



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131510
Inspection date	04 May 2006
Inspector	Elly Bik-Kuen Wong
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 was registered in 1997. She lives with her husband and school-age child. They live in a house in the Bassett Green area of Southampton. All areas of the property are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The family have birds in an outside aviary. At present, the childminder cares for four children during the week, including three under-eight's. She attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis. She is a member of the Southampton Childminders Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a clean and comfortable environment, because the childminder works to good policy to promote children's health and hygiene. She cleans and disinfects surfaces used by children; and wears disposable gloves when changing nappies to prevent the spread of infection. Children have opportunities to learn about good personal hygiene. For example, the pre-school children develop their emerging independence in toileting and hand washing, by using the bathroom upstairs. Young children are reminded to cover their mouths during coughing to prevent the spread of germs. Children are given individual rather than shared flannels to prevent cross infection. The upstairs toilet is not suitable for young toddlers to use independently, and their hands are usually wiped clean by the childminder before food to ensure good hygiene. However, this also impacts on insufficient opportunities for the younger children to practise hand washing during the daily routine.

Children can access drinks easily throughout the day to prevent dehydration; and these include diluted squash, milk and water. Children are offered daily nutritious snacks which usually include fresh fruits and salads. Children usually bring their own packed lunches, though the childminder is flexible with providing meals or re-heating parent's family foods for children. The childminder is vigilant about any dietary allergies and requirements to ensure children's well-being.

Children develop their fitness and health through daily fresh air and walking exercise during regular journeys to and from nurseries or schools. They also have regular opportunities for garden play and exploration in the nearby parks and fields, weather permitting. Children enjoy ball games, ride-on toys, and big equipment for sliding and climbing. All these activities are conducive to children developing good levels of physical fitness, balance and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children have easy and safe access to play resources which are set up at low levels in both the house and garden. Risks in the house have been reduced with safety devices like socket covers, stair gates, glass safety film, smoke alarms, and cupboard locks in the kitchen. Children enjoy safe floor play in the lounge; and receive appropriate supervision during eating or creative play in the kitchen. However, the seating furniture at the table may not always be age appropriate or safe for the younger children. The childminder shows vigilance by securing the gate of the street-facing garden; and by accompanying children in the garden with its different levels. She supervises children playing on the small plastic slide, though there are still potential hazards because of the hard patio underneath.

Children have opportunities to develop safety awareness during the daily routine. They learn about the hazards of the road, and know to stop and look carefully before crossing. They also gain an awareness about fire safety when they practise emergency fire evacuation, which is also recorded for monitoring. The childminder is qualified in first aid, and able to protect children who may be involved in accidents and emergencies. She keeps records of accidents and incidents

to monitor children's safety. The childminder demonstrates a working knowledge of child protection procedures, including ways of obtaining advice and referring relevant concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children feel secure and confident in the friendly and homely environment. Young children enjoy a balance of interesting play on the premises; and regular outings to a local toddler group, the library, and parks for physical play or for feeding the ducks. These extend opportunities for children's play and learning, as well as social skills when they mix with other children and adults.

Young children relate well to the childminder; and are happy and relaxed. She talks to and interacts well with children to help them become competent learners during free or planned play. Children can make their own choices with the accessible books and toys, such as construction; home corner including dolls and dressing-ups; small worlds; and lots of ride-on toys. Young toddlers engage in adult-supported creative play, using a range of tools and materials for drawing, cutting, sticking, and painting. When a toddler asks to be read to in the outdoor play tent, the childminder shares books with him, so he learns to use books for pleasure. Children gain an awareness about the environment and nature, for example, during trips to the local railway bridge to watch the trains come and go; or when they talk about the spring flowers and slugs seen near their paths.

The childminder builds on a toddler's interest in diggers, by hiring out similar ride-on toys from the library. He develops his ideas and communication skills when prompted to recount his recent experience of a real digger sighted down the road. The toddler is encouraged also to develop his imagination and social skills by role playing his favourite characters, such as Bob the builder; and by 'phoning' his favourite parent all the time. The childminder asks open ended questions such as 'what's this?' to help the toddler recognise the names of everyday objects while sticking pictures with glue. All these are conducive to young children developing new vocabulary and skills important for speech and communication. The childminder is currently updating her knowledge of how to play and share with children by undertaking training at her local early years centre. She expresses the wish to revisit her own Birth to three matters training pack, to further improve her planning and organisation of purposeful activities for babies and toddlers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young children settle well into the structured routines, which are discussed with parents to meet individual preference. Children's needs are met well because of good communication and long-standing relationships with parents. They work in partnership to meet children's dietary and health requirements. The childminder supports parents in helping their children to reach the various development milestones, including potty training. She feedbacks about children's progress at handover time; and shares records of accidents, medicines, and any behaviour issues to promote children's welfare.

Children are happy and involved in their play. They respond well to the childminder's constant praise and encouragement; and increase in their self-esteem. Children learn about her clear boundaries for good manners and social behaviour; and usually play well together. The childminder handles a range of behaviour with positive strategies suited to children's maturity, such as re-direction, explanation, and time out. Behaviour issues are discussed with parents and recorded when appropriate, so that common strategies can be worked on to bring about improvement. The childminder is kind to children; she values each child and treats everyone with equal concern. Children and families from different social and cultural backgrounds are all welcomed and included. There is also a positive attitude towards including those with a range of abilities and needs. Children follow her good role model, and learn about respect for others. There are some varied and high quality resources such as wooden jigsaw puzzles, dolls, dressing-up clothes, and books, to promote positive images of gender, culture, and disability.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children and parents experience a friendly and organised service due to the childminder's good use of time, space, and resources generally. Children's daily routines are well planned to meet their individual needs, though the younger children do not have consistent opportunities to learn about hand washing. Some equipment, such as the outdoor slide and young children's seating furniture, requires reviewing to improve safety. The childminder is very experienced with children of a wide age range. She is suitably trained in first aid and childminding; and is currently undergoing further training to improve her organisation of children's play. The childminder has kept herself up-to-date with the latest revisions to the National Standards, and their Guidance. All required documentation is in place, including children's records which are kept to ensure their health and safety. The paper work is easily accessible and stored securely, thus preserving confidentiality. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to improve her paper work: by providing a complaints procedure; recording significant incidents; and by obtaining parental written agreement for seeking emergency medical advice and treatment. There is now an up-to-date complaints procedure that has taken into consideration the latest revisions to the National Standards and Guidance. She has also started recording significant incidents such as regarding behaviour. There are now written agreements from all parents regarding the seeking of emergency medical advice and treatment.

Complaints since the last inspection

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

The childminder 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):

- review and improve the safety of the outdoor slide and seating furniture for young children
- improve opportunities for the younger children to practise hand washing during the daily routine.

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