

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148246
Inspection date	10 October 2007
Inspector	Marie Thompson
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 outstanding. 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 two children, aged 16 and 14 years old, in Lower Earley near Reading. The whole of the downstairs of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

There is currently one child on roll. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group. The family have do not have any pets.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an exceptionally well maintained, child friendly home where highly effective hygiene routines and procedures ensure the areas where they play and sleep are comfortable, clean and safe. They develop a very good understanding of personal hygiene as they are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times. The childminder has an

outstanding understanding of the Birth to three matters framework which she amalgamates into her daily activities and routines. As a result the children are making extremely good progress and learning a vast amount through their play.

Children's health is extremely well promoted as they enjoy the wide range of activities provided to develop their physical skills. These include visits to the park, garden play with the hula hoops, skipping ropes and bat and ball. The children get regular fresh air and exercise because they walk to the parent and toddlers groups and in the local area. When they are on their walks the childminder encourages the children to look at the things around them, for example, the changing colours of the leaves and the squirrels running around. The children particularly like walking to the post office to post letters. This is a valuable learning experience which enables the children to interact appropriately with other people and promotes the realisation of daily experiences and situations. The childminder builds very strong relationships with the children, making them feel secure. The childminder knows the children very well and is responsive to their individual needs, which allows them to learn and develop a variety of skills.

Children enjoy a varied selection of very healthy meals and snacks which are very well prepared. Meal times are good social occasions where children enjoy discussing their families and experiences. The childminder has a detailed menu which offers the children some tasty and varied meals at breakfast, lunch and tea time. This includes crumpets and honey, banana sandwiches and yoghurts and roast dinners or salmon with ribbon pasta. The childminder demonstrated that she clearly has a brilliant understanding of the need for children have a balanced, healthy and nutritious diet. At snack time the children have yoghurt raisins, which they enjoy pouring into the bowls themselves, or fruit. They have lots of fun making their own sandwiches under the watchful eye of the childminder. The children are offered lots of drinks throughout the day and the childminder is aware that they may need extra drinks if the weather is hot or they have been running around.

The childminder has a first aid certificate which means that the children are treated appropriately when they are ill or hurt themselves. All information about accidents and medication is recorded and countersigned by parents. Children are only administered medicine that has been authorised by parents. The childminder has a very good policy in place, therefore sick children are sensitively cared for by her and appropriate procedures followed, which reassures and comforts children. She also has some very useful and relevant information, such as information about meningitis and a sheet which details the symptoms for common diseases. These serve as a good reference and are shared with the parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides a warm, friendly home, where children feel safe and secure. Children benefit from this organised environment where risks have been identified and minimised so that children can play safely. The childminder has an outstanding fire evacuation procedure in place which has been practised with the children and recorded in her diary. The children know that when the alarm goes 'beep, beep' that they need to go out of the house with the childminder. Space within the home is ample, allowing children to move around safely and freely with independence. Children can easily access toys and resources, which are regularly checked for broken parts that could cause harm to a child. The childminder has devised and implemented 'House Rules' which the children understand and adhere to, which reinforces safety in the home. This gives children the opportunity to take responsibility to manage and learn about their own safety and to be aware of possible danger.

The childminder makes sure children are safe when going on outings whether they are walking or travelling in the car. Children and the childminder walk together and the children are encouraged to hold hands. If the childminder uses the buggy she makes sure the children are fastened into it safely using a five point harness and she is aware of the legislation regarding seat belts and booster seats in the car. Children learn about Green Cross Code and using pedestrian crossings. They enjoy taking turns to 'press the button' and waiting for the 'Green man' and the childminder encourages them to stop, look and listen when they are crossing roads.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of her role and responsibilities regarding child protection. Children are protected and safeguarded from harm as the childminder has attended child protection training and has a very good knowledge of procedures to follow. She has a child protection policy in place which is shared with parents and relevant reference materials, such as 'Child Protection' handbook from Berkshire Safeguarding Children Board and HM Government leaflet 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'. The childminder has reserved a place on further safeguarding children training to consolidate her existing knowledge.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children experience an excellent range of activities which contribute to their development, inside and outside the house. Children enjoy regular outings to the Mad house, Woodford Park, Trilakes, Laurel Park and Odds Farm which help to develop an understanding of the world around them and offer a range of different opportunities. They also regularly attend the parent and toddler groups with the childminder which provides them with different toys to play with and gives them the opportunity to mix with other children of a similar age. The children go with the childminder to the shops, the library and the toy library.

The childminder has a very good relationship with the children who are clearly very happy to be in her care and enjoy her company. She talks to children constantly, plays with them and is very warm and affectionate towards them which means children are effectively supported in their play and making very good progress in all areas of their development. The childminder offers lots of support, praise and encouragement which enable children to play with the toys of their choice and participate in activities at their own pace. Children move freely around the room initiating their own play from the excellent selection of toys and resources which are easily accessible. Children are learning important lessons through play in fairness, caring for each other, sharing, taking turns and showing respect for one another as they form good relationships with each other and have lots of fun.

