



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131328
Inspection date	25 August 2006
Inspector	Sylvia Dindar
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 childminding since 1990. She is registered to provide care for six children under eight, three of whom may be aged under five, and one may be aged under one. At present she cares for four children on a full time and part-time basis and supports children with special needs.

She lives with her husband and two teenage children and a lodger. They live in a three bedroom house in the suburb of Millbrook, in the city of Southampton. There are shops and a park within walking distance. Most areas of the property are used for childminding, including the enclosed back garden. The family have pets.

Claire has a certificate in first aid and a City and Guilds NVQ III in Childcare and Education. She is a member of the National Childminding Association Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's good health is very well promoted as children learn excellent routines in self care that are highly effective. Their independence is encouraged as toilet facilities are very attractive and children are able to reach the toilet and sink easily. Children have access to liquid soap and individual towels and flannels and are encouraged to wash their hands after toileting and before meals and snacks. They understand this is to get rid of the germs. Dental hygiene is strongly encouraged. At the childminder drop-in children are visited by the 'Tooth Lady' who talks to them about how to care for their teeth. Children are provided with toothbrushes and toothpaste and are encouraged to clean their teeth after meals. The childminder shares books with children about dental hygiene. This further re-enforces the exemplary practice.

Children are offered a excellent variety of healthy snacks including fresh and dried fruits, vegetables, organic bars and cheese and biscuits. Main meals are home cooked, well thought out balanced and nutritious. The childminder looks for new ideas and menus so that children enjoy their food and get a varied and exciting menu. Meals and snack times are relaxed and are social occasion where the childminder and children sit and chat and eat together. Children take part in food preparation and purposeful cooking activities, which prompts conversation about what foods are good for you and why. They begin to understand why they need to eat a healthy diet. Children are provided with regular drinks, such as water milk and sugar free fruit juice. The childminder ensures that these are available at all times and in particular when children have exerted themselves. Individual dietary needs are met as these are discussed with parents and recorded. The childminder adheres to the parents wishes. She is able to provide parents with excellent resources and ideas, further re-enforcing the healthy eating message.

Children are protected from infection as the childminder has well thought out easy to read policies in place. These explain to parents that she does not accept sick children and why. Parents are asked to read the sick child policy and are provided with a list of childhood infectious diseases. This enables them be alerted and identify contagious diseases early, lessening the risk of cross infection. Sound systems are in place when children are sick or injured. Parental consent for emergency medical care is requested, allowing the childminder to take immediate action when needed. This ensures that children get the best care when they are sick or injured. The childminder is able to administer basic first aid as she has up to date knowledge and training. Records for the safe administration of medication are in place and recorded efficiently. Accident records are accurately recorded and shared with parents, so that they are well informed, providing seamless care for children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment where their safety is paramount. All hazards with in the home have been identified and safety precautions are in place. For example, the childminder has a stair gate in place at the bottom of the stairs to limit children's access. Socket covers are in place in all exposed sockets. These precautions limit the risk of children having accidents.

Children are supervised well and are within sight and hearing at all times and the building is secure. Older children learn the rules of the house such as, not to open the front door. Children learn about fire safety through books and discussion with their childminder. An emergency procedure for evacuation is planned but has not been proved to be wholly effective as it is not regularly practised with children.

When travelling in the car children are provided with safety seats which meet children's individual needs and comply with British Safety Standards. If the childminder has any doubt about children's safety, for example, recently the childminder was concerned about eight year olds travelling with lap belts. She referred her question to the department of transport to get a professional view and found that she was acting within the guidelines. Outings are risk assessed and the childminder is aware of her limitations and identifies that some activities are more risky than others. For example the childminder takes one child swimming to ensure they can be kept safe. Children are supplied with toys that are of good quality and age and stage appropriate. Older children are taught to take care of equipment and be mindful of younger children's safety in regard to having access to toys that are unsuitable.

