

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148583
Inspection date	11 January 2008
Inspector	Sheena Bankier
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 1989. She lives with her husband and two children in Lower Earley, Reading. The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding nine children, who attend for various days and hours. Her husband is also a registered childminder who assists her at times with the minded children. The ground floor of the house is mainly used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The childminder walks or drives to the local schools to take and collect children. She uses local amenities with the children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is protected effectively. They are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment. The childminder ensures good hygiene procedures, for example, she wears disposable gloves when changing nappies and ensures the changing mat is cleaned each time. The childminder has undertaken food safety training which ensures she is up to date with current food hygiene practice. Sickness exclusions reduce the spread of infections. Children

learn about good personal hygiene through discussions about why they need to wash their hands. Regular hand washing routines are in place, such as before eating and after playing outside. Children have their own individual towels for hand-drying. This means children are protected from cross-infection.

Children benefit from fresh air and physical activity. They use the garden and have equipment which offers appropriate challenge to their physical development, such as playing basketball, using the climbing frame, bikes and scooters. Local parks and fun pools in the summertime are used. These offer a variety of different activities to the children. Local soft-play facilities are used and children enjoy dancing to music indoors. This enables children to be physically active both in and out of doors.

Paperwork to support children's good health is mostly in place. The childminder ensures she obtains information from parents about children's medical conditions and dietary needs. She obtains written consent to apply sun screen to the children, therefore ensuring their skin is suitably protected in the sun. Written policies and procedures are in place regarding health and hygiene and sickness arrangements. However, the childminder has overlooked gaining written consent from parents to seek emergency treatment and advice for children. As a result there are no agreements in place regarding emergencies to ensure children's well-being. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and has first aid kits for in the home and for outings. This ensures she is able to treat children's minor accidents and injuries appropriately at all times.

The childminder agrees the provision of meals and snacks with parents. This ensures children are given meals and snacks which meet their dietary needs. The childminder offers a variety of balanced healthy snacks and meals to the children which support healthy choices. Children's understanding of healthy eating is underpinned through discussions with the childminder. Social skills are developed and encouraged as children eat their meals and snacks together. Children have access to drinks at all times which ensures they can meet their own needs for fluid intake. Children are offered milk and water as well as weak diluted squash at times. Therefore healthy options are encouraged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is managed well. Suitable safety equipment is used, such as socket covers and a safety gate at the bottom of the stairs. These keep children safe from potential harm. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through the childminder reminding them about potential dangers and of established rules and boundaries. The children practise good road safety whilst out with the childminder. This extends their understanding of safety whilst outside of the home. Fire safety equipment is in place and there is a clear evacuation procedure in place. This ensures children's safety in an emergency.

Children are able to play safely and freely in the home. The home is warm and welcoming to children and parents, for example, brightly coloured child-orientated cushions are on the sofa. Children develop independence as they have low level pegs for their belongings and are able to visit the toilet by themselves. There are a good range of toys and equipment in place which meets the age and developmental needs of the children who attend. These are maintained in good, clean condition through regular checks and cleaning.

The childminder has a sound knowledge and understanding of her responsibilities to safeguard children in her care. She has undertaken safeguarding training and is well aware of the possible signs and symptoms which could cause concern. The childminder understands the procedures to follow in the event of having concerns about a child's welfare and has all necessary documentation to refer to, such as local procedures. This ensures children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder provides children with warm care and attention, for example, cuddles when the children wake from a sleep and she involves herself in the children's play. As a result children are happy and settled in her care. Children are able to initiate their own play as they self-select toys from shelving and storage units. This enables children to make their own choices and decisions. Good relationships are in place with the childminder and between the children. Children enjoy each other's company and have fun together.

Children enjoy a good variety of toys and activities within the home. They have fun playing with small world toys and construction, such as blocks, vehicles, garage and a ramp for the cars to roll down. Children benefit from activities to support their developing skills and independence, for example, they make sandwiches and the children are encouraged to learn to put their own coats and shoes on. This supports the children's progress and provides them with skills to use at pre-school and school. The childminder supports the pre-school children's learning and development through offering suitable activities, for example, using stencils to promote pencil control, observing letters, colours and numbers in the environment and counting blocks as they build with them. Children who are cared for after-school are supported well with appropriate activities and play, such as board and card games, arts and crafts and puzzles. The childminder reinforces the learning children have achieved at school by listening to the children read.

Imaginative and sensory play experiences are enjoyed by the children. They benefit from play with sand, water and dig the garden and water the plants. This encourages the children to explore and investigate different mediums and through caring for plants they learn about living things. Dressing up and playing musical instruments supports the children's imagination and creativity.

Children benefit from a good range of outings. These include meeting up with other childminders and children which supports and develops children's social skills. Outings to the Bracknell Lookout Centre enable children to use natural materials as they make dens from small branches and twigs. This also encourages the children to work together. They observe the wildlife, such as flowers and animals which develops their understanding of the world around them.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about others different to themselves through toys and resources which reflect positive images of the wider world. These include a welcome poster, dressing up clothes, puzzles and small world figures. The children access these in their natural play which enhances their awareness of diversity.

The childminder understands the children's individual needs well. She speaks to parents about these needs and also ensures her husband who sometimes assists her is aware of the children's

needs too. This provides continuity of care for the children. The childminder has a good understanding of how to manage the care of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is aware of working with parents and other parties to support children in their progress.

Children's behaviour is good. The childminder supports and manages the children's behaviour well. She uses appropriate strategies, such as explaining to children about their unacceptable behaviour and encourages good manners and respect for other people and property. Books are used to promote children's understanding of good behaviour. Children's self-esteem and confidence is built through praise and encouragement, for example, children are praised when they are helpful or have achieved and made a good effort.

Good relationships with parents are in place. The childminder has effective communication with them. She ensures parents are clear about the service she provides through having written policies and procedures which are shared with them. Parents receive detailed verbal feedback about their child's day and progress. This ensures they are well-informed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has cared for children for many years. She has undertaken the courses in line with regulation and has also attended further training. This benefits the children in her care as she extends her childcare practice. Children have different areas to enjoy quiet and active play in the home which provides children with restful times in the day. The childminder provides a good range of activities, toys and outings which support and extend the children's development well.

Most required paperwork is in place although a written consent required by the National Standards is not in place. This is in regard to seeking emergency treatment and advice for children. All other aspects of the childminder's documentation are good and children's individual records are organised well. This ensures confidentiality. The childminder has also devised written policies and procedures to support her childminding business. She has gained extra written consents from parents, such as to apply sun screen and to use large outdoor equipment. As a result the arrangements in place are clearly understood by both parties.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was given one recommendation to review and update documentation. The childminder has ensured she has most of the paperwork required by the National Standards in place, such as business agreements and various consents. However, she has overlooked gaining written consent from parents to seek emergency medical treatment and advice for children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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):

- obtain written consent from parents to seek emergency medical treatment and advice for children.

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