



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260339
Inspection date	24 January 2006
Inspector	Diane Mary O'Neill

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 1999. She lives with her husband and their two children aged five years of age, in the village of Arlesey Bedfordshire. The whole of the ground floor and two of the first floor bedrooms are used for the purpose of childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five on various days. The childminder is within driving distance of schools, pre-schools and play areas. The family has two pet cats.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and well maintained home. Their health is suitably promoted due to the childminder's secure knowledge and understanding of good hygiene practices and procedures, such as encouraging regular hand washing before and after meals and after using the toilet. When on outings the childminder ensures that the children can still maintain good hygiene practice and procedures, for example using disposable wipes for their hands.

Children's health and well-being is suitably maintained by the childminder as she ensures meals are eaten at set times within the daily routine. The childminder takes account of parents' wishes and provided food that the children like as well as maintaining a healthy balance. She ensures the children's needs are met by regular consultation with the parents.

The childminder has suitable knowledge of first aid to support any practices she may undertake in the care and welfare of the children. However her first aid training has lapsed and the childminder is endeavouring to update this. All relevant documentation was in place, although some written consent from parents was not as clear as it could have been.

The children have good opportunities to participate in a range of physical activities, both inside and outside that contribute to the promotion of their health and well-being. Children are provided with daily opportunities for outdoor activities, such as playing in the garden, walks in the local parks and partaking in picnics. Trips to the pre-school and nursery enable them to mix with other children and have experiences of different types of physical activities that encourage them to develop and explore their physical skills and gain control of their bodies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and safe environment. The childminder has identified and minimised the risk to children by the regularly checking equipment, toys and premises. Emergency evacuation procedures have been practiced with the children so they are beginning learning the importance of safety. Children have good access to all areas within the premises enabling them to have a variety of play experiences. For example free play, playing with play dough and taking part in outdoor activities. All of the areas used by the children are effectively monitored by the childminder to ensure the children have fun and are cared for in a safe environment.

Children have free access to equipment that is got out by the childminder, some is

stored in plastic draw units and basket effect units. This enables children to help themselves to the resources and to develop their independence and freedom of choice.

The childminder has suitable awareness of her responsibility to protect children in her care, however she did not have some up-to-date guidance such as the Department of health booklet "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused"- summary. This may effect the overall protection of children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are very settled and happy in the childminder's home. There is a varied routine that ensures they are stimulated and challenged. The play equipment and play opportunities enable them to develop in all areas of their learning. The childminder talks a lot with the children about what they are playing with. This is helping to develop their speech and communication skills. For example, when the children were playing with the phone they pretended to chat to another person. Talked about the pictures on the puzzles as well as laughing at the hand puppets.

Children have opportunities to make choices as they easily access the toys within the childminder's home, for example, helping themselves from the toy box. The toys help to support children's learning and development. They have good opportunities to extend their play through trips within the local area such as, going to the park, the local pre-school, visits to friends houses. These give the children chances to mix and socialise with others as well as experiencing different play opportunities.

Where possible the childminder tries to plan her day. This helps her organise suitable activities for the children that challenge and develop their learning through stimulating play experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals because the childminder makes sure that she is aware of their individual needs and is able to meet these. For example, there is a daily routine which allows time for them to play, rest and interact. The children's behaviour is acceptable and they are learning to play together, sharing and taking turns. Children have consistent boundaries so they know what is expected of them. The childminder has a sound understanding of behaviour management and uses age-appropriate strategies.

Children are beginning to have an awareness of society and the world around them, through trips out in the local community and play equipment the childminder has, such as books, dressing up clothes. This is an area the childminder wishes to expand and further develop.

Children's care is enhanced through the childminder's positive working partnership

with parents. This impacts on the confidence and security of each child. Each parent has sufficient time to discuss their child's progress on a daily basis, which helps to keep them informed about their child's day. The childminder has limited understanding of recording any complaints raised by a parent, this is an area for further development in line with updated procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are settled and happy in the childminder's care. They initiate their own play and explore readily accessible toys and resources, developing their confidence and self esteem as they become more independent. The childminder organises a majority of her work effectively, this contributes positively in helping children to feel comfortable and relaxed in her home. Children's welfare is safeguarded and their independence and confidence is well promoted enabling them to develop in all areas of their learning. There is general information that is openly shared with parents, which fully informs them about the care of their children.

Some further improvement on monitoring and evaluation of policies, ensuring clear information is within any written consent from parents, as well as updating child protection awareness to enable children to be fully protected.

The childminder is aware of 'Birth to three matters' frame work, and will possibly use this to further develop her understanding and develop the care needed to challenge and promote children's learning and well-being. Overall, the needs of all children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection recommendations were made for the childminder to increase the range of written policies and create a basic prospectus for parents. The childminder has added to her written policies but lacks a system of monitoring them to ensure they are still suitable for how she operates.

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 recorded 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):

- ensure the department of health booklet "what to do if you are worried a child is being abused - summary" is in place
- ensure first aid certificate is kept up to date
- further develop the system for monitoring and evaluating policies that are in place
- ensure a robust system for the recording and sharing of complaints with parents is available.

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