Children take part in some super painting and music activities which nurture their creative development and allow them to express themselves through a different medium. Children's drawings and paintings are pleasantly displayed in the kitchen which gives them a sense of pride and achievement in their work and encourages their conversation and memory of the things they have done. Children's sensory development is enhanced through taking part in gardening, which allows them to investigate different textures and smells and have great fun getting their hands dirty. They have planted sunflowers and cress and waited patiently to see how they grow. The children have an extensive range of toys and activities to keep them busy and occupied, these include Hama beads, Lego, dinosaurs, zoo animals, Action man and Barbies, books, puzzles, sand and water play. The childminder has devised a written list of the early learning goals with toys and activities in place that support these areas of development. For example, mathematical thinking is developed through the use of shape sorters, finger paints

and everyday activities such as counting cars or steps on the way to toddler group. The childminder's commitment and dedication to the children in her care is evident through the happy, contented children. These exciting, challenging and stimulating activities allow children to have lots of fun and enjoy some fantastic adventures which give them some lovely memories of their time with the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are valued and treated with respect, helping them to feel good about themselves. The childminder has an excellent understanding of equal opportunities issues. The childminder has a positive attitude towards diversity and increases children's understanding of diversity through resources and activities that enhance their awareness of their own and other cultures. The childminder has planned activities to cover a fantastic range of festivals when they occur. For example, in February, the children enjoy pancakes on Shrove Tuesday and learn the meaning behind the tradition, they learn about Chandeleur, the festival of light celebrated in France and the childminder and the children make crepes. The children enjoy Chinese New Year when they make colourful lanterns and Easter which gives them the chance to make Easter nests and fluffy bunnies. In May the children plant sunflowers, tomato plants and cress and watch and measure their growth. The children learn about Diwali and Rangoli and make their own clay lamps. The children use bright coloured chalks to create pictures of fireworks and learn the story of Guy Fawkes. The children particularly like the activities which help them learn about Kwanzaa which is the African celebration of the family and community when the children make music, necklaces, candles and sweets. At Christmas the children decorate cards and stockings to hang on their trees. The childminder is committed to including all children regardless of ethnic origin, background, gender or ability and makes sure all children have opportunities to access all the toys and resources available. This includes skin coloured crayons, coloured dolls, small coloured Lego family, a police lady and coloured police men and figures showing different disabilities and special needs. This ensures all children feel welcome. The extensive trips and outings provided for children means they have a varied and positive view of the world around them.

The childminder is not currently caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities but she talks knowledgeably about the requirements and adaptations of activities that would enable her to meet children's individual needs. She is proactive in ensuring that children with learning difficulties or disabilities receive the appropriate care and assistance they need when in her care. The childminder understands appropriate steps that need to be taken to meet the children's needs fully through liaison with parents and associated professionals.

Children help tidy up with the gentle guidance and encouragement from the childminder, are well behaved and enthusiastically participate in activities. They are made aware of the house rules and abide by them. The childminder effectively supports children and the management of their behaviour. She uses effective strategies, such as distraction and explanation, which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. This helps them to learn the difference between right and wrong. The childminder frequently praises the children which raises their self-esteem and ensures children feel secure and cared for.

The childminder has a strong, long-standing relationship with the parents of the children, which is friendly and supportive. Parents are fully informed of her practice through the use of the childminder's exceptional policies and procedures, verbal feedback and care diaries which provide continual communication. The childminder has diligently gathered information regarding

the children. This is maintained to a high standard and ensures the children's continued support and welfare. Parents feel welcome and value the childminder's energetic and enthusiastic approach to caring for their children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children make excellent progress as the childminder has a high regard for their well-being. She has a clear understanding of child development and provides a vast range of interesting activities. She uses effective skills to support children in all areas of their development. The home and daily routines are organised with the needs of the children in mind and they enjoy being able to choose activities and toys of most interest to them. As a result, they feel confident, secure and able to exercise their independence. The childminder is motivated and keeps up to date with current changes, which relate to childminding, through discussion with other childminders, Ofsted publications and some information from the National Childminding Association. She is dedicated to maintaining a high standard and implements changes as they occur. This means that children benefit from the care provided by a skilled and committed childminder. She attends relevant courses, such as Introduction to Childminding Practice, Makaton sign language, art and craft workshops, child protection and first aid. The childminder has a strong commitment to developing her knowledge and skills and is going to attend training courses on the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and safeguarding children.

Children are very well settled and benefit from a well-organised environment. They can access toys and resources independently. They are valued, supported and encouraged to gain independence and make choices. They receive very good support from the childminder and the organisation of the minding week allows for lots of individual attention.

All records and documents are up to date, comprehensive and stored in a confidential manner. The childminder has some exemplary policies and procedures which are shared with parents. This includes a very comprehensive complaints procedure. The childminder has a long standing and friendly relationship with the parents. Parents are involved and informed of their child's achievements through daily diaries, discussions and photographs of their children participating in activities. Parents receive information regularly, which keeps them extremely well informed about the service and their child's activities. Children's needs are very effectively met as the childminder organises the environment, resources and documentation exceptionally well. The childminder's certificate of registration is clearly displayed in the hall for the parents and visitors to see. She has an excellent information folder which is meticulously kept and contains her certificates, policies and procedures, detailed references of each of the National Standards and information for parents.

The childminder understands the regulations to protect children, to promote their well-being and support their development. The childminder's knowledge and involvement contributes to children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take active part in activities and outings offered. 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 ensure that the low fence in the garden is safe and that poisonous plants are inaccessible to the children and to ensure that full names and dates of birth of children are recorded in the accident/medication book.

The low fence in the garden is safe and poisonous plants are inaccessible to the children. The information recorded in the accident/medication book includes the full names and dates of birth of children.

These measures contribute to ensuring children's continued health, safety and well-being.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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