

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY364525
Inspection date	23 June 2008
Inspector	Sarah Fletcher
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 2007. She lives with her husband, her two adult children and two younger children aged 11 and seven years in Newport Pagnell, close to Milton Keynes. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She walks to local schools to take and collect children and attends the local parent/toddler group. The family has a wide selection of pets, including a dog, a cat, goldfish, land snails, a rabbit and a tortoise.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because the childminder follows current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines. Children are beginning to follow and understand simple good health and hygiene practices, for example, washing their hands before eating, after using the toilet and playing outside. The childminder is a good role model, washing her own hands often. She protects children from cross contamination and the spread of infection by following a clear

sickness policy and using anti-bacterial wipes to clean surfaces and changing mats. Nappy changing takes place in accordance with each individual child's needs. The childminder ensures she washes her hands after each nappy change and disposes of nappies appropriately. A clean protective material cover is in use on the changing mat to reduce slippages while administering the protective cream for the baby's eczema, in consultation with parents' wishes and the child's daily requirements.

Children have their health and dietary needs met because the childminder works well with parents. She ensures she meets parents' wishes and children's preferences, together with any religious or dietary requirements to nourish children in her care. Children receive a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables during their meals and snacks with children helping to plan the weekly menus. Parents provide packed lunches during school holidays and the childminder supplies evening meals, snacks and breakfast. Children receive regular drinks of water, milk or juice throughout the day and on request in named cups, which are refreshed as required. Babies receive good interaction from the childminder when eating in high chairs and young children receive encouragement to develop their independence during meals as they learn to feed themselves.

Children learn about healthy living, through regular physical play and activity. They go to the park, play in the garden or take long walks around the local area, such as beside the river to feed the ducks; remaining under the childminder's close supervision. Older children rest according to their needs on comfortable sofas in the lounge, while babies often sleep in their buggies in the secure garden for fresh air, at their parents request. Medication is recorded with accurate evidence of administration shared with parents. Written permission from parents to seek emergency treatment and administer first aid are in place for each individual child, together with emergency contact numbers. Pets are fed away from minded children and they do not have access to areas animals use for toileting. The childminder carries out daily vacuuming to remove pet hairs and to reduce the risk of allergies for children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming home, where they move around freely and enjoy the relaxing family environment. The childminder provides a secure and safe indoor and outside child friendly space, which is clean and well maintained. For example, children safely access a fully enclosed rear garden, where the childminder has installed secure high wooden gates at the side entrance of the house to provide a quiet sleeping area for babies and to prevent entry from unvetted adults. Children use a good range of suitable and safe equipment, toys and resources, which are easily accessible and carefully checked for wear and tear by the childminder. For example, children choose toys, resources and equipment from clear storage boxes in the kitchen and large all weather storage containers in the garden. The childminder has a small covered pond with a sturdy wooden frame and mesh to prevent children's access and stores the family bicycles in a locked shed.

The childminder rotates her resources to support the needs of the children she cares for and ensures toys and equipment are appropriate for children's age or stage. Babies and toddlers do not have access to articles that may cause them harm as older children's toys, resources and equipment are stored securely.

Children are secure and receive close supervision by being within sight or hearing of the childminder at all times. She ensures sleeping babies are frequently checked as they rest. The

childminder reduces risks and hazards and minimises dangers within the home and outdoors. For example, premises are secure during minding hours and outbuildings are inaccessible. The childminder has an expandable stair gate across the kitchen/diner entrance to prevent children accessing hazardous areas used during cooking. Rooms have appropriate safety precautions, such as smoke detectors and socket covers. There are no trailing wires and all dangerous liquids and knives are stored out of children's reach. Older children learn about fire safety and evacuating in case of a fire, because the childminder has a clear plan in place, which she shares with them and helps them to understand with regular practice. For example the fire plan is pictorially depicted beside the front door, together with a record of the fire evacuation procedures.

Children learn to keep themselves safe and avoid accidental injury by following the childminders guidance on stranger danger and road safety when outdoors and by not running around inside the home in case they slip, trip or fall. For example, when children are using the zebra crossing near the childminder's house, they discuss the dangers of passing traffic, particularly as the childminder lives close to a school. Children are protected from harm because the childminder clearly understands of her role in child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. She is able to demonstrate how she protects children by explaining how she would deal with any concerns. The childminder has recently attended a safeguarding children training course to improve her knowledge and awareness of her responsibilities. She understands the importance of recording information confidentially and is aware of procedures to follow if an allegation of abuse is made against herself or her family. The childminder will help to further protect children by recording pre-existing injuries and asking parents to sign that they happened outside her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children develop confidence, independence and self-esteem, responding to the challenges the childminder provides. For example, older children help with the shopping, remember the shopping list to help the childminder and collecting items from shelves to put into the basket. Children show interest in what they do and ask the childminder questions. Together they organise their snack and meal choices for the week, asking the childminder to provide their favourite foods. The childminder compromises with children and agrees to some treats such as a cake or small sweet once a week, providing the children agree to eat fruit at least three times each week. Children use initiative and acquire new knowledge and skills such as watching the regular development of a nearby tree with the childminder. Together they discuss changes to the leaves, the development of blossom, the seasons and the shelter the tree provides from the weather.

Children make positive relationships with adults and each other. The oldest children enjoy arts and crafts and play together with some of the younger ones, particularly during the school holidays. Good relationships have developed between the age ranges, with the childminder occasional reminding the older ones to play appropriate games for younger children. The childminder provides high levels of interaction at children's level. For example, the baby is starting to enjoy simple construction and musical toys; different texture and sound blocks and listening to the toy phone with various sounds. The childminder plans activities to ensure children have a variety of experiences that will challenge their learning. She takes the children for walks around the local area and regularly attends the toddler group, she organises to help children develop their social skills, She has also recently started to attend a soft play children's centre and a singing and activity group with young children.

Children participate in activities, which further develop their existing skills and encourage new ones. For example, some of the older children have created their own family tree, with their own choices of what they would like included, for example, their family, pets, or favourite food. The childminder encourages discussions between the children around their choices and this helps children to understand their differences. The childminder finds out what children know and can do when they first attend by talking to parents and observing children when they are playing. She takes time to help children settle into her care gradually, over a period of several days or weeks, ensuring they are confident in her care and parents start to build trusting relationships. The childminder encourages good communication to develop continuity of care and ensures she receives appropriate and up to date training by attending relevant courses.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to become aware of wider society and understand the wider world through the developing range of toys and resources that reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability, although these resources are currently somewhat limited. Children learn about their local community through walking around the neighbourhood and visiting a variety of local groups. They feel a sense of belonging in the relaxed family atmosphere of the childminder's home and show developing confidence in their play. For example, the baby who has newly started, smiles and cuddles the childminder as they play together on the mat. Children make choices and take decisions in their play with appropriate toys and equipment accessible to all children. For example, the dining area is mainly used for art and crafts, with storage and supplies of many different types of resources for children to access as they require.

Children receive appropriate support and all children are valued as individuals. The childminder works with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are fully included. She talks to parents and observes children to find out what the children require and understand. They are encouraged to play and co-operate with each other and to treat others with respect and kindness. Children's individual needs are discussed with parents; any particular needs are recorded on the contract and child details forms. For example, the baby's medical requirements are clearly detailed, together with records for administration of his medication. Children benefit from the developing two-way relationship between parents and the childminder, which ensures continuity to meet the child's needs. For example, the childminder has made herself very approachable and open to parents and children, caring for children according to their parents' wishes. The childminder has established daily discussions with parents and older children to meet their individual requirements. She also keeps a daily diary to share with the baby's parents, detailing feeds, sleeps, nappy changes and confirming medication timings. The childminder makes time to talk to parents each day and invites them to ring her if they are at all worried about their child.

Children understand responsible behaviour, knowing and understanding the house rules decided by the older children. For example, children have created a poster of their rules which is on display in the entrance hall, with pictures and words designed by themselves. Behaviour is generally good and children are learning the childminder's house rules from an early age. The management of children's behaviour is verbally agreed with parents and in the childminder's policy. She gently reminds children of the rules as necessary and works with the parents and the children together to manage behaviour. Some of the older children require more discussions and explanations than others, but the childminder does not shout at them and believes a cuddle and a chat are very beneficial to them instead. The childminder also believes in using positive praise and encouragement and is skilled in extending children's language development. For

example, the childminder praises the baby's achievements often, talking to him animatedly and smiling, which results in a series of positive sounds, smiles and shared interaction in response.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a high regard for the welfare and well-being of all children. For example, when visitors are in the home and children are present, the childminder is always careful to keep children in her sight. The childminder has a sound knowledge of the needs of babies, to back up her knowledge she liaises with each child's parents. Children benefit from the childminder's good organisation of time, space and resources. For example, she has ensured all hazardous areas are inaccessible to children and toys, resources and equipment are well maintained and stored safely. The childminder also provides a good balance of indoor and outside play, together with regular attendance of groups in the community to extend children's social skills.

The childminder organises her minding practice by verbally sharing policies with parents at induction and maintaining daily information exchanges to provide continuity of care. Documentation on individual children, such as contracts, daycare records and parental permissions are in place and all paperwork is stored securely. Policies and procedures work in practice and mostly contain the required details. For example, policies for equal opportunities, behaviour and fire evacuation are clear to parents, however the policy for child protection does not provide information for parents regarding the procedure for reporting any concerns. Children's attendance is clearly recorded with accurate times of arrival and departure and confidentiality is maintained with individual families. Parents have access to the policies and procedures on request and are informed of Ofsted contact details through the parent poster on display in the entrance hall. However, the childminder has not yet developed a procedure to share with parents in case of complaint.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of the 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 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 the child protection policy to include information for parents regarding the reporting of any concerns and develop a complaints procedure to share with parents
- improve the range of resources to promote diversity with positive images of differing cultures, gender roles and disability

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