



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY303710
Inspection date 11 November 2005
Inspector Miriam Sheila Brown

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 2005. She lives with her husband and a son aged 15 months, in a three-bedroom house located in a rural village to the north of Banbury. The ground floor of the house is used as the main play area, whilst the upper floor is used only for sleeping and personal care. There are fully enclosed play areas to the front and rear of the house for outdoor activities.

The childminder holds a National Vocational Qualification in Childcare and Education and is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She currently has 13 children on roll, who attend at different times throughout the week.

The childminder walks to the local school and playgroup to take and collect the children. She regularly takes the children to the park and local places of interest. The family have two dogs and two cats.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The children thrive in an environment which is clean and well looked after, and where hygiene procedures effectively minimise the risk of infection. The childminder's animals are well cared for and are appropriately managed, to ensure they do not pose a health risk to the children. The childminder has completed first aid training, which helps to ensure that children receive good care if an accident occurs. She also maintains clear and accurate accident records and she keeps the parents informed. Medication details are in place but, to date, the childminder has not sought any emergency medical treatment permission from the parents. The children's individual routines are respected and the day organised to meet their individual rest and eating patterns.

The childminder provides a range of healthy snacks such as fruit and cheese, and drinks are readily available to the children throughout the day. The children sit at the table as a group, to eat their packed lunches. The childminder sits with them, encouraging conversation and developing good manners. She also encourages the parents to think about healthy options for their children's packed meals.

The children benefit from excellent opportunities for physical play. They use the large outside area to dig, plant and grow vegetables, as well as playing with the usual outdoor equipment. In addition, the children regularly walk to the park, in the local community and in nearby places of interest. Activities such as painting on large sheets of paper using hands, feet and sponges help the children develop their muscles and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a home where risks have been identified and minimised, in order to keep them safe as they play. Inside the house, for example, gates are fitted to the top and bottom of the staircase and to the kitchen entrance. High chairs and buggies are fitted with safety harnesses. Smoke alarms are operational and a fire blanket is easily accessible. The childminder has an emergency evacuation plan, which she discusses with the parents at the start of a childminding arrangement; she also addresses how children will be kept safe in an emergency situation. The childminder has a list of contact numbers which are easily accessible when outside of the home. Her car is adequately insured and maintained and has appropriate restraints to help keep the children safe. The outdoor areas both to the front and rear of the property are fully enclosed and include a separate area for the family's dogs.

The children play mainly on the ground floor of the house, which offers them separate areas for eating, messy play and free play. There is a plentiful supply of toys and equipment, to ensure that the children are comfortable and can participate in activities appropriate to their age and ability. The childminder gives the children different toys every time, so that they may have various experiences. Those toys which are brought downstairs are easily and freely accessible to the children, so that they are able to make choices about which ones to play with. If the children wish to play with something specific and they do not see it, they ask the childminder about it, which demonstrates their comfort with her.

The childminder has completed child protection training and demonstrated, through a discussion, a good understanding of the signs of abuse and the procedures to follow should she have concerns about a child in her care. Her awareness about these issues assists her in safeguarding children's welfare and enables her to act in the children's best interests at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children enjoy their time with the childminder. They are confident and make themselves at home, freely accessing toys and equipment and asking for things they cannot see, or feel they need, for example, asking the childminder if they can make a den in the sitting room. The children enjoy exploring a wide range of activities which contribute to their creativity, such as papier-mâché modelling, painting, sticking, colouring and drawing. The childminder uses activities to increase children's awareness of colour, shape and sound, adjusting her input to match the age and abilities of each child. For example, whilst reading the story of the Bear Hunt, the children are encouraged to tell the story in their own words and use quiet and loud voices where appropriate, or just anticipate the end of each line.

The older children enjoy a wide range of board games, craft work and cookery. All children take an active part in the garden, digging, planting and harvesting runner beans, tomatoes and other vegetables and flowers. These activities in the garden help them to develop their sense of wonder of the natural world. The children are encouraged to think and solve problems for themselves, for example, when asking what would happen if brown and black are mixed together, the childminder encourages the children to do it and find out. The children relate well to each other and to the childminder. They are caring and thoughtful; for example, an older child shuts the stair gate behind him on his way to the bathroom, so that younger children do not come to harm on the stairs.

The children have many good opportunities for free and structured play, using either the childminder's planned activities or suggesting their own. This effectively develops children's independence and builds self-esteem, whilst maintaining their interest and enthusiasm.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children have easy and equal access to toys and equipment and are encouraged to make decisions about activities. For example, activities such as painting and craft, are suitably resourced for each day, but children decide if and when they wish to do this. They have regular opportunities to choose books from the library and resources from the toy library and the ones of other childminders. These resources include those which show positive images of different lifestyles and cultures, developing and increasing the children's awareness of the wider world. The children enjoy local walks and visits and make good use of outside areas, developing their sense of the the immediate community and the world around them.

The childminder supports the children with special needs and has completed training to enhance the care she offers. This helps to ensure that the children's individual needs are effectively addressed. The children begin to understand the difference between right and wrong, through the childminder's knowledgeable use of some behaviour management strategies, such as praise and attention, stickers and 'time out'. The latter is well managed and the children begin to self regulate their behaviour when they feel cross or they want time to themselves. All the aspects of the behaviour management strategies are discussed with the parents, at the start of an arrangement and at the end of each day.

The parents are provided with clear information about all the aspects of the care offered. The children's preferences and the parents' wishes are clearly recorded and regularly updated. The childminder maintains confidentiality well and provides the parents with information about how they may make a complaint. Daily informal discussions ensure that parents have up-to-date information about their children, thus effectively enhancing the standard and continuity of care for the children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder's home is effectively organised to ensure that the children feel at home and very much at ease. This contributes to their growing independence and provides them with a safe place to explore, experiment and try new things. The childminder plans the day well, and provides all the children with a balance of activities each day, and throughout the week. All the adults connected with the registration have received appropriate clearance and the children are well supervised throughout the day.

The childminder maintains her records and paperwork well; this helps to ensure that she addresses the children's health and welfare at all times. All permissions are in place, with the exception of those to provide medical treatment in an emergency situation. The children benefit from the childcare related courses, which the childminder has attended. These include child protection, special needs and first aid training. She also holds a National Vocational Qualification in Childcare and Education.

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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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):

- seek parents' written permission for emergency medical advice or treatment

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