



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY240223
Inspection date	21 July 2005
Inspector	Ann Field
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 registered in 2002. She lives with her partner, who may on occasions assist in the care of the children, in Amersham, Buckinghamshire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is currently minding three children under five years, one all day and the others on part time basis. Five children over five years attend for various hours before and after school and in the school holidays. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children; she attends a parent and toddler group. The family has a cat.

The childminder has a Certificate in Childminding Practice (CCP) qualification. She is a member of an approved childminding network, although no children in receipt of funding for nursery education currently attend.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very warm and welcoming environment, where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Children can develop their independence with easy access to the toilet and separate flannels and towels readily available to them. Excellent systems of communication between the childminder and parents mean that children's medication and general health care requirements are met. There are clear procedures in place to deal with any medical emergencies and the childminder has completed first aid training.

Children's good health greatly benefits from a comprehensive range of physical activities that include the use of the child-orientated garden and regular visits to the local park. Children are very confident to try out new skills because the childminder has an excellent understanding of age appropriate activities and the levels of support that children need. She sets their limits and they know when to ask for help.

Children learn the value of healthy eating. They enjoy snacks and meals that are extremely nutritious and healthy; the childminder takes account of the parent's wishes and the children's choices. Children are developing their social skills through eating snacks and meals together at the table.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play, eat and rest in a well-organised environment; they move around the home freely and confidently. Close supervision ensures their safety at all times. Children independently select activities from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment, which meet safety standards. They enjoy painting activities in the garden or utility room and have a comfortable lounge where they can relax and listen to stories. The majority of safety precautions are in place to reduce risk to children, but the work on the extension is not fully completed, posing some minor hazards.

The childminder follows safe practice when taking children out; the younger ones hold hands when they walk and she makes sure that they all use the appropriate safety restraints when in the car. Children wear wristbands or t-shirts with contact details when visiting crowded venues.

The clear and comprehensive procedures and documentations in place safeguard and promote the children's welfare. For example, there are clear health and safety and child protection policies; the childminder has a good understanding of her responsibilities to refer relevant concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children spend their time purposefully, exploring a wide range of activities that contribute to their creativity and imagination. For example, they enjoy painting activities in the garden; develop a Treasure Island map and hunt for buried treasure; feed their dolls and wash the dolls' clothes. The relaxed family environment that the childminder creates helps the children feel extremely secure and safe. They develop very affectionate relationships with her; she is very involved in their play and interacts well with them. They enter the home confidently and quickly become involved in play.

Children gain exceptional experiences from the wide variety of purposeful outings. They visit various museums, explore fire engines at the local fire station, and take trips on public transport to the zoo, Cutty Sark and aquarium. The childminder's sound knowledge of child development and use of the Birth to Three Matters framework means the children have many spontaneous learning opportunities within the everyday routine.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children gain a very clear understanding of others and the world in which they live. They use toys which reflect diversity and the childminder displays maps, which enable the children to plot holidays and the location of parents away on business trips. Children are valued and respected as individuals and the childminder has systems in place to fully integrate all children.

Children learn to understand right from wrong and play together harmoniously because the childminder uses appropriate and consistent strategies for managing behaviour. They have clear, consistent guidelines to follow with explanations that are appropriate for their age and understanding.

A detailed daily diary completed for each child, that parents use to exchange information, encourages good continuity of care for children and maintains a close working relationship with parents. Children enjoy attending and parents say how very pleased they are with the care provided.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children feel at home and at ease in the child-orientated environment. They actively contribute to their time spent with the childminder, being relaxed and confident enough to initiate and extend their own play and learning. The childminder is extremely well prepared and children benefit from the high level of quality time she spends with them. She has an excellent knowledge and understanding of caring for young children and meets their needs extremely well.

Children receive very good continuity of care because the childminder shares her comprehensive and detailed policies regularly with parents. She completes a daily diary for each child and

encourages the children to produce a book outlining the activities that they take part in over the summer holidays. The provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the childminder has improved children's health and safety. She now has a separate towel available for each child in the toilet and the children are involved in the regular practice of evacuating the building as outlined in the evacuation plan.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- review safety in the home to ensure that the step to craft area does not pose a trip hazard.

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