



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	510220
Inspection date	07 December 2005
Inspector	Sheena Bankier

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 1986. She lives with her husband and three children who are of school age, in Calcot, Reading. The downstairs of the childminder's house only is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

There are currently five children on roll. The childminder walks and drives to the local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group and library. The family have a pet cat, guinea pig and fish.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a good range of physical activities. They regularly walk, visit parks and play in the well-equipped garden, which ensures they have plenty of fresh air. Indoors they dance to music and enjoy outings to the soft play centre. This contributes to their good health and helps children to develop their large physical skills.

Children use an environment, which is warm and clean. They learn about good health and hygiene through the established routines such as washing their hands after using the toilet. Through discussion with the childminder, the older children learn about healthy eating and the importance of good hygiene practices, for example using tissues and not sharing cups because of germs. This protects children's good health. At times, good hygiene procedures are not consistent. For example, children wash their hands before lunch but not always before snack times.

Children enjoy a varied diet, which is healthy and nutritious. The childminder plans a well-balanced menu in advance, which takes account of parent's wishes and the children's choices. Children develop their social skills through eating together.

The younger children have good opportunities to use their developing physical skills by using appropriate toys and equipment, such as the use of outdoor equipment in the garden and parks. The childminder encourages the younger children's independent skills though self-feeding.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play safely under the close supervision of the childminder. The childminder assesses potential risks to children and where necessary ensures appropriate safety measures are undertaken, for example using a pan guard when cooking and a stair gate when necessary. The childminder gives good priority to keeping children safe whilst out, she uses appropriate safety equipment such as wrist straps or reins and she practises good road safety with the children. The childminder has a written fire policy, which includes the emergency evacuation procedure; however, children have not had the opportunity to practise it regularly.

Children access and can choose from a range of toys, which the childminder monitors and supervises. This ensures that they are safe and appropriate for the children's age and stage of development. Children use toys and equipment that are in good, clean condition, as the childminder regularly checks items for safety and cleanliness.

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection procedures and has a

current first aid certificate. This helps to safeguard children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and happy in the childminder's care. Children are confident to ask the childminder questions and to request she gets other resources out. The children interact and play well with each other. The childminder supports the children's learning and development well. She encourages the children's thinking skills through the questions she asks and helps children make observations, such as the train track curving inwards and outwards.

Children enjoy a good range of toys in the home, both inside and out in the garden. Children benefit from good support and stimulation from the childminder, who encourages the pre-school age children's recognition of colours, numbers and letters through playing board games and by playing 'I spy' when out. The childminder takes account of children's wishes when offering activities, which values their ideas and interests.

Children enjoy a wide variety of outings that include regular visits to toddler group, craft sessions and visits to farm parks and the zoo during school holidays. This contributes to the children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them, they are able to explore and investigate creative materials and develop their social skills with others.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children make themselves at home, confidently deciding what to do and independently visiting the toilet. They are learning to share and take turns with the toys and the childminder provides clear explanations to the children to support their understanding. Children learn to be responsible as they help tidy up the toys and clear the table for snack time.

Children's behaviour is generally good and the childminder provides consistent boundaries to them. She manages unacceptable behaviour calmly and overall uses appropriate strategies. At times, the childminder uses negative language such as 'don't', which does not positively reinforce behaviour. Children's good behaviour, self esteem and confidence is encouraged through the regular praise the childminder offers.

Children with additional needs are able to participate in the activities and play opportunities on offer. The childminder is sensitive to their needs and abilities, which enables children to progress and develop. She works closely with others involved in the care of the children to provide consistent and appropriate care.

Children learn about others through meeting a range of people in the community. Children use resources, which reflect positive images of the wider society in their

natural play. They also make art and crafts for celebrations and use a CD Rom on the computer about people around the world. This allows children to increase their awareness of others and diversity.

There are good partnerships with parents. They have good information about the service on offer through the written policies and procedures. The childminder ensures she is aware of children's needs through exchanging information with parents. She keeps parents fully informed about their child's day and progress through daily feedback.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the children for whom she provides.

Well-organised space enables children to have separate areas to rest and play. Children enjoy a good range of activities, at which they benefit from support from the childminder.

The childminder has suitable experience and she has completed a first aid course in line with the national standards for childminding.

The childminder has devised written policies that provide guidelines and procedures for her childminding business. The required paperwork is mostly in place although a consent for emergency treatment and advice requires clarification. Confidentiality is understood well and practised by the childminder.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has included further consents from parents in her business agreement, for example a consent for photographs of children to be taken. However, the consent for the seeking of emergency advice or treatment lacks sufficient detail. This may cause difficulties if the childminder is in a situation where she needs to seek emergency treatment or advice for minded children. The childminder checks her first aid box regularly to ensure items are available and are in date. This ensures suitable items are in place for treating the minor injuries of children.

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):

- practise the emergency evacuation plan with the children to ensure they are confident in the procedure
- obtain written consent from parents, which clearly indicates that it is for the seeking of emergency treatment or advice for children.

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