



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	112843
Inspection date	10 January 2006
Inspector	Jacqueline, Ann Connell
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 has been registered since 1999. She works with an assistant and is registered to care for a maximum of eight children under 8 years. Of these no more than six may be under 5 years and no more than one under 12 months. She does not provide overnight care. She is currently caring for six pre-school children on a part-time basis, and one child after-school.

The children have access to the ground floor of the home for their play and bedrooms for sleeping purposes. They use the garden at the front of the property for outside play.

The childminder lives with her husband and four teenage daughters in a four bedroom, detached house in a village which is situated between Overton and Whitchurch. The family keep pets, including a cat.

The childminder has experience of working with children for whom English is an additional language and children who have special needs. She can communicate using Makaton. She takes children who are in receipt of nursery education funding. She is a member of the National Childminding Association [NCMA] and the local Childminding Network.

She takes children to and from local schools and pre-schools, to toddler and childminding groups and for visits to the park, library and shops.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities, which actively contribute to their good health and help them to understand the need for regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. They develop their physical skills as they play with the equipment in the garden and make regular visits to the local park. Each day there are activities to help them gain control of their bodies. For example, as they do music and movement exercises, jump on the trampoline or enjoy a walk in the local area. They are confident to try out new skills as the childminder offers appropriate activities and levels of support. Children learn about their bodies and the effect of exercise. For example, they listen to their heart through a real stethoscope.

Children are cared for in a clean home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care through discussion and example. Their understanding of why it is important to blow their noses, wash their hands before handling food and after using the toilet helps to reduce the spread of infection. They have the opportunity to rest and sleep, in line with their parent's wishes. Children are protected from illness and infection through the childminder's effective health and hygiene procedures.

Children have frequent drinks throughout the day, helping to keep them well hydrated. They enjoy having meals together and develop their social skills through relaxed conversations around the table. The childminder understands the importance of healthy eating and provides a wide selection of fruit at snack time and a varied menu of nutritious, home cooked meals.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, child-centred home where the childminder identifies all risks and minimises hazards. This means children are able to move around very safely, freely and independently, which helps to develop their confidence. The childminder gives high priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe and to maintaining children's safety outside the home. For example, they learn about road safety and stranger danger.

Children independently select their own toys from the broad range of good quality, stimulating toys and play materials, which meet safety standards. They remain free from harm because the childminder checks the equipment regularly to ensure it is safe and clean. Children play with

toys appropriate to their age and stage of development, as the childminder closely supervises their choice of equipment.

The childminder consistently applies her clear policies and procedures to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children. For example, she holds a current first aid certificate and has a good awareness of her professional duty to protect children. She understands the child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the childminder's house and quickly become involved in their play. They are confident in their relationship with the childminder and her assistant, who are very welcoming and offer consistent warm support and encouragement. They become independent as they choose from the extensive selection of toys and equipment which provide challenges and cover all their developmental needs.

Children relate extremely well to one another and show pleasure in being together. They learn to socialise with other children and adults through regular attendance at toddler groups. All children spend their time purposefully and benefit from the individual learning plans which ensure each child develops to their full potential. They develop their imagination and communication skills as they share in informal, spontaneous conversations and sing nursery rhymes together. They enjoy exploring a range of activities which contribute to their creativity such as listening and moving to music, painting, baking and model making.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning are good. The childminder has a good knowledge of the Foundation stage and of how children learn. She plans interesting activities which cover the six areas of learning and adapts them to meet individual needs and interests. As a result, children are well motivated and eager to learn. They have access to a very wide range of books and know they can use them to find out information about a topic. For example, they use books to help them learn more about the life cycle of a butterfly. They enjoy listening to stories. Children are confident speakers and good listeners. They make simple writing patterns but have few opportunities for mark making within the daily routines.

Children use numbers confidently and begin to use their mathematical skills to solve problems. For instance, as they lay the table or measure the length of a scarf or a tower they have built. They use their imagination very well during role play and eagerly become engrossed in creative activities. They enjoy experimenting with sounds, for instance as they create their own orchestra using bottles filled with different levels of water.

Overall, children make good progress in all areas of learning. This is recorded in photographs, children's work and written observations which link to the stepping stones. Records of children's achievements are used to inform the future planning for each child. All records and plans are shared with parents.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's awareness and understanding of others increases as a result of the range of resources and activities on offer which promote a positive view of the wider world. For example, they talk about different celebrations such as the Chinese New Year, or discover how Christmas is celebrated in other countries. Children have opportunities to learn about their local community as they visit the library, the park or make a collage of the things they find in the village.

Children have a very good relationship with the childminder and her assistant who know them very well and respond to their individual and specific needs. This helps them to feel valued and respected. Children show care and concern for each other, play harmoniously together and behave well. They feel secure because there are clear behavioural boundaries. They thrive on praise when they are helpful and enjoy simple responsibilities. For example, helping to lay the table, pour the drinks or tidying up after an activity. This encourages their self-esteem and increases their independence. The positive and sensitive approach means that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the good relationship which develops between the childminder and their parents. The childminder keeps a diary for younger children and has a daily verbal exchange of information with parents. This ensures they are fully aware of their child's progress and they can work together to follow home routines and ensure the best outcome for the child. She gives parents copies of her policies and procedures, so that they understand how she organises her business, and regular newsletters to inform them of the children's activities in relation to the six areas of learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children feel secure and comfortable in the homely, organised environment and are familiar with the daily routine. The childminder plans this around the children's needs and combines a good balance of activities, with periods for rest and quiet play. This means they are relaxed and confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning.

The childminder recognises the importance of training and meeting with other childminders in order to increase her knowledge and understanding of her work. Most policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. However, there are no clear procedures for appointing an assistant and ensuring the suitability of those who live or work on the premises. Comprehensive planning systems are monitored and adapted to keep children safe and to enable them to make good progress in all aspects of their development. The nursery education is well organised, supports children in the six areas of learning and ensures all children are included and develop to their full potential. The childminder receives regular visits from the network co-ordinator to help her monitor and evaluate the nursery education. All the children's records are stored securely so that the information is confidential.

Overall, the care and nursery education meets the needs of the range of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that everyone is aware of the fire procedures and that the children are supervised at all times.

She has procedures in place to ensure that all adults are aware of the fire procedures which are practised regularly in order to increase children's awareness. The childminder and her assistant are vigilant in their supervision of the children, make regular risk assessments, and ensure they know what each child is doing at all times.

These measures contribute to the safety and well-being of the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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

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 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):

- improve the procedures for appointing an assistant and ensuring that those living or working on the premises are suitable to do so

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):

- increase the opportunities for mark making within the daily routine.

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