



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 110381
Inspection date 23 June 2005
Inspector Rosemary Davies

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 1992. She lives with her family in a 3 bed roomed semi-detached house in a cul-de-sac in the rural village of Chieveley, near Newbury, Berkshire. The local shop, pre-school, toddler group and playground are within walking distance. The childminder can take and collect children from local schools and nurseries.

Minded children use the downstairs rooms of the house with the upstairs being used for sleeping babies only. There is a secure garden area for outdoor play. The family keep 6 ducks, 4 cats, 2 guinea pigs and a rabbit.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. Her registration permits her to care for 6 children under the age of 8 years at any one time. She currently minds 4 children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the foundations of how to keep themselves healthy. They know they need sun cream and hats on sunny days and that they keep in the shade when it is exceptionally hot and bright. They become increasingly aware of their own needs, understanding when they feel hungry, thirsty or need to use a tissue. They understand simple hygiene 'rules' such as washing their hands or using antiseptic wipes, after using the toilet or before eating.

The childminder takes appropriate steps to prevent the spread of infection and cross-contamination by using appropriate practices and procedures, particularly with regard to the family's many pets. Her understanding in this area has increased since the last inspection through participation in a Food Hygiene course. She understands what constitutes a healthy and nutritious diet and can provide children with well balanced, home cooked meals. Children express their preferences clearly, knowing who likes salad and pasta and who definitely does not like baked beans! They drink when they want to and the childminder encourages them to take extra fluids in very hot weather.

Children play outdoors regularly, but during the inspection remained inside most of the time, owing to the extreme heat. They benefit from the childminder's experience and flexibility, as she alters routines to accommodate individual needs, such as earlier sleep times. This results in children having appropriate care in unusual conditions, such as extremes of temperature.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe environment. Indoors, the childminder identifies and eliminates possible hazards, well. Children know they do not play with electrical wires and they use child-type scissors sensibly, for example. They know they ask to use the toilet so that they are accompanied, and that they do not play with the computer.

The outside environment contains several potential hazards of which the childminder is fully aware. Children know they never go outside unless accompanied. They do not play in possible areas of danger such as the log pile, as they are watched over carefully.

Young children move around the spacious indoor play environment as they wish. They access toys and resources easily, knowing they may help themselves to items in the playroom or books from the wide range available on a low-level shelf. Babies

crawl freely, again benefiting from having plenty of room in which to move. They too play with a good range of safe toys that are within their reach.

The childminder undertakes training to help keep children safe and knows the local child protection procedures. She has not practised fire evacuation procedures with the children although other fire precautions are in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy the toys provided for them. They join in enthusiastically with high quality activities. They learn quickly, benefiting from the individual attention received from the childminder. They develop their speech and vocabularies quickly and at the same time learn about the world around them. One child asks, for example, "What is a coat-hanger?" and then practises saying the word. Children draw freely, sing familiar nursery rhymes tunefully and use mathematical language accurately, such as 'square'. Their imaginative play is exceptional. They enjoy pretending to be 'knights and dragons', making and decorating shields to use in their play or imagine going to the sea-side and taking a swim. The childminder joins in actively, sensitively supporting their ideas and extending the scenarios created.

Children enjoy high levels of choice and actively lead their play. They choose favourite stories such as 'Mog' and listen avidly as it is clearly read. They think about what they hear in order to answer the childminder's questions. The childminder's understanding of child development is extremely good. She divides her time skilfully so that all minded children receive appropriate attention and care and are always busy and purposefully engaged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy warm, relaxed relationships with the childminder. They treat each other in the same kind way that the childminder treats them. Older children praise their friend's creations saying for example, "That's a lovely crown!". This reflects how the childminder values what the children say and do, displaying made items on the playroom wall for all to admire. The childminder works closely with parents, with whom she also has good relationships. She finds out about children's individual requirements before they come to her so that she cares for them appropriately and they feel secure. Children receive equal attention and can use all resources provided, although there are few to reflect the diversity of modern life. The childminder keeps parents very well informed about what children have done during their time with her.

Children understand what is expected of them. They take off outdoor footwear when indoors and know that good manners are required. They understand the routines of the day. They receive praise for what they do well and participate in activities which interest them. Children's behaviour is excellent because of these established routines and positive strategies.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children cared for by this experienced childminder benefit from her knowledge and skills, which she uses well. Since her last inspection she has undertaken further training from choice, demonstrating commitment to her work and to the children in her care although her First Aid certificate is not current.

The childminder organises the space used for childminding to be child-centred so that children can access resources easily. All children receive much individual attention because of the way the childminder organises her day. She reads stories to older children whilst younger ones sleep and plays with babies as older children draw. Children enjoy an extremely good balance of daily activities owing to this good organisation.

All required documentation is kept securely and confidentially and contributes to the safe care of the children, as does the close relationship with parents. Overall, the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was required to install a working smoke alarm on each level of the property and to update her knowledge and understanding of child protection regulation. The childminder has fire alarms fitted on the ground and first floors, with a third alarm installed on the landing. This means that children are less at risk should a fire break out. She has successfully updated her knowledge and understanding of child protection and is fully aware of the local Area Child Protection Committee. This means that she is better able to protect the children in her care and knows how to report possible abuse.

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):

- complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children
- improve fire safety precautions further by implementing and practising a fire evacuation procedure
- ensure that children have an appropriate range of resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

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