



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131445
Inspection date	25 January 2006
Inspector	Judith Reed
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged three and five in Sholing, Southampton. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding five children for part time sessions throughout the week. The childminder walks to the local school and pre school to take and collect children. The childminder attends local parent and toddler groups. She works with an assistant to provide care for children.

The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network and is currently in receipt of funding for nursery education for two children. The childminder is an accredited childminder with the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a healthy and nutritious diet. They have a good understanding of healthy eating because the childminder provides a wide selection of healthy snacks and meals. Children make choices about their snacks and meals, choosing sandwich fillings and from a variety of fresh fruit. They grow fruit and vegetables to eat in season.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene. They are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times developing their self care skills. Most hygiene practices are good although the childminder does not provide individual hand towels for children who may be at risk of cross infection. The childminder employs excellent routines when changing nappies ensuring children remain clean and healthy at all times.

Children enjoy frequent opportunities for outside physical play and use the garden throughout the year. They use a range of toys and equipment including a car, a tricycle, the sand pit, a slide and a swing. Children particularly enjoy digging and gardening activities, growing and caring for a number of vegetables in the Summer months, such as tomatoes, peppers, strawberries and courgettes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a safe and secure environment because the childminder is vigilant and aware of potential hazards to children. The front door is kept locked and the rear garden is fully fenced and secure. Children use most of the downstairs rooms for play and a bedroom upstairs is used for a baby sleeping in a cot. Socket covers are in place and cleaning materials are stored in a high cupboard. Smoke alarms and a fire blanket are in place and children practice safe fire evacuation procedures regularly.

Children are able to access resources freely, developing their independence. The toys and play materials are stored in accessible cupboards and drawer units. A wide range of toys, books and equipment are available and the childminder uses the toy and book libraries to extend the range or provide specialised equipment. Children are happy within the childminder's home as she has all the necessary equipment to keep them comfortable and safe.

Children are safeguarded and well protected as the childminder is knowledgeable in child protection matters. She ensures parents are fully aware of her child protection policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very confident and have high levels of self esteem. The childminder has very good knowledge of children's developmental needs and she participates fully during activities. Children have many opportunities to develop a range of skills and progress well in all areas.

The childminder has completed training in the Birth to Three Matters framework and uses this to help younger children develop across all areas. Children are very competent learners. Children help themselves to toys from the extensive range available. They play independently as well as in small groups, supporting one another. All children become fully engaged and involved in the activities. They enjoy being with others and build positive relationships.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Children are motivated and interested in the activities provided by the childminder. She has good knowledge of the stepping stones in the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and uses them appropriately to plan a stimulating programme for children. The childminder uses open ended questions to help make children think and develop their own ideas. Children are able to focus on particular activities such as gluing and show good levels of concentration. They enjoy well planned yet flexible sessions with the childminder. Children suggest different activities, such as going out into the garden and the childminder is able to build in a quality experience because the environment and equipment are available at all times. The childminder keeps records of the children's development and uses incidental notes and observations of their play. She helps children progress by linking her future plans with these observations, developing the children's learning.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is very good and they learn about growing vegetables and fruit, caring for the plants and harvesting the produce to eat. They begin to understand about other cultures by looking at books and discussing festivals. Children visit places of interest such as a farm or local park with the childminder. Children become familiar with maths language and recognise shapes such as circles, triangles and squares although there is no routine counting activity. Children enjoy books and are familiar with the way they work. They choose from a wide variety and visit the library. There are few opportunities for the children to begin to link sounds and letters at the current time. Children use puppets to create a short scenario and the childminder helps them develop this with the aid of a story. Children enjoy frequent opportunities for creative play activities including painting, collage and drawing with chalk. They have good levels of physical manipulative skills, squeezing glue from tubes and using scissors confidently. Children's personal, social and emotional development is strong and they show curiosity and confidence. They are aware of their own needs regarding eating and they ask for a snack during the morning. Children show care and concern for others helping each other by fetching items for imaginative play and sharing well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from the very positive relationship with parents and excellent continuity of care. The childminder ensures that parents understand the necessity of all documentation including accident and medication records. They are made fully aware of the childminder's policies and procedures. The childminder holds individual records of achievement for children in receipt of nursery education and offers parents every opportunity to view these confidential records. Parents clearly state they are very happy with the standard of care provided for their children and join in on outings with the children. The childminder provides written daily feedback for younger children including clear areas of development as well as general activities. Parents

also use the diary to keep the childminder informed as necessary. Thorough verbal feedback is given to all parents. The partnership with parents is outstanding.

Children are praised and encouraged throughout their activities. The childminder and her assistant consistently praise children and thank them for being good or helping. Children help to tidy away toys when asked and take turns with equipment such as the sit and ride car. The childminder sets clear and realistic limits for all children ensuring she is kind and sets a good example. Children are encouraged to talk about their feelings. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. All their individual needs are met as the childminder knows them extremely well and takes into account their unique characteristics. The childminder works closely with parents, and other agencies when necessary to support all children to a very high level including those with special needs. She has taken further training in this area to enhance her knowledge of children's special needs.

Children develop an excellent understanding of equal opportunities and diversity through meaningful activities and discussion. They relish celebrating festivals from a number of cultures and learning about the world, for example Chinese New Year. Children have access to a large number of books showing other cultures and use toys such as puzzles, dolls, and cooking implements which reflect diversity.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are very well supervised at all times and the childminder works closely with her husband who is her assistant, when he is available. All necessary checks have been completed and the childminder remains within her ratios at all times. The childminder is also able to support new childminders and advise them on good practice. She has completed an accreditation process with the National Childminding Association. Up to date and relevant training is valued by the childminder who accesses many courses, conferences and workshops to improve the service she provides for families.

Children are busy and well occupied in the organised environment. They confidently move freely around the home and access the toys and equipment they require. The childminder ensures her register is accurate and up to date at all times. The childminder and her assistant work closely and support one another well. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. The childminder is professionally supported in the provision of good nursery education by a network coordinator. Together they review plans and evaluate children's learning. Children's records of achievement are kept up to date with regular additions of noted observations. These records and observations are used to plan future development and learning.

Children's care is enhanced by the relevant documentation which is prepared by the childminder. Parents understand the importance of keeping records up to date and accurate at all times and sign as required. Children's confidentially stored personal records include all necessary permissions, including permission for the childminding assistant to be in sole charge of children.

Comprehensive planning and evaluation systems are in place to ensure children make good progress in all areas of their development.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to make parents aware that she worked with an assistant and to obtain written permission for the assistant to be left in sole charge of the children.

The childminder has made parents aware of her working with an assistant and has obtained written permission from each set of parents, for him to be left in sole charge of their children who remain safe and secure at all times.

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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- provide individual hand drying towels for children to prevent cross infection

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- offer further opportunities for children to link sounds and letters and to count regularly

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