

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY344660
Inspection date	23 May 2007
Inspector	Carol Patricia Willett

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

This childminder was registered in 2006. She lives with her husband, two teenage children and one child of primary school-age in Wokingham, Berkshire. The family have a cat. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Children go upstairs for the toilet and to sleep only. The childminder makes use of local facilities such as the park and toddler groups. She walks to local schools to take and collect children.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. There are currently five children on roll. She is a member of the National Childminding Association. She has a relevant level 3 childcare qualification and holds a current first aid certificate.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted satisfactorily as the childminder provides a generally clean, healthy environment so the areas the children use for resting, eating and play are suitable. There are generally good hygiene procedures in place including when changing nappies. The childminder wipes the changing mat between uses to minimise the risk of cross infection. However, the baby sits on the floor on the changing mat to have her lunch and this is not good practice as it increases the risk of infection. The procedure for nappy disposal is not effective as they are placed in the kitchen bin.

The children eat a variety of healthy meals and snacks including fruit, vegetables and breadsticks. They have regular drinks of water in order to maintain good health and their cups are freely available and the childminder keeps them topped up. Parents currently supply the food for their children's lunch and the childminder stores it appropriately in the fridge and reheats it accordingly. Children wash their hands before they eat their lunch. However, they do not consistently wash their hands before eating in order to maintain good health, for example, they did not wash them before they had their snack in the garden.

There is a good range of garden toys and garden play. Outings to local parks and toddler groups provide the children with good opportunities to develop their physical skills well. The space indoors provides good opportunities for children to move freely and use toys and resources to develop their manipulative and coordination skills. Children have opportunities for quiet and restful activity as the childminder recognises the children's need to have both busy and quiet times.

Suitable measures are taken to promote children's health. For example, the childminder obtains a good range of information from parents to enable her to understand and meet the child's dietary and health needs. The childminder has not obtained written consent from all parents should their children need emergency aid or treatment. Some parents have supplied medication for emergency pain relief, however, the childminder does not have written consent to give this.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a well maintained family home. They play on the ground floor which provides sufficient space for them to play and explore freely. There is a large garden for outside play which is mostly safe and secure. Arrangements for children to have a rest are good as the childminder uses a travel cot in the bedroom. Children have access to a range of toys and equipment which are suitable for their age and of good quality. The childminder selects some toys she knows the children like and these are arranged so the children can freely select them to initiate their own play. They do not have free access to all the toys, due to limited space many of the resources are stored in the shed in the garden. The childminder does not have sufficient nursery equipment in place to fully ensure children's comfort and safety. For example, there is no step in the bathroom to enable children to reach the wash basin and there is no highchair for babies which hinder their developing skills as they start to feed themselves.

The childminder demonstrates a sound awareness of safety. She takes positive steps to minimise risks, for example, there is a safety gate across the kitchen and sockets are covered so children

stay safe. Security is good and children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. However, risk assessment procedures are not fully effective as the cupboard where cleaning materials are stored does not have a child-catch and the washing line and water butt in the garden are potential hazards to the children. The childminder encourages the children to develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they learn about walking and not running indoors and to look for cars as they cross the road when they are out walking. The childminder has suitable safety measures regarding smoke detection. She has discussed fire evacuation to develop children's confidence and awareness in an emergency.

