safety, in that a loose ridge (roof) tile on the boundary between the childminder's and the neighbour's house, posed a potential safety hazard for children and adults. A childcare inspector conducted an unannounced visit on the 21 July 2005. As a result of the visit, the following recommendation was made: notify Ofsted in writing when the work on the roof is completed, which has since been met. The childminder remains qualified for registration.

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):

- develop a secure understanding of all safety requirements when caring for children, including procedures for child protection.
- improve procedures for obtaining prior written consent for medicines, and for seeking emergency medical advice and treatment, in order to ensure children's health and safety.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk