



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	219724
Inspection date	20 February 2007
Inspector	Carol Mansell
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 aged 14 and 17 years in Pottton, Bedfordshire. The whole ground floor and two bedrooms of the childminder's house are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five years part time and one child over five years before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends local groups. The family has a dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy as the childminder follows current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines. She has a comprehensive sickness policy which is shared with parents. This helps to protect children from infection. Children have their individual needs met as they are able to rest or sleep according to their needs. The childminder works in line with parent's wishes, allowing children to sleep in the travel cot or in their pushchair. The childminder ensures children's bedding is washed regularly which helps children to stay healthy. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. Each child has their own towel and face cloth. Children recognise that this is an important part of keeping themselves healthy. Children benefit, as the childminder is a good role model. She washes her hands before and after changing nappies, wears disposable gloves and uses a separate changing mat for each child. The childminder talks to the children about germs at an appropriate level for their understanding. This helps children to understand simple good health and hygiene practices. Children are cared for appropriately if they have an accident. The childminder has recently updated her knowledge and understanding of first aid procedures and maintains a record of any accidents. She ensures parents are informed and obtains a signature on the record. This ensures children receive continuity of care. Although the childminder keeps a record of any medications administered to the children, she does not ensure that prior consent is sought from the parents and does not always ensure that parents sign the medication record to acknowledge the entry. This potentially compromises children's well-being.

Children are well nourished as the childminder offers freshly prepared meals which include fresh fruit and vegetables. She provides a weekly meal planner which helps parents and children to see what is on offer. Children enjoy home made biscuits, cakes and fruit salad as well as eating cheesy toast and past with ham and chopped tomatoes. The childminder talks to the children about the healthy options that they enjoy which helps them to understand about healthy eating. Children are encouraged to have drinks regularly throughout the day. This helps them to stay healthy and stops them from becoming dehydrated.

Children participate in a wide range of indoor and outdoor physical activities. They walk to the park and also enjoy taking the childminder's dog for walks. Children confidently use the static equipment at the park and enjoy exploring the snow as the childminder enables them to have fresh air and exercise regularly. This helps to keep the children healthy and increases their large physical skills. Children enjoy participating in a range of indoor activities. They enthusiastically dance along with their favourite television programmes and confidently explore the equipment at the local amusement centre. This helps to enhance children's physical development and helps to build their self-esteem. Children enjoy participating in a wide range of art and craft activities. They patiently thread beads to make a bracelet and enjoy using posting boxes, puzzles and construction toys to increase their fine physical skills and their hand and eye co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment. Children are happy and contented in the setting and treated as part of the family. Children move around the setting safely and understand that the stair gate at the bottom of the stairs helps to keep them safe. Children have access to a wide range of toys, equipment and resources which are safe and suitable. The childminder rotates these regularly to ensure children remain interested and stimulated. Children are able to access the resources as they are stored at an appropriate height. This helps them to satisfy their curiosity and enables them to make independent choices. Children benefit, as the childminder checks the toys every night. She has a set programme regarding the cleaning of the toys and equipment and the children help in this task. They inform the childminder if any toys are damaged and this helps them to keep themselves and others safe.

Children are kept safe on outings. The childminder uses appropriate equipment when using her vehicle. She helps children to understand the need to take care when walking to the park or local groups. This helps children to avoid accidental injuries. Children are safeguarded as the childminder ensures she can see or hear them at all times. She maintains her outdoor area in a safe and suitable condition. The childminder makes sure that her garden is fully enclosed and that the gates and doors are locked. This ensures that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. Children understand the emergency evacuation procedures. They practise these regularly and the childminder ensures the smoke alarms are maintained appropriately. However, the childminder does not have her fire blanket placed appropriately in her kitchen which potentially compromises children's well-being.

Children are protected because the childminder understands her role in child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when needed. She has a clear understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and extends her knowledge and understanding by accessing relevant information on the internet. This helps to protect children from harm or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children participate in an extensive range of planned and spontaneous play experiences. They are extremely happy and contented in the setting and interact very well with the childminder, her family and other children. The childminder encourages children to extend their play and supports them when needed. Children benefit, as the childminder asks open-ended questions and helps to reinforce their understanding. This helps children to acquire new knowledge and skills. Children enjoy joining in with a wide range of art and craft activities. They confidently paint, print and stick with a variety of different resources and materials. Children are learning to take turns. They play organised games with the childminder who offers lots of praise and encouragement. This helps the children to make positive relationships and to begin to distinguish between right and wrong.

Children are very well supported by the childminder. She works with parents when children find it difficult to separate and settle. She is sensitive to the children's individual needs and offers appropriate support allowing them the time, space and opportunities to feel at home in the setting and enabling them to feel relaxed and to gain a true sense of belonging. Parents work with the childminder and appreciate that through her patience and perseverance their children are able to settle and progress in her care. This ensures children have their individual needs met. Children use their initiative as they participate in various imaginative play opportunities. They 'cook' for the adults present and check what they want to eat by asking 'want sausage and chips? Want chicken?' They instruct the adults to 'pay the lady'. This helps children to use their knowledge from previous experiences enabling them to make sense of their world. Children enjoy walking in the local area and visiting the horses and ducks. This helps children to gain an awareness of their local community.

Children respond well to challenges. The childminder helps them to increase their memory and their language skills. She takes the children shopping and gives them each a number of items to remember. She encourages the children to count the number of items they have purchased. This helps children to build their mathematical thinking. Children benefit, as the childminder provides planned activities in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She observes what children do and uses the individual diaries to keep parents informed. This helps to build a professional working partnership with parents and carers and ensures that children feel safe and secure. Children benefit, as the childminder uses the information from her observations to aid children's progress to the next steps in their learning. This enables children to reach their full potential.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal concern. The childminder provides a wide range of toys, resources and activities to help them to gain an awareness of different gender roles, disabilities and different cultures. Children celebrate different festivals such as, Chinese New Year. They gain new experiences as they try to eat with chop sticks. This helps children to have an awareness of difference and diversity. Children benefit, as the childminder has a sound understanding of their individual needs. She works with parents to ensure suitable procedures are in place and that children are included fully in the life of the setting. This ensures that children receive appropriate support.

Children are learning to share and take turns. They are encouraged to play well together and are beginning to recognise when other children wish to play on their own. This helps children to be aware of their own needs and the needs of others. Children behave well as they want to please the childminder. They have a clear awareness of the 'house rules' and receive gentle reminders when needed. This helps children to understand responsible behaviours. Children attend different groups, they visit the library and enjoy soft play areas in amusement centres. They share the space with other children and are building friendships. This helps to increase their social skills and to develop their self-esteem and respect for others.

Children benefit, as the childminder keeps parents informed of what they have been doing whilst in her care. The childminder maintains a daily record for each child which is shared with

parents. This helps them to recognise changes in their children's sleep patterns and their developmental needs. Children are safeguarded as parents have a good awareness of the childminder's policies and procedures as they receive their own copy. This ensures children are cared for appropriately and have continuity of care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by the childminder who has a clear understanding of how children grow and develop. She records children's activities in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and shares this with parents. The children's ratios positively supports children's care learning and play.

The childminder's policies and procedures mainly work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. The childminder actively contributes to children's progression in their learning and enhances their all round development. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure that children cannot access toiletries stored in the bathroom. Children are unable to reach any toiletries as the childminder has ensured that these are stored inaccessible to children. This helps them to stay safe.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 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):

- ensure prior consent is sought from parents to administer medications and that they sign the record book to acknowledge the entry

- ensure a fire blanket, which conforms to BS EN safety Standards, is placed appropriately in the kitchen.

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