



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110447
Inspection date	27 October 2006
Inspector	Marilyn Joy

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 was registered in 1991. She lives with her two grown-up daughters in a house in West Totton. Downstairs is the main area used for childminding with additional sleeping facilities upstairs. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. Local shops, parks, schools and pre-school groups are nearby. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children.

The childminder is currently registered for a total of six children under eight years. She is currently minding a total of seven children. There are three under five years and four aged between five and eight years. Children attend on a part-time basis. The childminder is a member of the local childminder network and regularly attends childminder drop-ins and parent and toddler groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle with the childminder. They are offered healthy and nutritious snacks of fresh fruit and regular drinks throughout the day. Fresh air and exercise is part of the daily routine. Weekly outings offer exciting opportunities for children to develop their physical skills in using a variety of larger play equipment, such as climbing apparatus, slides and soft play equipment. Babies are encouraged to gain confidence and extend their range of movements. They learn to hold a ball and begin to roll it backwards and forwards with the childminder. They hold a spoon at lunchtime so they can begin to feed themselves.

Children's health and dietary requirements are recorded and discussed fully with parents to ensure the childminder is clear about responding to individual needs. Records are maintained of accidents and the administration of medication. However, consent to seek emergency medical care has not been obtained for all children which could mean they may receive inappropriate care in an emergency. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. Parents are made aware of the childminder's sickness policy so that children do not attend if they are ill. Good hygiene practices are observed by the childminder at all times, to ensure her home and resources are clean. Parents generally provide children's lunches and these are stored in the fridge to keep them fresh.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

A warm and welcoming, home environment is offered where children can explore an excellent range of toys in safety. High quality resources are provided which are clean and in good condition. Safety is given a clear emphasis by the childminder who conducts daily checks to ensure appropriate equipment is in place. For example, socket covers are fitted and furniture strategically placed to prevent children from accessing electrical wires. Children are supervised when playing in the garden to ensure they remain safe. It is fully fenced, although the bolt on the gate is not at high level. The front door is secured to prevent them leaving unaccompanied. Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of safety for themselves and be alert to dangers. They follow road safety rules when going for walks and younger children learn about the importance of holding hands.

Procedures and documents are in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted, for example, the childminder holds a current first aid certificate and shares her emergency arrangements with parents and children. She has an awareness of child protection issues and her responsibilities. Evacuation procedures are in place and fire safety precautions, such as smoke detectors, are regularly checked to ensure they are in good working order.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are offered an exciting and stimulating range of activities that they enjoy. A variety of outings throughout the week extend the experiences offered to pre-school children. They explore climbing frames, ride on bikes and scramble through tunnels when they visit local pre-school groups. They gain confidence in mixing with other adults and socialising with their peers. Visits within the local environment widen their knowledge of the world around and help them to understand how to behave in different situations. They learn about playing safely on the beach, help to select items when shopping and go for nature walks. Older children are involved in planning what they would like to do during the holidays, for example, at half term they choose cooking, arts and crafts and a visit to the adventure play site.

Children's individual routines are incorporated into daily activities and ensure they have a balance of active and quiet play. Effective support from the childminder, as well as age-appropriate activities, promotes children's development. Babies enjoy cuddles as they look at books and squeal with delight during songs and rhymes. Language is effectively encouraged by the childminder who echoes their attempts at words and sounds as they communicate as they play. Children demonstrate a clear sense of belonging in the way they respond to the childminder. They are happy and settled.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Positive relationships are developed with parents. They are given a range of policies and procedures about the service provided. This forms the basis for discussions about how their child's care will be organised. Children's records clearly detail individual requirements and parent's wishes are respected. Daily routines and children's well-being are regularly discussed to ensure parents are happy with the care provided. They are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have informally with the childminder. However, the procedure for responding to complaints has not been updated in line with current regulations. This could result in parents not being fully informed about any complaints the childminder may receive regarding children's care, which is a breach of regulations.

Daily diaries provide parents with a thoughtful and detailed record of children's activities. Younger children's diaries are written by the childminder and illustrated with photographs. They clearly show the exciting range of activities children experience throughout the day. Older children are helped and encouraged to complete their own diary. Clear arrangements are in place for supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Activities are adapted to ensure they are able to fully participate. Children become aware of diversity through the wide range of resources available. They receive lots of praise and encouragement as they play and become aware of what is expected of them through the effective behaviour management strategies used. Distraction is used effectively to discourage babies from walking or crawling on toys because they might break.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the caring environment provided by the childminder. She is experienced and has a strong commitment towards developing her expertise through further training and membership of the local childminding network. Careful consideration is given to promoting children's health, safety and welfare. The home is organised so that children have space to play and can be easily supervised. Most documentation is in place and maintained appropriately. Clear policies and procedures have been prepared so that parents are well-informed of most aspects of the service provided, although some are not up-to-date. Activities and children's progress are discussed regularly with parents and contributes to both children and parents feeling confident and secure. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop her awareness of child protection issues and ensure parents are aware of who to contact if they wish to make a complaint. Policies and procedures were updated at the time and the childminder is aware of what should an allegation be made or if she is concerned about a child in her care.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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):

- improve knowledge and develop systems for the recording of complaints, in line with current regulations
- request consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

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