

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	140806
Inspection date	04 July 2007
Inspector	Sonjia Nicholson

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 registered since July 1997. She lives with her husband and two children aged eight and 13 years in house the rural village of Oakley in Buckinghamshire, close to the border of Oxfordshire. Children have use of the playroom, cloakroom and kitchen/diner on the ground floor with facilities for a child to sleep in a travel cot available on the first floor. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years; of whom, three may be under five years and of these one may be under one year at any one time. There are currently 10 children on roll who attend at various times throughout the week. The childminder does not provide overnight care. The family have no pets.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy playing outside in the garden where they run about freely and play hide and seek. There is a variety of outdoor equipment designed to encourage children's physical skills, such as, footballs, a slide and ride-on toys. The childminder takes children to a range of play parks where they access large equipment and to soft play centres where they experience further physical play to support their good health.

Children are learning the importance of good personal hygiene as they wash their hands before meals/snacks and after going to the toilet; signs on display in the cloakroom remind them to do this. The childminder provides a clean towel for the children to share each day but this does not fully protect them from the spread of infection. Children further develop their personal hygiene habits as they use tissues to wipe their own noses. Children play in premises that are warm, clean and maintained to a very high standard. The childminder has a regular cleaning routine, for example, she wipes kitchen surfaces, cleans the toilet and washes the kitchen floor before children arrive. She uses a clean dishcloth and tea towel each day and follows a very good nappy changing routine, wearing gloves, to further prevent cross-infection.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and is confident to deal with minor injuries to children; she has parents' written consent to give first aid and to seek emergency treatment in the event of a more serious accident which means children receive prompt and appropriate attention. The childminder records accidents and details of medication she administers to children in a duplicate book which she shares with parents to keep them fully informed about the care received. Children stay safe in the sun as childminder ensures they wear hats when playing outside; she moves the sandpit and other play equipment out of the sun and encourages children to bring their own hats and sun cream.

The childminder is very flexible and will provide meals at parents request; she tries to offer what they like and children develop healthy eating habits through nutritious meals, such as, lasagne, fish and shepherds pie. The childminder tries to use organic produce and follow the Food Standards Agency "five a day" campaign so they have plenty of fruit and vegetables. A poster and magnets on display in the kitchen encourages this further. Food provided by parents is stored appropriately in the fridge and re-heated safely, for example, a child enjoys pasta and broccoli at lunchtime. The childminder has registered as a food business with the local Environmental Health Department and has completed a recognised on-line Food Hygiene course to extend her knowledge. She promotes good dental hygiene by giving children a piece of cheese after their meal and having tooth brushing sessions to help them develop good habits. Children have frequent drinks of water, milk or fruit juice throughout the day, particularly when they arrive home from pre-school and school, so they are not thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a welcoming family home with a dedicated playroom containing a wide range of good quality toys and resources; they make choices about what they want to do and select freely from the tubs and shelves around the room, dressing-up in a variety of outfits. Children eat their meals and take part in planned activities at the kitchen table and use the cloakroom independently to go to the toilet and wash their hands. There is easy access to the safe and

secure garden where children enjoy playing with the sand, riding on the scooters and playing hide and seek; they move freely between the garden and the playroom supervised by the childminder who observes them at all times.

Children play safely as the childminder is aware of risks that may harm them, for example, children do not have access to a section of the patio that has wobbly slabs as a small fence has been built and elastic bands are used to keep low level kitchen cupboards shut when younger children are present. The childminder ensures younger children are securely strapped into their booster seats and buggies to prevent them falling out and she uses a monitor to listen out for a child sleeping upstairs. Children are secure within the home as the front door is locked at all times and there are some agreed procedures in place regarding the collection of children, including if a parent fails to collect a child.

The childminder shares her written evacuation plan with parents and children discuss and practice the plan on a regular basis so they know how to leave the home safely, but the childminder does not keep a record of this for future reference. As a precaution fire safety equipment is in place, such as, working smoke alarms on both levels of the property, a fire blanket and carbon monoxide detector are fitted in the kitchen and the gas boiler is serviced annually. The childminder is effective in ensuring children's welfare as she has good understanding of the procedures to safeguard children. She is aware of the possible signs of abuse, for example, she would be concerned by bruising in unusual places on a child's body and a change in their behaviour, such as, suddenly becoming very withdrawn. The childminder is aware of the organisations who offer support and has all the relevant documents in place which she shares with parents via her portfolio.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children relate well to the childminder's calm, relaxed manner. The childminder is very aware of children's needs, for example, she encourages and helps a younger child to eat her lunch, knows when her nappy needs changing and takes the buggy to collect a child from pre-school who she knows is tired. Older children cared for after school have the opportunity to pursue their own interests, such as, making models with interconnecting building blocks or to rest and relax on the sofa where they can watch television. Children appear happy and settled within the childminder's home and are familiar with the established daily routine, for example, they tidy away the toys because they know they must go and collect the older children from school.

