

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141446
Inspection date	06 November 2007
Inspector	Dorcas Forgan
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?

This childminder was registered in 1994. She lives with her partner and three teenage children in Great Holm, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding with sleeping facilities on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children she is currently minding a baby of seven months full time and three children aged two and three years part time. She also cares for four children under the age of eight during out of school hours. The childminder collects children from local schools and pre-schools. She attends the local parent and toddler group. The family have two dogs, five cats and three rabbits.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because the childminder has very effective practices and policies in place to limit possible risk of infection. She ensures that the procedures she follows are up to date.

Children are cared for in a light bright home where the childminder maintains extremely high standards of hygiene throughout. Children are learning the importance of personal hygiene and are becoming independent in their own personal care. They become used to the routine of washing their hands as necessary and after handling the animals such as the rabbits. They enjoy learning about how their body works. The childminder organises trips to interesting places such as the science museum to increase their interest and understanding.

Children increase their understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle as they talk about which foods are healthy. They gain practical experience as they help to prepare the food especially the snacks when they return from school. They freely access drinks and are learning to respond to their bodies needs. The parents supply the meals for the baby who is under one year. The childminder works very closely with the parents to ensure that the children's individual dietary needs are met.

Children have daily opportunities to be in the fresh air and to develop their physical skills. They walk as often as possible. They walk to the schools and pre-schools daily and to the local parks. They also walk to the local attractions that are further away and use the times to discuss what they see on the way such as the fire station and the road works. Children have access to the garden. The childminder takes the youngest children swimming whenever possible to develop their physical skills and provide essential one to one activities whenever possible to enhance emotional well being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children remain safe and secure because the environment is well organised and extremely child friendly. Children have plenty of room to play freely and to choose the activities they wish to take part in. The extensive range of toys and activities are within easy reach around the sides of the playroom. Children spend most of the time in the playroom but also take part in cooking and craft activities at the dining room table and can spend quiet time in the lounge. The childminder provides sleeping arrangements to suit the individual children. The childminder arranges various trips and activity days for the children during the holidays; safety is of paramount importance to all who take part. The childminder has attended training in carrying out risk assessments.

Children learn to keep themselves safe and to be aware of others safety. They often practice this through practical activities such as knowing how to call the emergency services, learning the safety code when near traffic, or on the train station. They regularly take part in the emergency evacuation. They are all very aware of the safety rules in the home such as not picking up or carrying the younger children.

Children are well protected because the childminder has a very good understanding of her responsibility to safeguard children from harm or neglect. She has all relevant guidance and contact numbers to hand. The childminder gives parents copies of her policy so that they are well informed. However, the policy does not include the procedure to be followed if allegations were made against the childminder or members of the household.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a great deal of fun when with the childminder in a very wide variety of ways. Babies and young children form a trusting relationship with the childminder through the times that they spend together playing, singing and talking. They interact freely and are stimulated with the interesting toys and activities. The childminder is aware of each individual child's needs and the stages they have reached in their development; she supports and guides them to make progress. The childminder provides a balance of planned activities and allowing children to show initiative and develop their own games. She praises their achievements. Children develop their imaginations by playing with the dressing up and role-play resources; they construct and have a wide range of books available to them. She stimulates their senses with items to touch, look at, listen to and smell. The older children relax when they come in from school often cooking or making craft items such as glittery masks. When they need to do homework, they can be in a quiet area and use any of the resources available. During holidays, interesting outings and activity days are organised along with other local childminders. Children are able to socialise with several others of all ages and enjoy large group activities. The childminders plan the days well so that all are busy and have a great deal of fun. Children take part in a varied range of experiences, travelling on all sorts of transport and visiting attractions where they can learn, wonder and become excited.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children have an affectionate relationship with the childminder; they feel part of the family and the wider group. They have a sense of belonging. They are learning to care for others. Children socialise widely and through this realise that other people have different needs to theirs. They are becoming aware of the wider world and people of other cultures and religions. A recent visit to the war museum when the children saw part of the Berlin wall, which promoted discussions about how people live in very different ways, illustrated this very well. The childminder has a good range of resources that promote diversity that the children enjoy playing with. The childminder has a great deal of interest in caring for children with learning or physical difficulties, although none currently attends.

The childminder has very good strategies in place to encourage good behaviour. These are mainly positive and include weekly stickers with the child who has behaved well being able to take Alex or Larry, two soft toys, home for the weekend. The children have helped to produce the house rules and learn the reasons for them. Children receive clear consistent guidance from the childminder, so that they behave responsibly.

The childminder establishes very good partnerships with the parents to ensure the care the children receive is consistent. She provides the parents with information about the service that she offers at the initial meetings, which includes her policies and procedures. They exchange information daily about the children. The children make scrap books that include some of the pictures that they make. There are many photo albums for the parents and children to look at that show activities they have enjoyed. The childminder regularly asks the parents for their opinions of her service and she values their comments.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare is paramount to the childminder at all times. She regularly attends training events to ensure that her knowledge is up to date and relevant. She keeps very clear comprehensive documentation for all the children. The home is extremely well organised so that children can play safely, eat in comfort, sleep and relax as necessary. The childminder plans her daily routines so that all children are included and their developmental needs are considered. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made that all hazardous substances should be stored safely. These are now stored in a cupboard in the kitchen with a child lock attached so that children are unable to access them.

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

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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):

- include in Safeguarding children policy the procedure to be followed if allegations are made against any member of the family.

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