The children's security is promoted well as they are always in the childminder's care and they are closely supervised when out. They are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. Children's welfare is satisfactorily safeguarded by the childminder's understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and of the action she needs to take if concerned about a child in her care. She ensures parents are aware of her responsibility to protect children through her written policies and the sharing of records such as accident reports. The child protection policy does not contain contact details of the local child protection team.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and at home in the childminder's house as she has a warm caring manner. They enjoy a suitable variety of activities that are appropriate to their ages. They confidently choose toys and resources for themselves from the range selected by the childminder. Whilst the children mostly enjoy playing with the selected toys they are not able to freely choose from the whole range of toys available. The childminder does not effectively plan for changes of toys or activities and sometimes the children wander aimlessly when the childminder is preparing their lunch towards the end of the morning. The childminder is aware of the Birth to three matters framework but she has not used it to develop her practice with children under three years. The children enjoy the childminder's interaction with them. She joins in with their play and makes suggestions and helps the children to develop their play ideas. For example, she sits on the floor and plays with the animals naming them and counting which develops their vocabulary and number skills. The childminder encourages imagination and language development as the children play with the cars and garage in the garden. The childminder knows the children well and gets out activities they like. The older children enjoy craft activities and the childminder plans activities, for example, making cards for cultural and family celebrations such as Mothers day.

The childminder is warm and affectionate making children feel comfortable and valued. They like to sit on her lap and listen to stories. The childminder has good relationships with the children and knows them well. She spends a lot of time talking and playing with them, consequently children are supported in their play. Children enjoy a good variety of activities over the childminding week which ensures they have fun and make progress in all areas of development. They meet with other childminders and visit toddler groups and parks. This enables them to meet other adults and children and develop their social skills and knowledge of the local community. The childminder ensures the children have suitable opportunities for activity, rest and nourishment in their daily routine recognising that it ensures the children enjoy their day.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has a sound knowledge of the children as she finds out about their individual needs at initial meetings with parents. Good relationships are formed with parents and they are kept informed of the children's time at the childminder's home through ongoing daily discussions. The childminder works effectively in partnership with parents and the school to ensure children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and their needs met. She talks to the teachers at the school and ensures parents are aware of any issues in the communication book. Parents provide positive written feedback about how happy they are with the care their children receive.

The childminder has some basic written policies and procedures which are shared with parents to inform them of the service offered. They sign written contracts and appropriate records to keep them informed of accidents and any medication given in order to safeguard the children's welfare. Parents sign the register of attendance. They provide written consent for a variety of care issues including outings and use of sun cream and medication. The childminder has not obtained some written consents, for example, she has not obtained consent for children using the trampoline in the garden. The childminder has a written policy to inform parents of the procedures to follow should they have a complaint which includes contact details of the regulator, Ofsted. However, she does not have documentation to record any concerns from the parents, should there be any, in line with current guidance.

Children generally behave well. They are learning to share and take turns using the toys and resources. The childminder acts as a good role model. The children are praised and encouraged frequently as they play reinforcing their positive behaviour. She ensures the children are aware of unacceptable behaviour giving them explanations. The childminder has a written policy based on house rules, however, this is not framed in a positive way.

Children undertake a variety of suitable activities in the home and in the local community which increases their awareness and understanding of different people and society. They regularly meet with other childminders and the children so they become aware of differences and develop their social skills.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder generally organises her day well to ensure she provides the children with the attention and care they need. She enjoys her time with the children and joins in their play, listens and responds attentively. The childminder has a sound understanding of the requirements of registration and maintains correct ratios at all times so children are well supported.

Resources are mostly used effectively to promote the children's care. They can access selected toys and resources easily and independently and have sufficient space for their play. The childminder generally maintains suitable documentation to underpin her practice and keep parents informed. They sign appropriate records and discuss the children's needs daily. Some written consents are not in place for all the children. Children's records are stored well and maintain confidentiality. The childminder does not have documentation to record any concerns the parents may have. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 satisfactory. 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):

- request written permission from all parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment; ensure prior written consent is obtained to give emergency pain relief medication
- improve hygiene practices with regard to hand washing and the disposal of nappies
- improve risk assessment procedures; ensure children are safe in the garden with regard to the water butt and washing line and ensure cleaning materials in the kitchen cupboard are inaccessible to children
- review and improve the organisation of resources and activities to ensure all children are sufficiently challenged throughout the day; develop practice with children under three years by using the Birth to three matters framework, for example
- review and improve written policies.

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