



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	116496
Inspection date	17 January 2006
Inspector	Kerryn Matthews

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 satisfactory. 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 1997. She lives with her husband and one of her adult children in Wooburn Green, in Buckinghamshire County Council. The whole of the ground floor of the house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five and one child over five after school and in school holidays.

The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends local parent and toddler groups and is a member of a local childminding network. She is also a Bucks Buddy Support Childminder, offering support to newly registered childminders. The family has no pets.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and hygienic home. Their health is promoted as the childminder maintains appropriate levels of hygiene, for example, by encouraging children to wash their hands after using the toilet and ensuring that her nappy changing mat is cleaned after each use.

Children enjoy a good range of freshly prepared healthy snacks and meals, for example, chicken breast, potatoes and vegetables; which the childminder provides to meet their individual dietary requirements. They sit and eat with the childminder at the dining table, enjoying sociable mealtimes which extend their language skills and knowledge of healthy eating.

Sound policies are in place for accidents, medication and illness which ensures that children are well cared for. Parents have signed the accident and medication records to confirm that they have been informed of their child's accident and of when medication has been administered.

Children are developing well physically as they have regular opportunities to run, climb and slide on large play equipment at the local park and on their weekly visits to soft play areas. They also enjoy outdoor play at toddler groups where a wider range of physical activities is available. Children are able to access the childminder's rear garden and make dens in the mature shrubs, extending their outdoor experiences and imaginative play further.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally safe and secure as the childminder has identified most risks in her home and taken appropriate steps to minimise these, for example, electrical sockets are covered and the stairs made inaccessible with the use of a safety gate. However children could leave the rear garden unsupervised as the gates can be easily opened. The childminder has a clear written fire evacuation plan displayed, showing various exit routes in the case of an emergency. However, this has not been practised with the children.

The childminder provides an adequate range of toys, resources and equipment to meet the needs of the children, for example, a high chair and travel cot. They are able to make free choices from toys made available to them in the lounge and dining room. Children are also able to request additional toys from the childminder's large

toy storage box. The childminder enhances the toys and resources available by borrowing additional toys from her local childminding network group such as a pirate ship and doughnut maker, therefore keeping the children's interest and furthering their enjoyment.

Children's welfare is safeguarded through the childminder's good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. She has recently attended further training in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are involved in an interesting range of activities and play experiences that are age appropriate and extend their development in all areas of learning. They are settled and happy, being able to choose toys and resources for themselves enhancing their independence. The children's individual needs are taken into account on a day-to-day basis when activities are planned to ensure that all activities carried out are fun and have a worthwhile value regarding the children's development. The childminder's weekly routine includes visits to the library and soft play areas, providing lots of variety and interest for them. School holiday activities are planned and written in advance, ensuring that the children are well catered for and that the activity will be purposeful to them all.

Children involve the childminder in their play and in turn receive lots of warm attention which enables them to successfully extend their learning and experiences. The childminder shows an active interest in the children and this has helped them to be clearly understood and develop a strong bond with her. Children's positive relationships with the childminder enable them to be confident in their interactions with others, for example, a minded child interacted with the inspector, talking eagerly about what they liked to play with and what they were having for lunch.

Children regularly attend structured toddler groups which enable them to interact with peers, extend their social skills and gain confidence in a larger group. The childminder feels that art and craft is her area of weakness, therefore she regularly attends a group which focuses on art and craft, enabling the children to be involved in these activities.

The childminder has attended training on the Birth to three matters framework. Although this has not been formally implemented into her practice, the childminder is confident that she is covering all areas of learning for children under three years.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy care that promotes their well-being. The childminder understands the importance of helping children develop a strong identity. She knows them well. The children are able to access toys and resources that promote positive images and

reflect diversity, for example, multi-cultural dolls and books. Children are occasionally learning about differing cultures and beliefs through appropriate activities and discussions when the subject arises. However, this is not currently part of the childminder's day-to-day practice. The childminder has experience of caring for children with special needs and works closely with the parents to ensure that these children are fully included in the setting. All children in her care are taught to be respectful and to accept others for who they are rather than what they can or cannot do.

Children respond appropriately to the praise and encouragement that they receive from the childminder. They are well behaved and are learning about right and wrong, also taking responsibility for their actions.

The childminder has friendly but professional relationships with parents. Information regarding the children's care and achievements are discussed with parents daily to ensure that the children's individual needs and parental wishes are being met at all times. This information is recorded more fully for parents each day in home link books. Parents receive written policies and procedures from the childminder on commencement of their placement which include her sick child and child protection policies. This ensures that parents are fully informed of the service that the childminder provides.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are comfortable and feel secure in the childminder's home. Their safety is maintained as the childminder is clear of the need for persons aged over 16 years, living or staying at her home, to be reference checked by the Criminal Records Bureau.

The childminder takes advantage of training opportunities to update and refresh her knowledge, these are generally implemented into her practice to the benefit of the children. She is a member of the local childminding network, receiving regular support and additional training from the network co-ordinator, employed by the local authority. The childminder has also been approved as a buddy support childminder offering support and advice to newly registered childminders.

Policies and procedures are shared with parents and put into practice to ensure that the children are well cared for. This also supports the building of positive relationships with parents. However, new regulations regarding complaints and the recording of all complaints has not been implemented. The childminder remains within her registered numbers and has an appropriate regard for the well being of all children in her care.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has been fully recording the administrations of medication and the time of accidents. She has also enhanced her nappy changing procedure to ensure that the changing mat is cleaned after each nappy change. The childminder has retained records as required by the Children Act regulations for a period of two years. These improvements enhance the care and welfare of the children, also ensuring that their health needs are promoted.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- incorporate the children's learning of differing cultures and beliefs into day to day practice
- ensure that the new regulations regarding the keeping of a complaints log are met
- ensure that the fire evacuation procedure is regularly practised and the practises recorded
- ensure that children are not able to leave the rear garden unattended

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