

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	506050
Inspection date	05 November 2007
Inspector	Rachel Edwards
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 husband and two children aged 10 and 12 years, in a house in the Gorse Hill area of Swindon. It is within walking distance of shops, community facilities and parks. All areas of the property except the bedrooms are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for no more than six children under eight years at any one time. She is not registered to provide over night care. She currently cares for eight children who attend part time.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and belongs to the local childminders' group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is well promoted by the childminder. They are cared for in a clean home, where the childminder follows good hygienic procedures to protect children from illness and cross infection, for example, when changing nappies or preparing food. She has attended first aid training so would know what to do if there was an accident. The childminder works with parents to ensure she has accurate records of children's health and any medical conditions so that she can take account of these in the care she provides. She keeps detailed records of any accidents or medication that parents ask her to administer.

The childminder is happy to provide all children's meals or to serve food provided by parents. She has a good understanding of children's dietary requirements and makes sure they have a balanced healthy diet, with sufficient food to meet their needs. She tries to provide food that children enjoy and gives them plenty of time to finish their meal. This relaxed atmosphere, encourages most children to eat well.

Children benefit from being physically active every day. In warmer weather they use the childminder's garden but at other times they visit a nearby park, where there is a good range of larger play equipment suitable for all ages. Young children regularly enjoy visiting a toddler group, where there is plenty of room to run and pedal.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, bright, well maintained home that provides plenty of space, which is well organised for them to eat, play and rest. There is an adequate range of toys and equipment for the ages of children cared for, which appear to meet safety standards. Toys are stored so that children can reach them and choose what they would like to play with, which encourages their independence and allows them to follow their own interests. However, some of the toys are rather jumbled in a large box, making it difficult, especially for younger children, to find what they need.

The childminder has carried out a risk assessment of her home and taken steps to minimise most hazards to children. For example, she makes good use of safety gates to prevent children going into the kitchen, so they are safe whilst she is cooking and to stop them reaching the stairs or front door. She has talked to children about the dangers of fire and they routinely practise an emergency evacuation. She has working smoke detectors on each level of the house. Young children are accompanied to the first floor toilet and older children are supervised. They understand they must not close the door, but there is a risk of children locking themselves in with a low level bolt and there are some toiletries in drawers which they can reach.

The childminder has a thorough understanding of child protection issues and her responsibility to safeguard children's welfare. She is familiar with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and would be able to act in children's best interests if she had concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident, relaxed and happy whilst they are with the childminder. They enjoy taking part in the range of interesting activities and outings that she provides.

The childminder is not using the Birth to three matters guidance for good quality care for young children, as is recommended, but she does follow many of its underlying principles in the care she provides. For example, she does much to develop children's early communication skills. For example, she talks with children about they are doing, models good speaking skills and is responsive to young children as they try to communicate both verbally and with gestures and facial expressions. Story time is very popular with the children and they particularly enjoy acting out familiar tales when they use their imagination and predict what will happen next. They regularly visit the library and develop a real love of books. The childminder takes every opportunity to help children learn. For example, she helps them develop an understanding of numbers and mathematical ideas as they build "really high" towers, count bricks and use language, such as taller and shorter. The childminder leaves the television on in the background most of the day and this is not best practice as it interferes with children's concentration on other activities.

Older children who attend after school, are given time to relax after a tiring day, perhaps watching television and then freedom to choose what to play with. They often enjoy activities planned by the childminder, such as art and craft or cooking. The childminder provides a quiet space for those who want to do homework.

The childminder provides many interesting outings for the children, for example, younger children go to toddler groups each week, where they have the chance to socialise with other children and adults. They regularly enjoy walks and shopping trips. During the year, she also plans major trips with all the children, for example, to Legoland and a wildlife park. These worthwhile experiences add considerably to the children's enjoyment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed by the childminder. She works very closely with parents to ensure they are well informed about the care she provides and she has good information about children's individual needs. The childminder develops good relationships with children and their families, who she knows well. She frequently visits children in their own homes, for example, attending birthday parties and this helps build trusting relationships. The childminder supports families well, for example, she is happy to attend school concerts if parents are unable to go themselves and this is beneficial to the children. Children demonstrate a sense of belonging at the childminder's, for example, as they choose toys or help to tidy up.

Children behave very well and play co-operatively together. Young children are well supported as they learn to share and take turns. The childminder values children's efforts and is quick to offer praise and encouragement so that children quickly learn how to behave appropriately. They learn to value differences and similarities between themselves and others as they play with a limited range of toys that reflect our diverse society. They learn about their local community, for example, as they visit toddler groups, shops, library and schools.

Parents are generally well informed about the care provided. They receive a range of written policies and procedures and give their written consent for various aspects of the care. However, these sometimes lack sufficient detail, for example, the complaints procedure does not fully comply with regulations and the consent for outings does not make it clear that children are occasionally taken on public transport.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder plans her daily routine well to allow children's needs, for example for food and rest, to be met, whilst providing an interesting range of enjoyable and worthwhile activities and outings. Children are confident and happy and able to choose what they want to play with, although the organisation of the toy storage makes it difficult for young children to find what they want. The childminder has carried out recommendations made at the last inspection to improve the quality of care. She has also kept her first aid certificate up to date but does not regularly attend other relevant training, which would further improve the quality of care she provides.

All of the required documentation is in place, although on occasions, it lacks sufficient detail. It is retained for the appropriate period and is stored confidentially. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection, the childminder was recommended to obtain parents' written permission for her to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. This is now in place, which is beneficial to children's health, in the event of a serious accident.

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 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):

- improve documentation by ensuring the complaints procedure fully complies with Children Act regulations and obtaining parents written consent to transport children in a vehicle

- organise toys so that all children can readily select what they want
- improve safety by ensuring children cannot become locked in the toilet and by making sure all toiletries are inaccessible to 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