



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141022
Inspection date	22 August 2006
Inspector	Brenda Joan Flewitt
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 was registered in 1999. She lives with her three children aged 14, 12 and eight years in Blandford Forum, Dorset. The ground floor is mainly used for childminding, which consists of a sitting room with a linked dining room, kitchen and toilet facilities. Sleep facilities are provided on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outside play. The family have a dog and a cat to, which the children have supervised access.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is currently caring for two children under the age of five years, who attend on a part time basis. She is currently caring for one child overnight on occasions, as required.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and the 'Children Come First' network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's healthy lifestyle is well promoted. They are cared for in a clean and tidy family home. They develop independence in good practices for their own personal hygiene. From an early age children learn that hands must be clean before eating. For example, the childminder cleans babies' hands with wet wipes, and older children use the easily accessible hand washing facilities to wash their hands. Children are protected from the spread of infection through the childminder's procedures, such as providing hygienic resources for hand washing and nappy changing. There is a clear sickness policy which informs parents that children must not attend if they have an infectious illness. Children's medication and accidents are well managed. The first aid resources are easily accessible both at home and on outings, and records are completed accurately.

Children are involved in a good range of activities that promote physical development. They often visit 'soft play' venues where even the youngest children practice rolling, crawling and climbing in a safe environment. Regular trips to various play parks enables the children to practise skills in using large equipment like swings, slides and climbing frames, or to take part in ball games.

Children are offered drinks on a regular basis to prevent them getting thirsty and they make choices from food provided by their parents. The childminder shares her knowledge with parents about the importance of presenting appropriate sized portions, which leads to children enjoying their food. Babies' routines are discussed with parents and respected with regards to food and sleep, to ensure their individual needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in well maintained premises, where risks are identified and minimised. The childminder puts measures in place to help prevent accidents. These include a safety gate to prevent access to the stairs, socket covers and the safe storage of hazardous substances. Children are protected from uninvited visitors and cannot leave the building unsupervised, as doors and gates are kept locked. Children move around the family home in safety and use play provision that is kept in a safe condition. There is a range of equipment available to keep children safe while eating, sleeping and travelling. This includes a high chair and buggies with harnesses, a high sided travel cot and appropriate car seats.

Children are kept safe on outings through the childminder's routine procedures. She chooses child orientated venues and makes sure that first aid equipment and contact numbers are readily available. Children learn about being safe near roads. A four-year-old knows that she must hold hands or the buggy, and when crossing roads she must 'stop' and 'wait for the green man'. Children get to know what is expected if they have to leave the home in an emergency, as they are involved in regular practices. This contributes towards their safety in a real situation.

The childminder's good understanding of child protection issues and sound knowledge of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures contributes towards the children's safety and welfare. Existing injuries are recorded as routine, and there is information for parents that explains the childminder's responsibility in child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and secure in their childminder's care. They make good relationships with her and her family. Children develop confidence in making their needs known as they can be sure of a friendly response. For example, a baby lets his childminder know that he is thirsty by pointing to his beaker, and older children ask for a drink, or something to eat when they are hungry.

Children are involved in a variety of activities and experiences that promote their learning. These include puzzles, games, small world toys, water play, construction, role play, books, art and TV. A four-year-old enjoys playing a game of dominoes with the childminder, taking turns and confidently practising her knowledge of numbers. A baby finds some appropriate toys on the floor to investigate and returns to his childminder for reassurance. The childminder interacts appropriately with the children, talking with them, which helps them learn language, and an understanding of various everyday activities. Children's days include a good range of visits outside the home, which encourages them to develop a positive awareness of the world around them. They regularly go to a toddler group or meet up with other childminders. This means they meet other people and use a wider range of equipment. They enjoy days out to venues such as Moors Valley or Farmer Palmers where they observe animals, join in picnics and experience a sense of adventure.

Children use a suitable range of play provision which is appropriate for their age and stage of development; however, the storage arrangements limit children making spontaneous choices and selecting equipment from a full range.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a friendly, caring environment where children are made to feel at home. Children are respected as individuals. The childminder gets to know children's particular needs through her interaction while supporting their activities, and effective communication with parents. Children start to develop an open attitude to people's differences as they use resources that reflect positive images of diversity, and through discussion and good example provided by the childminder.

Children behave well. They respond favourably to praise and encouragement offered by the childminder for effort and achievement, which helps build their self-esteem. They are encouraged to display good manners.

Children benefit from the childminder's good relationships with parents. She provides comprehensive information about the setting for new parents. This includes a folder containing

certificates relating to courses she has attended, and written policies and procedures. The childminder supplies parents with copies to keep, which provides good information for them to refer to. However, the complaints procedure does not relate to the most recent requirements. There are daily opportunities for exchanging information, and a flexible service is provided. This contributes towards meeting individual needs and ensures additional requirements are addressed.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the childminder's attendance at training courses, which develops her knowledge in some aspects of child care. The appropriate organisation of the space available and structure of the day leads to children being active in a safe environment, eating and sleeping as individual needs require, as well as enjoying visits outside the home. However, the storage arrangements for toys and play equipment sometimes restrict children choosing for themselves. For example, many of the resources are stored out of sight, and the large containers make it difficult for young children to select items easily. Some toys are muddled and not easy to reach.

The childminder's regular contact with other childminders means that children gain confidence with other familiar adults and children. Therefore, in the event of the childminder's holiday or sickness, children settle more easily with an alternative childminder they already know. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

All the required documentation and records are in place, up-to-date and completed clearly. However, there is no appropriate system in place for recording complaints suitable to show parents on request.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection recommended that good hygiene practices were promoted regarding hand washing, and that written statements were provided regarding various aspects of the provision.

The childminder has changed the resources provided for hand washing, which now includes individual towels and liquid hand wash, therefore protecting children from the risk of cross-infection. She provides all parents with a copy of each written policy relating to the care and welfare of the 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 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):

- review the organisation of the play provision, so that children can choose independently and spontaneously from a full range
- make sure the complaints procedure includes the most recent requirements, and that there is a system for recording complaints which is suitable for parents to see on request.

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