



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	104807
Inspection date	10 July 2006
Inspector	Michael Collins
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1992. She lives with her husband, one adult child and one school-aged child. The family live in a terraced house in a quiet situation on the outskirts of Barnstaple near to the North Devon District Hospital. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under the age of eight, and there are currently eight children on roll who attend at various times. Children have access to the ground floor of the home, in the lounge/diner. There is also an enclosed garden at the rear of the property. To the front of the property there is a shared, enclosed grassed area which is used, with parents permission, by the minded children under the supervision of the childminder. There are two cats in the household, one of which is usually in the home when the minded children are present.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder supports and encourages children's physical development through planned regular physical activities. For example, children play in the rear garden, go on regular walks and make visits to the local park.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment where they clearly learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They have a growing understanding of why they must wash hands after toileting and before eating thus helping to reduce the risk of cross contamination.

The childminder endeavours to care for children as their parents would wish and is aware of what to do should a child be unwell or have an accident. However, she does not have written permission to seek emergency medical advice and/or treatment, and this could potentially place children in danger.

The childminder provides snacks that appeal to children and meets their dietary needs. She takes into account parent's wishes, for example, following vegetarian diets, avoiding foods because of allergies and providing fresh fruit and vegetables. Drinks of milk, water or juice are always available to the children in order to maintain their fluid levels.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained home where risks are mainly identified and minimised. This enables them to move around with safety and independence. The childminder supervises children effectively and consistently helps children understand how to keep themselves safe both in and outside of the home. For example, she reminds them to use equipment safely and to be aware of each other.

Children confidently self-select activities from an adequate range of appropriate toys and resources, which meet safety standards. The childminder warmly supervises and supports children's choices, ensuring they are safe and appropriate.

In order to promote and safeguard children's welfare, the childminder has most of the required procedures and documents in place. For example, she holds a current first aid certificate and has a basic knowledge of child protection procedures in line with the local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. However, she does not have written permission from parents to take children on outings and trips. In addition, although the childminder has evacuation plans in place, these have not been practised with the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settle very quickly at the childminder's house, clearly making themselves comfortable and at home. They relate well to each other and to adults, confidently discussing their activities and their experiences. They clearly enjoy their time with the childminder and are able to relax or be active depending on their needs and interests. They independently choose activities and are absorbed in their play. This is particularly well supported by the childminder who will join in or leave them to their own devices, whichever is most appropriate. For example, children will play happily with the play dough or other activities provided and are confident enough to ask for comment, approval or help, and the childminder skilful enough to know when and how they require her assistance. She consistently praises the children for achievement and encourages them to tackle new challenges. All of this helps to reinforce children's independence and their sense of well being and confidence.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder welcomes children and parents to her home warmly. She takes individual need, family background and parental wishes into consideration, and acts upon these. However, despite a recommendation at the previous inspection she still lacks resources, which reflect positive images of race, culture gender and disability.

The childminder knows the children she cares for very well and has developed warm, caring and positive relationships with them. Children are valued and respected as individuals and treated as such. This encourages and supports them to interact co-operatively and develop their social and wider skills. She also assists the children to develop these skills by setting consistent boundaries and routines in partnership with parents. All of this, along with her consistent positive reinforcement of good behaviour, enables the childminder to foster and support good behaviour very well. As a result, the children feel safe and secure, and their behaviour is very good.

The childminder works in partnership with parents well in the main. She provides parents with daily verbal reports about her service, including information about: activities; food; naps; and events. This helps to ensure that parents are aware of their children's activities and behaviours, and they are able to discuss achievements, and plan for events with the childminder. However, not all parents have signed written agreements for the care of their children and there is a distinct lack of written permissions for specific eventualities.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

A well-maintained and reasonably organised environment enables the children to feel at ease and welcome. This ensures that they are confident to rest or initiate play as they wish.

The childminder, who makes sure she has all the information required to care for the children, as their parents would wish, caters for the children's individual needs well. However, the register of attendance does not accurately reflect times of children's arrival and departure.

Whilst the childminder has much of the documentation, policies and procedures in place, as previously mentioned there are marked and potentially dangerous gaps in documentation. In addition, although the event itself is properly recorded, the childminder has failed to inform Ofsted, as the regulating body, of a significant event, and this is a breach of regulations.

Therefore, whilst the continuity and level of care for the children is satisfactory, the lack of required documentation and its poor organisation and maintenance means that, overall the provision does not meet the needs of all the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

There has been minimal improvement since the last inspection when five recommendations were made. The childminder has improved children's safety by ensuring that they are unable to leave the premises unnoticed, and by making herself aware of child protection issues and procedures. However, she has not obtained written permission to seek emergency medical advice and or treatment, nor has she ensured that a written agreement with parents is in place for all children. Also, she has not ensured that there is an appropriate range of resources that reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that the records and documentation required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are complete and available for inspection at all times

- obtain written permission from parents to: seek emergency medical advice and/or treatment; and to take children on outings/trips; also obtain written agreements with parents for all children; and ensure the register clearly shows accurate times of children's arrival and departure
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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