



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	112691
Inspection date	11 January 2006
Inspector	Loraine Wardlaw

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 has been registered since 1994. The childminder lives with her husband and two children, one of whom is over 16-years. They live in a three bedroom house in the centre of New Milton, Hampshire close to schools and shops. Childminding takes place on the ground floor only and there is a secure garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under 8-years, three of whom may be under 5-years. When working with an assistant she is registered for six children under 8-years, six of whom may be under 5-years. This

does not include overnight care. There are currently six children being cared for on a part-time basis. The childminder is able to take and collect children from pre-schools and schools within the local area.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a clean home, where good attention is paid to leading a healthy lifestyle. Children learn good hygiene practices; such as, washing their hands before they eat, and after using the toilet and using their own personal towel to help prevent cross infection. Personal hygiene is an important part of the children's daily routine, which helps them develop good habits early. For example, a toddler eagerly holds out her hands when the childminder tells the children it's time to wash their hands. Children learn it is important to eat at designated times and to eat healthy food. The childminder is pro-active in working with parents to ensure that children eat a balanced, nutritious meal each day, and encourages children to drink water which contributes to their good health. Young children are openly affectionate towards the childminder who builds a warm, caring and fun relationship with each child. They are gently encouraged to grow and develop at their own individual rate and are given good choices. For example, a 2-year-old independently and confidently takes the wrapper off her cake. Children have a range of regular opportunities to develop good physical skills and co-ordination; such as, climbing the cargo net at a soft play area, energetic physical play at the park or daily walks to school. The childminder balances this with quieter times where children enjoy listening to stories or sleeping at times which fit in with their individual needs. Most of the necessary health documents are in place and good recording in the medication and accident record book, ensures that children remain healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe environment, where hazards have been identified and addressed by the childminder. For example, the front door is kept locked and the back garden is not currently used until the patio slabs are taken up and replaced. Children receive high levels of supervision, particularly on outings, and when out walking in order to keep them from danger. They enjoy a good amount of space, playing in a designated playroom, with suitable toys that are regularly checked for safety. Free and easy access to some toys, which are regularly rotated, means that children can play happily and safely. Equipment and furniture safely meets the needs of the children such as the low-level table and chairs, with a harness for the toddler, so that all the children can enjoy social mealtimes together. Children are suitably protected from harm due to the childminder's sound working knowledge of child protection procedures for safeguarding children's welfare. However, her duty to protect children is not underpinned by a written procedure, or easy accessible contact telephone numbers.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children are very happy in the care of the childminder and enjoy a good variety of play experiences, with lots of sympathetic support given to them. They have fun playing and laughing with the childminder who skilfully interacts with children. Children engage enthusiastically in activities; such as, manipulating play dough, making snails, ducks or tarts to cut up, which effectively develops their physical skills and imaginative ideas. They are able to make their own choices and take the lead in their play; for example, when they are given large boxes to play with, they make it into a house for role-play. The childminder successfully extends their learning; she develops their speech and language skills by asking open ended questions or by role-modelling simple words for the toddler. Children learn about living things as they observe a caterpillar when out walking and develop their mathematical skills as they are encouraged to count objects during their play. A good ,varied, cross section of activities outside the home; such as, music and movement , parent and toddler club or story time at the library contributes positively to young children's enjoyment and achievements whilst in the care of the childminder. All children have good routines for playing, sleeping and mealtimes which in turn helps them to feel settled and secure. The childminder is familiar with the Birth to three matters framework but has not used it as a tool for making activities more purposeful for babies and toddlers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individuality is much respected by the childminder, who treats children with equal concern and meets their needs well. Toys and books within the home reflect diversity and help children appreciate differences in others. Children are given lots of praise and encouragement by the childminder and as a consequence they behave well. They enjoy being helpful around the home; for example, they assemble their chairs at the small table and are well mannered, often saying please and thank you to their peers and to the childminder. Children play very well together and confidently share the play resources with one another often voicing their thoughts and feelings. For example, a 2-year-old says 'I'm going to share it with you in a minute'. The childminder shows a positive attitude towards inclusion and caring for children with special needs. A good, lasting partnership with parents is built which influences children's wellbeing. Parents highly praise the care offered and receive daily, verbal updates of the children's day and routine. However, limited written information is available for parents about the care offered, parental consents are minimal and a complaints log is not in place or available for parents. The childminder relies on her good communication skills to inform parents of her practice.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The committed and experienced childminder organises her time and day centred around the children in her care. Children receive lots of attention from her which makes them feel secure and well-nurtured. Adult to child ratios are adhered to by the childminder and there is a good amount of space for children to play and rest. The childminder updates her knowledge by accessing short courses, and taking ideas from other experienced, qualified childminders to benefit the children in her care. Most of the necessary regulatory documentation is complete and up-to-date. Although the childminder's practice is good with children enjoying quality care and worthwhile, practical, learning experiences, the practice is not underpinned by any written policies or procedures. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was requested to secure the front door so that it could not be opened by children. The childminder now keeps the front door locked and the key is instantly available to her, to ensure the safe evacuation of children in the event of a fire. The home is more secure and children cannot escape easily, except under adult supervision.

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

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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 written information about the care offered for parents, in particular information regarding child protection and ensure a complaints log and the necessary parental consents are in place

- use Birth to three matters framework as a tool for making activities more purposeful for babies and toddlers

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