Children experience an interesting range of activities, such as, cooking, painting, making pasta necklaces and building models. The childminder plans and prepares these well, for example, children make pictures of flowers using pre-cut petals and straws for the stalks. Outside the home they gain new experiences and develop social skills as they visit toddler groups, a music group and the library. The childminder takes children to productions and assemblies at the local school and the pre-school open morning to help them integrate into the school community.

The childminder is familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework following attendance at a training workshop; she implements aspects of the framework, such as, 'Finding a Voice' linked to 'A Skilful Communicator' into her practice by asking questions designed to encourage children to express their feelings on a day to day basis. Children enjoy appropriate interaction from the childminder in their play; she is led by what the children want to do and gives them freedom and time to play and explore on their own. Children develop their own imaginary game using dolls and the doctor's medical kit; the childminder pretends to be the doctor using lots

of relevant vocabulary and extends the game further as she pretends to be a vet and introduces cuddly toys to be patients.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children experience a good range of activities that help them learn about the wider world, for example, they make flags to celebrate American Independence Day. They learn about their own community as they walk to and from school, go on nature walks and use the local park. The childminder encourages discussions about local features, such as, the church, cattle in the fields and chickens at the farm; this helps children develop a sense of belonging. Children access an outstanding range of resources to develop their awareness of diversity and understanding of differences, such as, a globe, large map of the world, books in other languages, such as, Spanish and French, a puzzle of world flags, a poster with 'hello' in 23 languages, dolls with different skin tones, a book about 'Festivals and Celebrations' and a children's atlas. The childminder asks parents to send postcards from their holidays to add to the display in the playroom which children use as a prompt to talk about other countries and cultures. She ably supports a bi-lingual child using simple words and phrases in French.

There are no children attending with learning difficulties/disabilities but the childminder is flexible and aware of the issues to consider before offering a placement, for example, space and access within the home and the current minded children's needs. Children generally behave well; the childminder intervenes to resolve some minor squabbles, encourages children to share books and toys and gives high priority to encouraging good manners.

Children benefit from the professional relationships the childminder develops with parents and carers. She provides a 'business-like' leaflet briefly detailing her service along with more detailed information and written policies in her portfolio which she shares with parents. The childminder gives feedback to parents on collection, which includes details of nappy changes and food intake so they are aware of the care their child receives. The childminder gives parents information about how to raise a complaint with her but this is not up to date; she keeps a complaints log as required by regulation.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All aspects of the childminder's service are well-organised. She provides a welcoming home for children where she effectively uses the space for them to play freely both inside and outside, particularly in the sunny playroom which has posters and children's artwork on display. Children take part in a variety of planned activities but also have time to play together and use their imagination, for example, they dress up and go on a picnic using play food and a dolls blanket.

The childminder has attended training since her last inspection which has resulted in an increased knowledge of child protection and basic food hygiene; she displays relevant certificates in the playroom, including her certificate of registration. She presents a professional image to parents and provides written policies and procedures in her informative portfolio, along with contracts and parental consents. All the required records on children are in place; these are completed accurately and stored confidentially to protect children's identity. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the childminder develop her knowledge of the Area Child Protection Committee procedures (ACPC), ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, improve fire safety precautions by maintaining the smoke alarm on the first floor in working order, make available to parents a statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint and make sure that low-level glass panels are safe or inaccessible.

Since the last inspection the childminder has completed a Child Protection course and gained a good understanding of the updated Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures which means she is aware of the possible signs of abuse and how to report them. She now has an excellent range of toys and equipment that reflect diversity and help children learn about the wider world. A smoke alarm in working order, is now fitted to the first floor of the property and the unmarked low level glass in the children's playhouse has been re-fitted with glass that meets British Standards by a professional glazier to keep children safe. Parents have received information about how to make a complaint but regulations have changed since the last inspection, so this information needs updating again; this has been raised as a recommendation during this inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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 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):

- provide individual towels for children to dry their hands
- update the complaints policy to reflect changes to regulations.

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