

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	505310
Inspection date	08 August 2007
Inspector	Diane Mary O'Neill

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 has been registered since 2000. She lives with her partner and three children aged 12, eight and three years in the town Leighton Buzzard. Children have access to the ground floor of the house and an upstairs bathroom and a bedroom which is used for sleep purposes. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time during the day and one child for overnight care. She is currently minding a total of one child under five either all day or part-time, one under eight and two over eight years after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has a rabbit and a dog as pets.

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 have good opportunities to understand simple good health and hygiene practices. This is achieved by the childminder's vigilance in ensuring hand washing materials are readily available to the children to aid in their personal care. For example, she supplies them with wipes as well as liquid hand wash in order to reduce any potential cross infection. Children are further protected by the childminder being proactive in ensuring consistent high standards of cleanliness within her home.

Children's health and welfare is maintained as the childminder has clearly written procedures. These include exclusion periods to minimise the spread of infection and therefore protecting the children in her care. The childminder has a booklet of information about communicable diseases which she can refer to for reference. If children become ill whilst in the childminder's care, they are made comfortable until their parents arrive. The childminder has a sound knowledge and understanding of first aid, holding a current up-to-date first aid certificate. All required documentation is in place. However, there are no clear procedures for obtaining written permission from parents for the administration of any emergency medical treatment. Therefore, there is the potential for children's care and welfare to be compromised.

Children enjoy a varied, balanced and nutritious diet. All meals are home cooked from fresh ingredients. Consideration is given to children's preferences and individual dietary needs when planning menus which are on display for parents to see. Children remain well hydrated, as drinks are available throughout the day. For example, a jug of water and cups are always available which enables children to help themselves.

Children enjoy a varied choice of indoor and outdoor play opportunities on a daily basis. The children have good opportunities when the weather permits to play out in the garden with play materials such as sit and ride toys, balls, spades and digging equipment to use in the sand pit. There is a large trampoline that the childminder always supervises and only two children are allowed to go on it at any time. Their play is further extended as the childminder takes them to the local parks, the farm and fruit picking in the summer.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into the inviting environment of the childminder's home. The childminder and her family greet the children when they arrive. The childminder ensures the children's art work is displayed in the kitchen. The childminder sets out the excellent variety of play materials in a very inviting manner. This encourages the children to explore, be stimulated, interested and have fun and enjoyment, as well as be challenged and develop in all areas of their learning. Some of the equipment and resources are safely stored in large storage units and open boxes therefore enabling the children to independently access them.

The childminder gives high priority to ensuring the security of the premises as well as the supervision of the children and the general safety of her home. Children learn about being safe in the event of a fire by taking part in regular fire evacuation practices. This is recorded so the childminder can review the effectiveness of the procedures. The children also learn about being safe when they are out with the childminder. She discusses with the children the importance

of being safe as well as teaching them the 'Green Cross Code'. The children know to keep within sight or close to the childminder when they are in the park.

The childminder has a very sound knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures and the importance of protecting children at all times. She has attended training which further helps her to keep up-to-date with procedures and relevant guidance. This enables her to continually meet the needs and welfare of any children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thrive in this stimulating, fun filled environment, where they are provided with an excellent balance of play and learning opportunities. For example, children enjoy playing with cars and race tracks, where they match colours and enjoy celebrating whose car is the fastest. The play areas within the childminder's home are set up in a very child orientated way, enabling them to easily access play materials of their choice. The children are engaged in lots of conversations with the childminder about the activities they are involved in, showing they are relaxed, very secure and happy in this provision.

Children confidently play well together. For example, they take turns at racing their cars, and celebrate together when one of them has won. The childminder praises the children and encourages them to experiment in new and interesting activities. For example, the children hunt in the sand pit for hidden toys and enjoy building and showing their sandcastles. The childminder is aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and uses this effectively to set out planning of activities for the younger aged children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are effectively beginning to learn right from wrong through positive role modelling from the childminder. They are very familiar with the daily routines and have a clear understanding of the rules and boundaries which are in place. The children are well behaved and have good manners. They are encouraged to say 'please' and 'thank you' and share the play materials with each other.

Children receive praise and encouragement from the childminder as they complete tasks within their play. For example, they are congratulated when building their sandcastles. Children enjoy having their art work displayed in the kitchen which helps to make them feel valued. The childminder has a clear understanding of any care that may be required for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example, a member of the childminder's family has used a wheel chair and this helped the children to learn and understand about different people's abilities.

Children are beginning to learn about diversity through the childminder's openness and ability to show positive recognition of people's diverse backgrounds. The childminder covers different festivals with the children and gains information through helpful websites. There is a good supply of resources, including books that enable children to continue learning and developing their knowledge and understanding which is actively supported by the childminder.

The childminder goes to a great deal of effort to ensure that individual needs are met. This is achieved through developing a positive partnership with parents and carers. The childminder

has a professional, honest and flexible working relationship that enables parents to be fully informed of their children's daily achievements, through verbal and written communication. The childminder has a comprehensive portfolio which outlines all of her policies and procedures, so enabling parents and carers to be kept fully informed. The childminder has a very clear and robust system for the sharing of any complaints or concerns with parents, which enables her to continually support the children in her care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel at home and at ease within this well organised environment. They actively participate in activities as well as initiating their own play. The childminder is very dedicated and committed to delivering excellent care and learning opportunities to children. The childminder is prepared to further her own knowledge and learning through attending various training courses, keeping up-to-date with information, enabling her to continue to offer the good quality and professional service that she offers children and their families.

Documentation is of a high standard and maintained at a very professional level. The childminder ensures her policies and procedures are clear and concise and kept up-to-date and made available at all times to all the parents and carers, which enables them to be kept fully informed about her practices. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to ensure all persons over 16 years had updated their CRB clearances. The childminder contacted the Criminal Records Bureau to confirm that all checks on the adults in the family home were still valid from the local authority.

The childminder was asked to ensure the gate is replaced if young children are being minded. The outside gate has now been replaced and is secure, therefore keeping children safe when they are playing in the garden. She was also requested, to ensure the safety of the children from the contents of the under sink cupboard in the bathroom, the green house, the water butt and the general debris in the garden. The childminder has made all these areas safe, so protecting children and meeting their needs.

The childminder was asked to ensure there is written parental permission for the seeking of emergency treatment or advice and for the use of an antiseptic spray. The childminder has permission for emergency treatment, she also has two first aid boxes so can meet children's medical needs.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint received by Ofsted relating to National Standard 6 and 7 during the investigation, the inspectors looked at hygiene procedures for changing children's nappies and what safety precautions are in place for outside play, especially the swimming pool. The childminder was able to give information on the impetigo break out and procedure she had followed to protect children in her care.

From the investigation three actions were raised which are as follows,

- * ensure incident and complaint log is maintained

- * ensure parents are informed of complaints procedure and protection of children procedure
- * ensure procedure is in place for recording any child protection concerns.

The childminder remains qualified for registration.

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 written parental permission is requested for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment.

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