



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142287
Inspection date	04 August 2006
Inspector	Jan Healy
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?

The childminder registered in 1992. She lives with her partner and one adult daughter, in the city of Wells, Somerset. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and one bedroom on the first floor for sleep and rest. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time, and is currently caring for four children under the age of eight years.

The family have three cats.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder helps to promote children's good health, by taking positive steps to prevent the spread of infection. The premises are immaculate, due to a daily cleaning routine. Disposable tissues and wipes are provided for the cleaning of hands and faces after meals and snacks, and for nose blowing, all of which are disposed of after one use. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and all accidents are recorded. She is clear about the procedure to follow when administering medication, retaining written information, which she shares with parents. She has written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice, to prevent the delay in care. The family own three cats, which are clean and free from disease. The childminder does not allow sick children into her home, and contacts parents to collect children if they become ill during their stay. Children have the opportunity to enjoy the fresh air in the fully enclosed garden, and to enhance their physical development, through a range of climbing and stretching activities, using a wide range of apparatus.

The childminder provides a range of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks, for example, fresh fruit and steamed vegetables. She attends a healthy eating course, and has good understanding about the effects food and drink has on a child's well-being. The childminder works in partnership with parents, to ensure dietary requirements and individual needs are catered for, such as children who follow a vegetarian diet. She is aware that there are some children who suffer from an allergy to food or who have a food intolerance, and so the swapping of food is prevented.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides a welcoming environment and greets the children and parents, with her warm and generous personality. Children have access to a reasonable amount of space for both table top and floor toys, such as games and the interlocking of jigsaws. Comfortable rest facilities are available on the first floor, for the children and babies who require a sleep during the day. A telephone is in good working order and is used for the contacting of parents, and in the event of contacting emergency services if required. The rooms are kept cool during the summer months, by the opening of windows and doors, and heating is adjusted during the winter months, to ensure the children remain comfortable during their stay.

Independence is encouraged when young children use the bathroom, as the childminder provides a booster step and seat. Hand washing is supervised, taking into account the age of the child and their developing independence. Warm water is available at all times, to aid hygiene. A baby monitor is in use during sleep times, as they are out of the childminder's sight, which ensures their safety. Children have the use of a dining room table and chairs for mealtimes, and babies sit in a highchair, so they are able to join the older children during this social occasion, helping to develop their language skills and social graces. When on outings, children and babies have the benefit of being secure in a vehicle with age appropriate car seats, and have the advantage of a pram for when the children are not yet able to walk.

The premises are secure to prevent unwanted visitors gaining access, as doors are locked and the outdoor play area is fully enclosed. Hot drinks are placed out of children's reach to prevent scalding, and dangerous substances are stored so they are inaccessible to children, such as bleach. The childminder is aware of the plants that are in her garden, ensuring that none pose a possible health risk to children. The children practise an emergency evacuation procedure for both floors of the property, so they learn to leave the premises swiftly and calmly. Smoke alarms are tested regularly, to alert the childminder of impending danger. An effective system is in place, for the safe arrival and departure of children, so they remain protected at all times.

The childminder has adequate knowledge with regard to child protection issues, but is unsure about the procedure to follow, in the event of a concern. She is able to discuss and recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse, and has an understanding about the requirement for the keeping of relevant records.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder is kind towards the children, sharing a warm relationship. Children look to the childminder for comfort and reassurance when upset, or facing a new challenge, such as learning a new activity or game, for example, 'Snakes and Ladders' or 'Battle Ships'. Babies and toddlers walk and crawl near and within reach of the childminder, providing them with a sense of security. The childminder responds to babies' gestures and sounds, encouraging them to practise their language skills. A suitable range of play is available, for example, equipment in the outdoor play area, which helps to enhance children's fitness and stamina. Activities are arranged according to the ages of the children in the childminder's care, so they are able to progress confidently, and to access the resources independently.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder shares a warm and affectionate relationship with the babies and children in her care. She values each of them, treating them as individuals who have individual needs. The childminder has cared for children who speak English as an additional language. She requests relevant information from the parents, for example, finding out about their customs and beliefs, so she is able to provide for their needs. There is, however, a lack of play materials, which reflect diversity, which further helps children to feel secure, and to learn about similarities and differences.

The childminder is aware that there are some children who have a learning disability, and ensures that information is collated from parents before their child's stay. This helps the childminder to ensure that she is able to provide for their individual needs. Information about any further concerns noted or about any progress are exchanged with the parents, so both parties are kept fully informed and up to date.

The childminder encourages the children to be kind to each other and to respect each others' differences. For example, she reminds the older children that the babies and toddlers do not

always understand what is expected of them. Boundaries are clear and consistent, so there is no misunderstanding or confusion. An explanation is provided as to why a particular behaviour is unacceptable, in a way that does not damage their self-esteem or confidence.

Written contracts are updated regularly, so relevant information is shared between the parent and childminder, who is able to provide for children's individual requirements. Parents are kept informed about how their child spent their day, and about any progress being made or concerns noted. Parents report that they are happy with the care provided and are aware of the procedure to follow in the event of wishing to make a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has adequate knowledge and understanding about the National Standards and has the skills and ability to meet them. She is a kind and considerate carer, who keeps up to date with relevant training, to ensure the children and babies' welfare and safety is paramount, for example, training in first aid. Children are supervised when indoors and when on outings, so they are safe from adults who are not vetted.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. An attendance register is up to date, and contains details about the children's time of arrival and departure, so the childminder ensures the adult: child ratio is maintained. Both babies and children are well supported during their stay, with an adequate amount of resources, helping them to develop in their learning.

The childminder keeps relevant documentation up to date, and retains them for a reasonable period of time. They remain confidential and are available for inspection. Records are shared with parents, to keep them informed about any concerns or progress children are making.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was requested to develop her knowledge and understanding about equal opportunities, and to ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity. This has been done reasonably well, as although she has improved her knowledge, she has purchased very few resources. The childminder was also requested to gain knowledge about the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made whilst a child was in her care. She has improved her knowledge through reading relevant literature and seeking information from her local network. The childminder was also requested to obtain written parental permission before administering medication, which is now in place, for the good health of children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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):

- develop knowledge and understanding about the procedure to follow in the event of a child protection concern
- ensure children have access to resources which reflect diversity

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