



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	219642
Inspection date	11 September 2006
Inspector	Susan Ennis
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 1998. She lives with her husband and three children aged eighteen months, two and half years and eight years in Bedford, Bedfordshire. The whole of the ground floor and one bedroom of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding one child over five after school. The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children. The family has two cats.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and comfortable home environment. Their health is consistently promoted as the childminder follows effective hygiene procedures such as encouraging the children to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet and having a written sick children's policy which helps to prevent cross infection. Cleansing wipes are also made available for the children to use when needed, for example, when playing in the garden. Children understand simple hygiene practices encouraged by conversations about germs and 'poorly tummies'.

Children participate in a wide and varied range of physical activities, contributing to their good health. The childminder ensures that there are daily opportunities for outdoor activities, such as walks to school and the park, playing in the well equipped garden with bikes and scooters and visits to 'Kids World' which encourages the children's coordination and spatial awareness. Children's rest and sleep patterns are accommodated with quiet times built into the routine especially during school holidays and very active days. They are well nourished with healthy snacks and meals, such as carrots with dips and sausage and mash, promoting their growth and development. Children are given ownership of their decisions by being encouraged to choose what to have for lunch or tea, taking it in turns with their preferred choice.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe environment in which they are able to move around independently and freely. The childminder carries out informal risk assessments and takes reasonable steps to minimise the hazards, for example, accessible plug sockets are covered and stair gates are fitted at both the top and bottom of the staircase. Children are starting to learn about keeping themselves safe as they are reminded to 'buckle up' when going in the car and to stay near the pushchair to prevent them from getting lost.

Children are able to independently select activities from a suitable range of toys and equipment. The childminder sensitively supervises the children's choices ensuring that they are both safe and appropriate for their age and stage of learning. Children's welfare is promoted because the childminder has a sound understanding of the child protection procedures. However, the local contact details for concerns are not up to date affecting the children's safety should concerns arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident, settled and interested in their play. They relate well to the childminder who extends their play and learning experiences through asking open ended questions such as 'how many cars are there?' and 'what colour are they?' when spotting cars on the way to school. Children can generally participate in all the activities because the childminder uses her

sound knowledge of child development to adapt activities encouraging all to become involved. For example, age appropriate activity books were purchased for all the children during the summer holidays, enabling them to enjoy the same activity, but with books at their developmental level. A visit to the local zoo was chosen to ensure that all the children can be involved and benefit from the activity, increasing their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Children's development in all areas is generally promoted, such as using role play situations to develop their imagination skills. Children enjoy 'casting spells' whilst pretending to be magicians. However, as the childminder has not developed an understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' publication, the outcomes for children from birth to three could be affected.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. The childminder ensures that she is aware of the children's individual needs and meets them effectively. Daily conversations take place ensuring that all parties are informed about the child's development and care. The children have a trusting and caring relationship with the childminder coming to her for security and reassurance when needed. Children's behaviour is good, being reinforced by the childminder's effective understanding of consistent and appropriate boundaries. A 'Tally chart' works alongside that from the children's school and a star chart provides an extra incentive for the children to work together as a team. For example, tidying away the toys without bickering brings a reward of a star on the chart. Age appropriate strategies such as reasoning and compromise encourage the children to take responsibility for their actions and to work situations out independently. However, incidents are not recorded possibly affecting the relationship between the childminder and parent leading to an unsettling affect on the children.

Children's understanding of the wider community is increased by the childminder providing resources and activities that positively promote our society, for example, children play with dolls and books reflecting different cultures and disabilities, discuss different world religions and festivals and enjoy visits within the community such as walks to the local shops. Although the childminder has limited experience in caring for children with disabilities or learning difficulties she is able to effectively care for all children.

Children's needs and welfare are efficiently met because the childminder has a good relationship with parents. Information is regularly shared and parents are informed of the required procedures including the complaints procedure.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder sufficiently organises her work, helping children feel comfortable, relaxed and secure. They are confident often initiating their own play and learning. The individual needs of all the children are met by the childminder through her procedures and policies', ensuring

that most relevant information is in place. However, the children's actual times of attendance are not recorded compromising children's safety should an accident or incident occur.

The childminder uses her child care knowledge to assist her in planning a safe, stimulating and caring environment for the children. She ensures that the children are offered a varied range of activities that all are able to participate in. Overall, the needs of all the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the quality and standards of care was judged as inadequate. The childminder has developed her practice therefore improving the outcomes for children. The registration certificate is displayed for all visitors to see, documentation is readily available for inspection and the childminder is aware of her responsibilities towards Ofsted.

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):

- update child protection information in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- improve the outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters'
- ensure that all incidents are recorded
- record the actual times of the children's attendance
- obtain written parental permission to occasionally leave minded child in sole charge of assistant.

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