



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142325
Inspection date	14 March 2007
Inspector	Susan June Stone
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 lives in a semi-detached house in Wells, Somerset and her husband is also registered as a childminder. They have two children who are of primary school age. The whole of the house is available to use for childminding. Downstairs offers, separate play room and lounge room, toilet facilities and kitchen diner. There are additional toilet facilities and four bedrooms upstairs. Outdoor play can take place in the large rear garden and the front paved area.

The childminder is registered to care for five children under eight, three of whom can be under five years. At present she is caring for eight children of whom three are aged over 8 years. Most are cared for on a part time basis. The family have three dogs and two cats, a guinea pig, three goldfish and some chickens.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children are well cared for in a warm clean home where they enjoy the benefits of a routine that ensures the appropriate balance of rest and play. Regular outings and the effective use of the garden, contribute to children's good health.

Children are cared for in a clean family home, where they begin to learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They learn about the importance of maintaining good personal hygiene through daily routines. The childminder encourages the children to wash hands before meals and after playing outside. Separate face flannels are used to wipe hands and faces after meals have been eaten. The childminder sets good examples for hygiene in her behaviour such as washing hands before and after nappy changes and ensuring the changing mat is suitable cleaned after nappies have been changed. She ensures the toys and equipment are clean and safe before being used by the children. She has however failed to identify that the guinea pig being housed in the playroom poses a health and hygiene risk to the children.

The childminder works well with the parents to ensure that she meets the children's dietary requirements, likes and dislikes. She provides a good balance of nutritious snacks and lunches that are made from fresh wholesome ingredients. Children enjoy home made bread and marmite for their lunch, along with grapes and chunks of cucumber. At snack time children are offered a selection of fresh fruit including strawberries, bananas and apples. As a result, the children learn the benefits of healthy eating and they understand the benefits of eating fruit. They enjoy the social interaction during meal times as they eat together at the table. However, the children are not encouraged by the childminder to have regular drinks. They are offered a large drink at the start of the morning, but children are not encouraged to take regular drinks throughout the day.

Records of accidents and medication are in place, and emergency medical forms have been completed. The childminder's first aid training and awareness of dealing with sick children, ensures that an emergency situation and children's health care needs can be consistently met and dealt with effectively.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a safe, homely environment where risks have been identified and minimised. The house is bright and cheerful, with children's artwork on display. This makes the environment attractive and inviting to the children. The childminder ensures that good standards of safety are maintained in the areas used by the children, and uses available space well. This allows the children to move about freely and safely under her close supervision. Effective safety measures, like using safety gates in different areas of the house helps the children to play, and be cared for in a safe environment. The childminder also ensures the children are safe when accessing the outside areas, she ensures the younger children hold an adults hand when using the steps to gains access to the back garden. She also ensures that the access to the road from

the front drive is suitably barricaded with plastic fencing and a bollard to prevent the children running into the road. By carrying out safety checks and putting safety features in place, the childminder demonstrates her ability to identify and reduce possible hazards, so children can play in a safe and secure environment.

The children use a stimulating range of safe and suitable toys, which are in good repair and conform to safety standards. There are plenty of toys and resources that are age appropriate and meet the developmental needs of all the children. These are well organised and stored in the play room allowing the children to access them, enabling them to make their own choices about their play. The childminder helps the younger children to select toys they wish to play with like the 'funky footsteps' play mat. By providing a range of suitable equipment and resources the needs of the children can be well met.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. The childminder has a good knowledge of child protection procedures and a clear understanding of her role in the protection of children, ensuring the children's safety is always a priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and at ease in the childminder's house. They make themselves at home and are familiar with the daily routines and where things are kept. The children are confident and settled within the setting. Their individual care routines are known and respected by the childminder. She provides for and accommodates sleep routines and rest requirements. This enables the children to feel secure and make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.

