



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	505298
Inspection date	21 March 2006
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 1996. She lives with her husband and 2 children aged 11 and 7 years in Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire. Most of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 5 children at any one time and is currently minding 4 children under 5 years part-time, and 2 children over 5 years before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools and playgroup to take and collect children. The family has some fish in a fish tank.

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 are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands after toileting, when coming in from outside play and after messy play. Following these procedures helps to reduce the risk of cross contamination and keep the children healthy. Children enjoy fresh air and exercise daily as they walk to local school and facilities such as parks and other places of interest in the community. This allows them opportunities to run around energetically, playing football and using the park equipment confidently refining their co-ordination and balance skills. Children keenly join in with the childminder's son as he completes his keep fit exercises, for example as they practise their 'sit ups' at a basic level. They know that these help their bodies to grow strong and fit. Garden games and good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework enables the younger children to be active and learn to control their bodies. They are able to rest or sleep according to their needs and are gaining an understanding of why they need to cover their mouths when coughing. Children dispose of tissues appropriately which helps to prevent the spread of infection and safeguard their well-being.

Children's good health and well-being are promoted through the nutritious snacks, meals and regular drinks provided by the childminder. Children can choose from fresh fruit which is available in a fruit bowl and older children are beginning to gain a good understanding of the need to have 5 portions of fruit or vegetables a day. They recognise that by having a healthy diet their bodies grow properly. Children are well nourished as the childminder works with the parents to ensure their health and dietary needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure, clean and safe indoor and outdoor environment. The childminder has minimised hazards around the house to safeguard the children's well-being. The childminder has developed clear evacuation procedure and this is practised with the older children. However, she has not practised this with the younger children and this has the potential to compromise the children's welfare. Space is organised to provide suitable playing areas for children of all ages.

Children use suitable and safe equipment, such as buggies, reins, and booster seats at the table. Some children bring their own beakers from home. Having access to familiar objects helps the children to develop their confidence and to feel safe and secure in the setting, developing a true sense of belonging. Children are given gentle reminders when moving around the setting and the childminder is alert in her

supervision. She provides additional support as needed by very young children who move around the space safely. Children have access to a wide range of resources that are rotated regularly to maintain the children's interest and provide appropriate challenges.

Children understand and adhere to the procedures the childminder has in place when away from the house. She effectively instils in them a clear understanding of road safety procedures and helps them to recognise the need to listen carefully and wait until the noise of each car has gone completely before crossing the road. Children are therefore kept safe on outings. The childminder has a clear knowledge of child protection issues. She understands the local and national procedures she would need to follow if she had any concerns. The children's safety from harm is of paramount importance to the childminder and she cares for the children with great regard to duty of care. She ensures the children are protected from harm or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled with the childminder. They are very sociable and relaxed because the childminder follows regular routines and responds well to their individual needs which enhances their emotional well-being. Children are very attentive and enjoy a broad range of activities. They have the freedom to choose from the resources that are accessible to the children at an appropriate height. Children develop their imagination as they play together using the kitchen, dolls, and dressing up clothes. They create role-play scenarios such as, doctors and nurses and this is extended and enriched by the support of the childminder. Children thrive in this setting and consolidate their feelings of self-confidence.

Young children are supported appropriately as they develop their language skills. The childminder reinforces the children's growing vocabulary and encourages children with additional needs by gently helping them to say words clearly. This supports the children's development and helps build their self-esteem. Children have their mathematical thinking encouraged by the childminder who counts in everyday activities. She engages the children in different activities where they help each other and the childminder to count items required, such as lotto cards to ensure there are enough for one each. This helps the children to build on their knowledge and to acquire new skills. Children have opportunities to mix with children from a wide age range, particularly at the Friday gathering of childminder's at the setting. This helps the children to develop their social skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to learn about difference and diversity. The childminder has a positive attitude and uses this to explain, at an appropriate level for the children, why everyone is different. Children have access to a range of resources that show positive images of different cultures and gender roles. They are beginning to learn

about their community and the wider society in general and this helps them to recognise their own and others needs and work harmoniously together. Children lack access to resources which show positive images of disabilities and this hampers them in gaining a greater understanding of disabilities.

Children with additional needs are well supported by the childminder. She is aware of their individual needs and works with the parents to ensure all children are included fully in her activities and routines. This helps the children to feel valued, increases their self-esteem and ensures their needs are met appropriately. Children behave well as they know what is expected of them. They respond immediately to boundaries set by the childminder and this helps them to learn reasonable behaviours. Children recognise the need to play gently when younger children are present and when they are sleeping or resting. They therefore develop respect for others and an awareness of the needs of others. Children are encouraged to develop their independence skills. They try putting their coats and shoes on ready for outings and show a great sense of achievement when they are ready to go. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from the childminder and this helps them to develop fully and recognise their own worth.

Children benefit from the good relationships that have developed between the parents and the childminder. This ensures they receive continuity of care and have their individual needs met. The positive relationship helps the children to have a sense of belonging. Parents receive good quality information about the provision and particularly about the care given to their children. The childminder provides parents with both verbal and written feedback daily. They exchange comprehensive information regarding children's food preferences and this ensures the children are cared for in line with parents wishes. The childminder has provided parents with a questionnaire to gauge how they feel about the service she provides. Positive and very complementary comments were recorded by the parents. Children therefore feel safe and secure.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit as the childminder organises her time, space and resources effectively to promote their welfare, care and learning. Children are able to initiate and extend their own play and learning. They move freely around the setting and independently choose from the wide range of resources available to them at an appropriate height. Children thrive in the homely environment and interact well with the childminder and her family.

Children are cared for by the childminder who has been vetted and has the relevant experiences, knowledge and skills to aid their development. The childminder has policies and procedures in place which are shared with parents. These generally work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievements and help them to develop appropriately. The childminder ensures the paperwork is stored safely and securely, maintaining confidentiality at all times. Overall, 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 agreed to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. She has drawn up a consent form for parents to sign which gives permission to seek emergency treatment for the children. However, the form does not include permission for the childminder to seek emergency medical advice and this potentially compromises the children's well-being.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 the emergency evacuation procedures are practised with all minded children
- extend resources for equal opportunities particularly those which show positive images of disabilities

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk