

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	145395
Inspection date	08 May 2007
Inspector	Nikki Whinton

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 1994. She lives with her husband and three children aged 10 months, two and 13 years, in Marlborough, Wiltshire. The whole of the property, except for the main bedroom is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under the age of eight years at any one time and is currently minding two children under the age of eight years, on a part-time basis. She attends the local carer and toddler group. The family has three cats and two guinea pigs.

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 lead a healthy lifestyle whilst in the childminder's care. They are involved in daily excursions, such as collecting children from school or walking to a music or carer group event. They explore the local woods, feed the ducks, enjoy picnics and take part in treasure hunts. In addition, children use the childminder's fully enclosed garden, where they can experience a good range of exciting, challenging equipment to help build their physical skills.

Children learn about healthy eating through the nutritious snacks and light meals that they eat whilst in the provision. They are able to choose their preferred sandwich fillings, snack or fruit options. Allergies or parental wishes are discussed as part of the registration process. Any needs are recorded and always accommodated. Children help themselves to drinks that are placed at their height, to encourage independence. This helps to ensure children consume liquids in sufficient quantities to meet their differing needs.

Children benefit from the childminder's understanding of the importance of taking positive steps to promote their good health. For example, children use separate hand towels to reduce the risk of cross contamination, they wear sun hats when playing outside during fine weather and the childminder's written sick child policy is discussed and given to parents prior to a child entering the provision. There is a clear understanding of hygiene issues regarding the care of children when animals are present and correct administrative procedures are in place if accidents occur or children require medication.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and relax within premises that are suitably clean and maintained and of an appropriate temperature. There is a range of measures in place to help keep children safe and reduce the chance of accidents. For example, the childminder ensures standing water is removed from the sand pit lid prior to children playing outside, stair gates restrict children's access to the stairs or kitchen, smoke detectors are maintained in working order, hazardous materials are inaccessible to children and exposed electric points are fitted with covers. In addition, the childminder has a good understanding of potential hazards when taking children on outings and through activities such as teaching children road safety skills, helps in raising their awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Children start to share some responsibility for their safety through activities such as tidying away toys after play, thus reducing trip hazards and by taking part in emergency evacuation drills.

Children enjoy exploring a good range of clean, well maintained, age appropriate resources that are easily available to them for self-selection. They benefit from the childminder's good understanding of safety and hygiene issues concerning the purchase, ongoing maintenance and cleaning of resources. Children play with safe and suitable toys, which help to promote their development.

Children's well-being is safeguarded by a childminder that has undertaken targeted training, has a very good understanding of child protection issues and knows the procedures to follow if concerned about a child. There are effective arrangements for ensuring parents fully understand the childminder's responsibilities, prior to a child commencing in the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children appear relaxed, settled and confident within the setting. They have a good relationship with the gentle childminder and are forming positive friendships with their peer group. Children are gaining social skills as they learn to share the toys and to take turns to investigate resources. Children independently make choices concerning the equipment or materials they wish to explore, such as ride on vehicles, small world toys or role-play resources. Children benefit from the childminder's active involvement in their play, such as when asking for a cup of tea whilst a child is 'lighting' a barbeque during imaginary play. Children demonstrate shared ownership of the setting and negotiate with the childminder to alter the programme of events to meet their interests and preferences. For example, snack time is delayed because children decide they wish to play in the garden.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the childminder knowing them well and having a good understanding of their individual needs. All children are valued and respected. They access a good range of toys, including puppets, small world figures, dolls and books that reflect positive images of diversity. However, children rarely have planned opportunities to take part in activities that help to increase their understanding of the wider world.

Children behave well, as appropriate for their age and stage of development. Any minor incidents are skilfully handled by a childminder who has a clear understanding of effective, age appropriate methods for promoting positive behaviour. Strategies are discussed with parents to ensure a consistency of approach between home and the provision, with regard to behaviour management.

Parents are provided with useful written information about the setting, its policies and procedures, prior to a child entering the childminder's care. There are daily opportunities for informal discussion and feedback about children's achievements or any childcare issues. This routine helps to ensure continuity in children's care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder is an experienced, capable early years practitioner who undertakes training to update her skills. All legally required documentation is maintained and accessible for inspection. For example, children's daily attendance is accurately recorded and their personal information, whilst securely stored, is easily available to support their care. However, Ofsted has not been advised of significant changes affecting the childminder's registration, which is a breach of regulations.

Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the last inspection, the childminder was given a recommendation to support the development of the provision. This referred to making sure a fire alarm is installed on the first floor of the property that is maintained in working order.

A fire alarm has now been installed which is kept in working order. This improvement has had a positive impact on the quality of care offered to the children.

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 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 that Ofsted is advised of significant changes of circumstances affecting the registration
- ensure children have the opportunity to take part in practical activities to enable them to increase their understanding of the wider world.

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