Children have developed good relationships with the childminder and her family. They enjoy playing in the garden, swinging on the swings and looking at the chickens, collecting the eggs they have laid. Children also enjoy playing games with the childminder, laughing together when playing with the 'funky footsteps' play mat, balancing on the different coloured footprints and jumping into the 'puddle' at the end, each child waiting patiently for their next turn. They play happily together at the front of the house, using chalks to draw and colour on the drive. They also help the childminder to water the plants 'to make sure they can grow and don't die'. The children are also eager to look at the development of the frogspawn they have collected and are fascinated by the tadpoles swimming in the water. The childminder has taken photographs to record the development for the children. She explains to the children that the tadpoles will eventually grow into frogs. The childminder talks with the children during their play about what they are doing, which helps to develop their communication and language skills. Very good relationships are evident and the children are relaxed and happy in the childminders care.

Children's self-esteem is reinforced by the childminder valuing each child and supporting their needs. Children relate well to the childminder and consequently, they are secure and confident in her care. The childminder interacts well with the children, and she is involved in their play at an appropriate level. She is encouraging and reassuring and offers lots of positive praise and reinforcement. She cares for children under the age of three and is making herself familiar with the Birth to three matters framework. She provides supervised activities for the younger children

which encourages their pencil control and encourages individual learning. She uses worksheets to help the children to learn about numbers, letters and colours. These are kept in a folder along with other pieces of children's work like drawings and paintings. These folders are shared with parents and used by the childminder to help identify areas for individual development. This helps the childminder to plan and provide different activities for the children that will help them learn new skills and aid their development and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. The childminder is very aware of the children's particular requirements and meets these well. She plans activities to suit individual needs and to move the children to the next stage in their development. All children are included in the activities as the childminder effectively adapts the experiences she provides to suit each child's age and level of understanding. The childminder interacts well with the children, and encourages them to feel valued and included, all children are respected as individuals. She provides toys and activities which portray positive images of diversity such as books, dolls and small world toys. These help the children to develop a respect for and have positive attitudes towards others.

Children behave well and respond well to the consistent boundaries set by the childminder. The childminder has a calm approach and uses positive, sound methods for managing behaviour which makes the children feel valued and helps to build children's confidence and self esteem. The childminder sets very good examples in her behaviour. The children are learning what is right from wrong, and manners are encouraged by the childminder. Discussions indicate the childminder would use appropriate explanations and guidance to the children when behaviour is not as expected; for example, encouraging the children to be fair and share the toys. This helps the children to understand how their behaviour and actions can affect others.

Children benefit from the childminder's friendly, yet professional relationship with parents. The childminder has developed a portfolio of policies and procedures, copies of which are provided to parents. This helps to ensure parents are well informed about the care offered. The childminder and parents work together to meet the children's needs. Time is allowed daily to talk and share any necessary information concerning the children. This ensures that information can be exchanged and recorded, and allows for the children's individual needs to be identified and addressed. The childminder also asks parents to complete questionnaires about the care offered. Replies to these indicate the parents feel the service they receive is excellent and they are very happy with the care provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well ordered, family environment where their individual needs are identified and appropriately addressed. A suitable range of furniture and equipment is used well to provide for the varying needs of the children attending. This means that the children are relaxed and settled, and able to learn and develop at their own pace. Children attending

are engaged in suitable activities and experiences which challenge them and contribute to their individual learning. The childminder ensures the children are well cared for using her good knowledge and understanding of childcare.

Records and documentation are in place to support the childminding offered which are well maintained to ensure they remain current. Written policies and procedures have been developed and are used effectively to promote the care and welfare of the children. They are shared regularly with parents to keep them informed about the service and their children's activities. Parental contributions are respected which helps to contribute to the continuity in the children's care.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There was one recommendation from the last inspection which was to; produce written information for parents about the childminder's policy for the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious. This recommendation has been suitably addressed and parents are now well informed. Written information is now available which details incubation periods for infectious diseases and exclusion times for stomach upsets. This information has been given to all parents and is now included in the information pack for new parents.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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

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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):

- make sure drinks are regularly offered to children
- make sure pets do not pose a health or hygiene risk to children

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