Children are protected as the childminder has a good knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse. Policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents so that they understand the childminder's responsibility to safeguard all children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed and thrive on the attention they get from their childminder. They are kept busy and well stimulated and have a sense of belonging as the childminder sometimes gives them responsibilities, such as fetching and opening the post. Children are provided with well thought out meaningful play opportunities. Through observation the childminder begins to understand what is important to the child and uses this information to build on what children already know. Allowing for children's individual developmental needs to be met. For example, the childminder captures children's imagination as she turns the sand tray into a treasure hunt for 'Pirate Jacks' hidden treasure. She provides extra equipment so that the play can be extended, for example a range of sieves, tools and pouring equipment. Children are given opportunities to express their fears as the childminder has a range of books on life events, such as 'going to the doctor' and 'preparing for pre-school'. Children are given an excellent range of props, such as glasses and mirrors which help children discuss the wearing of glasses and their uses; this gives children a positive view and is helpful for those children which need to wear them to aid their sight.

Play is relaxed and sometimes incidental, however the childminder is knowledgeable about child development and realises the importance for children to be able to create play situation for themselves. When the logs are delivered she follows their lead and allows them to build a home for the wood lice, allowing them to take an interest in and care for the natural world. Children's language is developed as the childminder listens carefully to what children say. She encourages them to speak clearly so that she can understand what they are saying, ensuring that they are able to do this in their own time.

Children enjoy regular exercise to develop their balance and muscle control. In the garden they have opportunities to play on bikes and a trampette. Indoors they practise throwing and catching balls. They enjoy regular trips to the local park and swimming pools where they are beginning to learn to swim. They have regular outings to the local childminder drop in. Here they meet with other children and enjoy joint play experiences, learning to socialise and make new friends.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are exceptionally well cared for in an environment where all children are valued and included, their individuality is celebrated. Play is extremely well thought out and inclusive so all children are able to participate and take part. Children's differing backgrounds are respected and children are encouraged to talk about their families. Children are introduced to the wider community through an excellent range of play provision allowing them to become familiar and talk about their beliefs.

Children benefit from the childminders' professionalism and sound in depth knowledge of child development. As she is able to identify when a child needs extra support and children with special needs are extremely well supported. All children are observed in their play and individual records are kept and shared with parents on a daily basis. They are given a six monthly written reports about their child's development, meeting together to celebrate the achievements, however small. When children are identified as needing extra support the childminder, works extremely closely with parents and other professionals, allowing them to share their joint knowledge, so that each child has the opportunities to meet their full potential.

Children behave well because the childminder communicates well with children and is a good role model. She gives them good eye contact and talks to them in a way that they will understand. The childminder gives children firm boundaries and gently reminds them what is expected of them if they forget. Children are learning to take care of the toys, to be sensitive about others and learn to share. When children do well the childminder praises them and children are given stickers, making children feel important and promoting their self esteem. Behavioural issues are discussed with parents and they work closely together to ensure that children have a consistent approach between home and childminder.

Children benefit as the childminder has well thought out policies and procedures in place which underpin her excellent practice. These are discussed and shared with parents so that they know what is expected of them and what she can expect of them. This builds a firm business relationship, an open door policy allows parents to discuss any issues that may affect their child and when parents need help and support they are able to access an in depth resource bank on such as issues as children's diets and nutrition, potty training and behavioural issues. This knowledge base is offered in a way that supports and empowers parents in the care of their children. Children's records are kept up to date and observation and assessments are shared with parents fully involving them in their child's care and education.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are very well cared for in a household where all adults are vetted. Children benefit from the childminder's excellent knowledge of child development. She provides them with a range of exceptionally well thought out, thought provoking play activities which children find exciting and fun. This makes them keen to learn; provides excellent stimulation; and meets their individual developmental needs. Her excellent organisational skills mean that children access the resources they need to develop to their full potential.

All documentation required by regulation is in place and available for inspection. They are well managed, recorded effectively, shared with parents and kept in a confidential manner.

The childminder is committed to ever improving practice. She is constantly evaluating the service she provides ensuring that the child's needs are her main focus. Through this practice she is able to identify her training needs and regularly attends training. She expands her knowledge base and keeps up to date with current best practice by regularly meeting with other childminders and child care professionals, allowing them to share each others knowledge and expertise. Therefore, the childminder meets the needs of the range children for whom she provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At last inspection the childminder was required to ensure that sufficient toys and resources are available to promote positive images of disability. There is now a broad range of toys and resources available, such as, books, poster and small world people. Children have opportunities to learn signing, when singing nursery rhymes, so that all children become familiar with new ways of communicating to ensure an inclusive setting for all.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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):

- review the fire evacuation procedures and ensure that children are familiar with the practice.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk