



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	134374
Inspection date	30 January 2006
Inspector	Rosemary Davies

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 registered in 1993. She lives with her husband and two teen-aged children in a link-detached, three bedroomed house in Witney, Oxfordshire. Shops, a park, library, museum and other amenities, lie within walking distance. The childminder can take children to, and collect them from, local schools. The family keeps one dog as a pet.

Minded children use the downstairs rooms of the house and a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. Her registration permits her to care for 6 children under the age of 8

years, at any one time. Currently, she minds 5 children, 2 of whom are aged 5 years, whilst the others are over the age of 8 years. All attend on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children use an extremely clean, homely environment. The childminder takes meticulous care to maintain a hygienic home and does all she can to prevent the risk of cross-infection. She makes parents aware of when children may not attend owing to infectious illnesses and she understands her duties in regard to notifiable diseases. Excellent hygiene and veterinary precautions keep the family's new puppy clean; minded children know they may pet it at particular times.

Children's understanding of a healthy life-style develops particularly well because the childminder takes pains to encourage this. Children get daily fresh air and exercise, walking back from school briskly on cold days. They visit a play-park most days, developing physical skills through using the challenging apparatus. Children know that exercise is good for them. The childminder helps them understand about taking healthy choices, as they grow older. They declare that smoking, "makes your lungs go black". They learn the basics of healthy living too, helping themselves to tissues when needed and disposing of them quickly and hygienically. They eat fresh fruit daily, again with a real understanding that this is a healthy option.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety receives high priority from this childminder. She assesses possible risks extremely well and does her utmost to minimise them, remaining vigilant for further hazards at all times. In the home, children understand that they do not enter the kitchen without permission or go upstairs. They cannot access potentially dangerous substances as these remain out of reach. Hot drinks are positioned so that children cannot touch them. The house and garden are secure. Children may pet the dog under supervision, the childminder being fully aware that it still retains sharp, 'puppy teeth'.

Children play in an exceedingly well organised and child-friendly home. The childminder seeks their views on what they wish to play with, and accommodates these. Children make their own decisions therefore, about what to do and for how long. They play with well-maintained, high quality equipment.

Children make great strides in learning how to keep themselves safe when walking to and from school. They fully understand what is expected of them, such as younger children holding hands and walking on the inside. They know they halt at the kerbside, 'look and listen' and do not cross until told they may. The childminder remains vigilant for their safety within the school playground, immediately outside the school with busy 'school run' traffic and throughout the walk back.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children delight in entering this childminder's home. They discuss with her, before they go to school, what they wish to do on their return. This means they come in full of anticipation, eager to start playing with their chosen activities. The childminder allows flexibility however, so that young children who wished to play with large toy vehicles may change their minds and imitate their older friends. In this way, children make their own decisions about what to do and for how long, so that all thoroughly enjoy their activities.

Children achieve extremely well because they gain pleasure from what they do and as a result of the childminder's excellent interaction with them. She devotes her time to the children, joining in their conversations but being sensitive in her work with them. When children ask for support, she supplies it. One child, for example, needed help with writing words in a Valentine's Day card. He decided what he wished to write and had help with 'sounding out' the required letters. Children both consolidate their learning and relax after the busy school day, with their care needs met extremely well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy this childminder's company. Relationships throughout the household are relaxed, warm and friendly, reflecting the childminder's caring nature. Children's behaviour is excellent. The childminder maintains clear boundaries which children know and understand. They take off shoes when entering the home and leave with their bags, in the hallway. They agree decisions, such as whether to watch television or engage in activities. When they watch television, they know they take turns to decide what to watch, if they cannot all agreed on one programme.

Children learn about the local area, sometimes going to visit a Farm Museum. They develop their knowledge of the wider world and its various traditions, through discussions following on from school activities, such as the Chinese New Year and St Valentine's Day. They use a wide range of resources which reflect diversity and sometimes experience home-cooked foods from other cultures. The childminder gives all children equal attention. She guides them in their understanding of equality, helping them understand that boys and girls are equal and that boys may wear pink as well as girls. The close working relationship she has developed with parents, underpins the type of care given, so that children's individual needs are catered for.

The childminder has established a strong partnership with parents that is both professional and friendly. Parents speak highly and appreciatively of the care given to their children. Close liaison results in the exchange of useful information so that the childminder cares for children in accordance with parents' wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

This experienced childminder uses her skills and knowledge well to promote the welfare of children in her care. She organises her home, time and paperwork efficiently to look after the children appropriately. Most required documentation is kept securely, confidentially and ready for inspection. She is unfamiliar with recent legislation regarding complaints made by parents, however, and of her new duties in this area. Her complaints procedures have not been updated to reflect this. She is unaware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Nevertheless, she is able to provide appropriately for all children owing to her understanding of child development.

The childminder understands fully her responsibilities to protect children from unchecked adults. They remain under close supervision when being taken to, or collected from, school. She ensures that people in her household undergo appropriate checks. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the previous inspection, the childminder was required to address two aspects of her practice: the provision of resources to reflect diversity and obtaining written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. The childminder has addressed both these issues effectively with the result that minded children may now gain a better understanding to the world around them and their welfare is more likely to be safeguarded in the event of an emergency.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are 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?
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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):

- update the complaints procedure to take account of recent legislation and have regard to the 'Birth to three matters' framework

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