

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY273365
Inspection date	08 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 November 2003. She lives with her husband and two children aged five and six years in a house close to the centre of Calne, within walking distance of local shops, schools and pre-schools. All areas of the property are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have one dog.

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

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean home and use clean and well maintained toys and equipment. The childminder has attended food hygiene training and uses her good knowledge to safely

store and prepare food. Sensible precautions are taken to make sure the family dog does not affect children's good health. Children are taught to wash their hands before eating and how to manage this independently. However, on occasions the childminder does not wash children's hands before they eat their snack. She does not always follow hygienic procedures, for example, she does not use a mat to change nappies unless they are dirty and she does not wash her own hands after wiping children's noses and puts dirty tissues back into children's pockets. These unhygienic practices increase the risk of cross infection.

Children learn about healthy eating whilst with the childminder. They have talked about making healthy choices and have made a lovely wall display to reinforce their learning. Children benefit from the range of healthy snacks and meals that the childminder provides. She accommodates any special diets and involves children in choosing the menu so she can take account of their preferences. If parents prefer to supply their own food, the childminder encourages them to include fruit in the children's lunch boxes, which has a beneficial effect on children's diet. Children sit together for meals, which helps them learn good social skills and encourages them to eat well and try new tastes. Children are able to reach drinks whenever they need to and babies are regularly offered drinks.

Children are physically active each day. They walk to and from school as they take and collect children. They frequently go for walks or visit the park where there is large play equipment to practise climbing and balancing skills. They often visit a nearby adventure park and soft play area, where they can play boisterously in a challenging, yet safe environment. Babies have good opportunities to aid their physical development. For example, the playroom is well arranged to allow them room to roll and crawl and 'cruise' round the furniture and low toy boxes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder has created a warm and welcoming environment for children. She uses her conservatory as a playroom and this is very well organised so that there is room for children to play and they are able to choose and reach toys for themselves. There is a very good range of well chosen toys for all ages of children that are well maintained and appear to meet safety standards.

The childminder has carried out a thorough risk assessment of her home and has taken steps to make safe any hazards she has found. For example, the house and garden are secure so that children cannot wander off nor visitors enter unannounced. All sharp and toxic substances are safely locked away or out of reach. The childminder has sought advice from the Fire Safety Officer and children learn to keep themselves safe, for example, by regularly taking part in emergency fire drills. They often talk about other safety issues, such as talking to strangers and road safety whilst out and about. There is one hazard to children that the childminder had not identified in the garden. The birdbath is not fixed to its pedestal and there is a risk of children pulling this down and causing damage to themselves or others.

The childminder has a thorough knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. She has attended training and has a copy of the locally agreed procedures for safeguarding children, which she shares with parents. She would be able to act in children's best interests if she had concerns for their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children really enjoy the time they spend with the childminder. They are settled, happy and confident and they develop good relationships with the childminder and the other children she cares for. The childminder uses her good knowledge of early years guidance, such as the Birth to three matters framework, and children's interests to plan a range of worthwhile and enjoyable activities and outings. She takes account of children's stage of development to adapt activities so that all can benefit and join in. The childminder is warm and caring towards the children, they go freely to her for comfort and help and enjoy the closeness of being cuddled and tickled.

The childminder enjoys playing with the children and she takes every opportunity to help them learn. For example, young children practise counting as they play with wooden numbers. Children develop excellent communication skills. There is a great deal of lively conversation and the childminder encourages children to talk about what they are doing and she introduces new vocabulary. She is very responsive to babies as they attempt to communicate through sounds, gestures and facial expressions. In this way they are encouraged to express their needs, knowing they will be understood. Children's creativity is encouraged, for example, through art, imaginative role play and music. A baby plays with an electronic toy and enjoys moving to the music. Children's achievements are valued, for example, there are several displays of children's art work attractively mounted on the walls.

Older children have time to relax after school, for example, taking turns to choose videos. They enjoy planned activities, such as topics on healthy eating and different cultures from around the world. All children enjoy trips during the holidays, such as to Bowood adventure park.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the childminder's home and soon feel part of the setting. The childminder does a great deal to raise children's self esteem and develop their sense of belonging. For example, there are photographs displayed of all the children and they are encouraged to make choices throughout the day, such as what to play with or what they would like to eat. They talk about different topics all together, for example, on healthy eating and then make a group display for the wall. The childminder is skilled at including everyone in activities and makes sure that each child gets plenty of individual attention.

Children have good opportunities to learn about the wider world and to value similarities and differences between themselves and others. They play with a range of toys that reflect diversity and join in with activities that help them learn about other countries, cultures and ways of life.

The childminder works closely with parents to make sure she can accommodate their wishes and children's individual needs. She makes time to talk to parents each day about their children and offers written daily reports, especially for the younger children. This ensures parents are fully informed about their child's day. The childminder shares a range of written policies and procedures with the parents, which gives them useful information. She informs them about how to make a complaint, including how to refer to Ofsted. She was not, however, clear about the requirement to share any complaints she may receive with parents, should they request this. Parents speak highly of the childminder and the care she provides.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The good organisation of the childminder ensures that children are safe, happy and well cared for. She has arranged her home effectively to meet children's needs and plans her day well so that children take part in a range of interesting and enjoyable activities. She sometimes works with an assistant, allowing her to care for more children at these times, yet still offer them plenty of individual attention. She ensures that any assistants have undergone the relevant checks and are suitable to carry out this role.

All the required documentation is in place. It is kept up to date and is available for inspection. All records are stored confidentially. She has a wide range of policies and procedures to share with parents, however, the complaints procedure lacks sufficient detail. The childminder is committed to continually improving the standard of care she provides. She regularly attends relevant training and enjoys sharing aspects of good practice with others. 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 asked to attend first aid training and to improve her knowledge of child protection issues. She now has a current first aid certificate and she has attended child protection training. Both these help protect children's welfare.

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 standards of hygiene by using a mat when changing nappies; washing hands after wiping children's noses and consistently washing children's hands before eating
- ensure the complaints procedure states that parents can see the complaints log on request
- ensure the garden ornaments are not a danger 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