



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112712
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 January 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Elly Bik-Kuen Wong

<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 1995. She lives with her husband and their three children who are aged from primary school to teenage. They live in a large four-bedroomed detached house in a rural area of Ashurst in the New Forest, Hampshire. The home is within walking distance of local shops and the forest; schools are approximately one to two miles away.

All areas of the house are available for childminding, although the main areas used are downstairs. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have one cat and one dog. The childminder currently minds eight children after



school during the week, half of whom are under eight years. Some children attend during school holidays and inset days.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a welcoming and friendly environment. The childminder works to various policies and procedures to promote good hygiene. She is rigorous in her cleaning routines; areas and surfaces used by children are regularly cleaned or disinfected. Children receive good encouragement from the childminder, and learn about the importance of hand washing for preventing germs and infections. When they arrive back from school, they usually follow the toilet and hand washing routines independently without much prompting. The childminder also ensures sound hygiene practices with the pets, which are usually kept separate from children. She records in detail any special health and dietary requirements regarding children, so as to promote their health and safety. The childminder has an understanding with parents that sick children do not attend, so as to prevent cross infection. However, this policy is informal.

Children are independent in looking after their personal needs, such as accessing drinks and snacks, because the childminder lays them out in an accessible manner. She fills up personalised drink bottles with water or sugar-free juice drinks, which children can help themselves to readily, both on the premises and during outings. Children enjoy a good range of snacks that appeal to them, including bread sticks, cheese straws and biscuits, as well as fresh and dried fruits. The childminder is helpful to parents, and provides meals that parents request for their children. They work together to help children work towards a healthy and balanced diet.

Children enjoy good opportunities for physical games and exercise, because the childminder places high importance on sports and physical fitness. They benefit from outdoor games and exercise in her garden regularly, weather permitting, which promotes their physical development. Examples include skipping, playing on the large trampoline, basket ball, and football. Children are usually taken out every day during school holidays. The childminder ensures that they benefit from fresh air and exercise during local forest walks and play on the beach in the area. Children also develop their physical balance and co-ordination through visits to a local soft play centre and a play park.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure manner. The childminder supervises them within her sight or hearing, and ensures their safety on the premises and during outings. Children enjoy safe movement and play in the spacious lounge and dining area, as well as in the wide hallway. Play resources and books are generally well



organised and easily accessible for children to self-select in a safe manner. Children can play safely also because risks have been assessed and reduced for them. The large trampoline in the garden has been fitted with an all-encompassing safety netting. Hazardous substances are stored in a locked kitchen cupboard, while various smoke alarms are installed on both floors for fire safety. Children develop an awareness of fire hazards, and practise evacuation according to the childminder's emergency fire plan. They are made aware of personal safety issues, for example, during outings, and on such topics as road safety and stranger danger. This impacts on children's ability to look out for themselves.

The childminder follows rigorous procedures of recording accidents and injuries to monitor children's safety. She pays attention to details, and ensures that her childminding insurance has additional cover for the trampoline's use, as it is classified as a hazardous sport. She has trained in first aid, and is able to protect children who may be affected by accidents and emergencies. However, her first aid qualification is not current. The childminder shows a sound understanding of child protection procedures, and is confident about obtaining advice and referring concerns in order to safeguard children's welfare.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children play happily and enthusiastically at the friendly setting. Many go straight to play soon after they arrive back from school. They are familiar with the layout and set-up, and can self-select the mostly accessible toys for satisfying free play. Children can choose from a good range of stimulating resources and activities, such as construction and model making, home corner with dolls and prams, small worlds, and art and craft. The childminder talks to them and offers support for activities when needed, especially with the younger children. They share news about what happens at school and within their family. She praises and encourages children, and helps them to feel good about themselves.

Children look forward to the daily opportunities of being at the childminder's, and to playing and socialising with all their friends there. They feel relaxed and at ease at the homely environment, and can decide on the kind and pace of their own play. Children are well stimulated during the school holidays, as the childminder usually plans a packed and interesting programme of play and learning activities. They go to play parks, or explore the local forest or beach, where they collect natural objects for their interests. For example, children collect sea shells and use them to decorate the cardboard picture frames which they make for framing their drawing of the beach outing. Children routinely enjoy paper craft, drawing, colouring, and cutting and sticking activities, though these are often adult-directed rather than child-led activities.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.



Children feel settled and secure because the childminder treats children kindly, just like they are her own. Children respond well to the her praise and encouragement. They thrive on her clear house rules and boundaries for behaviour. Children are courteous and helpful towards one another. The childminder encourages children to eat together at the table, so they socialise and banter easily with their friends. School children enjoy the vibrant social atmosphere at the setting, and look forward to seeing their friends there after school each day. They play well individually, as well as with their peers in small or large groups. The childminder values all children, and treats them with equal concern. Boy and girls are encouraged to play with toys freely without any labelling of gender roles. The childminder responds well to children's curiosity, and borrows relevant library books for children to find out about faraway countries, for example, in Africa. This helps them gain a well informed perspective and appreciation of diverse cultures.

Children receive good care and support because the childminder is familiar with their needs and interests. She communicates well with their parents, for example, during handover time and by phone at any time. She records children's special health needs and dietary requirements so as to promote their welfare and safety. She obtains various parental written agreements, for example, about medicines, outings, and children's use of the large trampoline. Children's care and play is enhanced by the good rapport and liaison between the childminder and parents.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's welfare, needs, and interests are promoted due to the childminder's appropriate use of time, space, and resources. Children respond well to the structured routines after school, and enjoy their snacks, play and rest. The childminder is very experienced with a wide age range of children. She is suitably trained for childminding, though she has not attended further courses to update her initial training. Also, her first aid qualification is not current.

All required paper work is in place to promote children's health and safety. The childminder is rigorous with the recording and reporting of accidents to parents in order to safeguard children. Children's records are well organised, easily accessible, and stored securely. However, the National Standards and related guidance for childminding are not readily available for quick reference. Some paper work lacks details, for example, regarding parental agreements for seeking emergency medical advice and treatment. The childminder has a few simple policies to inform parents, for example, about complaints and child protection, though her sickness policy is informal. 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 various recommendations regarding safety, such as: the security of a garden gate; tripping hazards due to excess toys on the floor; and the safety of stairs and banisters. The childminder has since improved the safety



and security of the premises. She has installed a lock on the side gate in the garden, and ensures that play resources are well organised in low storage cupboards and do not pose tripping hazards. Currently all minded children are of school-age, and do not use the upstairs generally, so the stairs and banister no longer impact on their safety.

Other recommendations were about: providing accurate records of attendance for children; a correct procedure for child protection; and the recording of accidents and medicines administered, as well as parents' acknowledgement. The childminder has since kept clear records of children's attendance including their times of arrival and departure. She has adopted a procedure for child protection, based on the model provided by the Southampton Childminders' Association. The childminder now keeps appropriate records of medicines as well as parents' acknowledgement. She also has a rigorous procedure for recording accidents, and reports clearly to parents with a written slip in case of head injuries.

### **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):

- ensure that a current first aid certificate is maintained
- enhance documentation to promote close working with parents, such as the parental consent for seeking emergency medical advice and treatment; and formalise the sickness policy.

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:



