



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	153411
Inspection date	26 June 2006
Inspector	Carol Johnstone
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 2001. She lives in Dorchester with her son aged eight. She is registered to care for three children and there are currently four children on roll, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding purposes with one bedroom and a toilet upstairs. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. Minded children can have supervised access to the pet guinea pigs who live in the garden.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating. They are offered a range of fruit each day at snack time and there are regular fruit and vegetable tasting days where the children discuss, shop for and prepare more unusual fruits from around the world. The childminder eliminates salt from any food she gives the children and when they cook together, she introduces them to alternatives for sugar in recipes such as using dried fruit.

Children have independent access to water throughout the day and they are offered milk at snack time. Packed lunches are provided by parents, however the childminder works with the parents to encourage them to make healthy choices when preparing them. Children are not allowed to share lunch boxes in order to protect them from the risk of unknown allergies.

Children learn very effectively about their personal hygiene. They are taught not to share flannels and have liquid soap and separate towels for hand washing which minimises the risk of cross infection. They are encouraged to cover their mouth when they cough and know to use paper hankies to wipe their noses. Children who are unwell are excluded from the provision in order to protect the others from possible infection. In addition, parents are advised of minimum exclusion periods before the children will be allowed back. Children who become unwell in the day are made comfortable in a quiet corner until parents arrive to collect them. The childminder is aware of the correct procedures to follow when administering and recording medication. She holds a current paediatric first aid certificate so would be able to assist children correctly in the event of an accident.

Children have daily fresh air and exercise. The childminder walks to local playgroups and nurseries instead of using the car to promote children's health. There are regular trips to local parks and play centres where children can practise their physical skills on a range of equipment. There is also a range of play equipment in the childminder's garden including a slide and trampoline. Each week, the children go to Kingston Maurward where there is a farm and fields to play in. There are also frequent visits to the beach and the Swannery when the weather is fine.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about their personal safety in the provision. The childminder teaches them to be aware of potential hazards such as leaving toys out in the middle of the room when they have finished playing with them. They are asked what will happen and one child replies "someone will hurt themselves and bang their knees". Children also learn about road safety. During their daily walks to the nursery, children are secured into buggies or on reins, however they are asked at the roadside to see if there are cars coming and if it is safe to cross yet.

Around the childminder's home, there are safety precautions in place such as a fireguard, stair gates and cupboard locks. However, there are some issues that require attention such as some unsafe plants in the garden that could present a hazard.

The childminder has a basic understanding of child protection issues. She is aware of the types of abuse and the signs that may present in a child at risk. She is aware of the correct agency to contact in the event of an urgent concern. However, her understanding of when it is appropriate to do so needs to be more secure so that she is able to confidently make a referral when necessary. This will enable a child to obtain timely and appropriate support and assistance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of interesting activities. These include bug hunts in the garden, caring for the tadpoles that the childminder keeps, role play and dressing up, construction play with duplo, bricks and beakers, letter and number board games, planting and growing in the garden, home-made play dough, printing, arts and crafts, rice and lentil writing, small world play such as a castle and dolls house, reading, puzzles and dancing.

Children have regular trips to the local library for story time, visits to local playgroups and a weekly visit to a music group where they learn about sound and rhythm. The childminder is also currently teaching the children basic French and how to write numbers and letters for school.

All activities are very effectively supported by the childminder's warm but challenging interaction which encourages children to think about the activity they are involved with and how to develop it themselves.

Children are extremely comfortable and relaxed with the childminder and are very confident to approach her at any time. The childminder is consistently involved with the children during their play while allowing them to make their own choices and learn how to be independent.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are extremely well regarded by the childminder. She is committed to enabling all children to reach their potential and become sociable and confident. Each child is given one-to-one attention based on their particular needs. For example if a child is particularly shy, she introduces other children and adults very slowly to them while providing the security of her care. She then increases this through introductions to very small and then larger groups through steady stages. The childminder makes sure that the child goes at their own speed and this prevents them from feeling any pressure.

Children with identified special needs would be welcomed to the provision. The childminder is open to taking additional training courses to enable her to work with children who have particular disabilities and their parents to follow specific routines and educational plans.

Children's behaviour is very good. Children learn to respect and be kind to each other through the childminder's positive role modelling. She says please and thank you to the children and they in turn follow her example. Positive behaviour is praised and negative behaviour is played down. However the childminder does have a range of strategies to use if ongoing issues occur.

Children learn about different cultures and religions through topic work, discussion and the celebration of festivals. In addition there are resources and books that reflect diversity and disability.

There are very positive relationships with parents which support the children during their care. The childminder invites parents and children to visit several times before starting and regularly reviews the care to ensure that needs are being met. She offers a diary service to all parents and there is a daily discussion upon collection of the child. Additional information and updates are provided for parents throughout the day if requested.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises the space available flexibly to give children a choice of play areas. There is clear floor space in the lounge which children can use to spread out train track and small world play. Children are able to enjoy messy play in the kitchen and there are two tables on which they can paint, make models and roll out play dough.

All required aspects of documentation are in place. The attendance register, contracts, the accident book and medication record are completed accurately. Motor vehicle and public liability insurance is up-to-date. Children's personal information is stored confidentially.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made to obtain parental consent for children to go on outings and to be transported in a vehicle. There was also a recommendation that attendance be more clearly recorded. Both of these issues have been addressed. Attendance is now recorded on a daily basis to give an accurate picture of which children are present and parental consent is now held for outings and transportation.

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 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):

- ensure that potential hazards are made inaccessible to children
- develop a clearer understanding of the referral procedures for child protection concerns.

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