



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	156460
Inspection date	14 February 2007
Inspector	Jacqueline Allen
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 1990. She lives with her husband and six year old daughter in an end of terrace house, in a residential area on the outskirts of Tiverton in Devon. The house is close to a park and local shop. The childminder has five older children who live away from home and the family have a pet rabbit that lives in a hutch in the back garden.

The minded children play predominantly in the lounge, dining room and the enclosed rear garden. The kitchen is used for the storage of food and drinks and there is a toilet on the ground floor. One of the bedrooms upstairs is available for children to sleep during the day.

The childminder is registered to provide care for five children under eight years. There are currently four children on roll who attend on a part-time basis. The childminder has completed the National Childminding Association's Quality First Assurance course and is currently working towards a NVQ level 3 in child care.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning good hygiene routines, such as washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Children use separate flannels and hand towels and the childminder positively role models good hand washing routines which reduces the risk of cross infection. Children's minor accidents are appropriately treated and clearly recorded by the childminder who holds a valid certificate in first aid. Children's medication needs are also appropriately recorded although the childminder has not sought written permission from parents to use homeopathic remedies, which puts children at some risk.

Children eat a range of healthy foods supplied by their parents, such as fresh and dried fruit and chopped vegetables. They are encouraged to access a drink as needed and the childminder replenishes these as required. The childminder records children's special dietary needs and has good knowledge of their particular likes and dislikes.

Children participate in daily physical activities both inside and outdoors. They move freely throughout the lounge/diner and participate in planned activities, such as singing and dancing, trips to the local park, playing in the garden, visits to the local toddler group and daily walks in the woods or to see local building works in progress.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean and comfortable home environment, where resources are laid out in advance of their arrival for their easy access. For example, children can safely access books kept on a low-level shelf, select cars from a box on the floor and play with the good quality kitchen and wide range of utensils freely. Children are safe as the childminder has a good understanding of how to reduce potential risks. For example, young children are strapped into highchairs, electrical sockets are covered and children are always supervised when using the rear garden due to the danger of some steps. Children are safe when travelling in the car as the childminder has a good understanding of new car seat laws and a range of seats to meet children's individual needs.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse. She is aware of the correct procedures to follow, in line with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, if she has concerns about a child in her care. This information is clearly documented and shared with parents via the childminder's prospectus.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children arrive happy and settle very quickly to their play. They are positively welcomed into the childminder's welcoming home and given time and attention to say their goodbyes in their own way. For example, the childminder is exceedingly patient with children and ensures they

feel completely happy and secure before saying goodbye to their carers, offering them the choice of closing the door or waiting and waving goodbye. Children happily share information, such as "I love the Wizard of Oz but I don't like the nasty witch". The childminder is very interested and extremely responsive to children's comments and asks open ended questions to encourage children to think and express themselves further. Young children's language is very well understood and promoted as the childminder repeats words back to them to increase and encourage their language skills. Children are constantly offered excellent choices in their play to encourage their decision making skills and promote their self-esteem.

The childminder uses the Birth to three matters framework very well to plan a range of exciting activities to progress children in all areas of their learning. Children's photographs show them enjoying a vast range of interesting activities, such as playing in cardboard boxes, dressing-up, at the park, in the paddling pool, blowing bubbles, using construction toys, puzzles, printing, making a snowman, hiding in dens under the table, watching bugs, washing dolls and their clothes and hanging them on a small line, planting, role play, feeding the ducks and visiting local animals. Children's work is stored in individual folders so parents can clearly see the progress their child is making, with well documented updates on their individual stage of development. Children are respected as individuals by the childminder, who is flexible in her daily plans to allow children to make decisions about their play, rather than always sticking to planned activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are well known and met through very positive relations with parents and good sharing of information. For example, the childminder has devised a prospectus to inform parents about her provision and the care their child will receive. They are also encouraged to read and sign the personal policies and procedures in place to ensure they are fully informed. Children's weekly routines are shared with parents via a diary which includes information on places they have visited, activities enjoyed and the child's general mood, development and care. Children benefit from this sharing of information which promotes consistency of care and parents appreciate this personal information.

Children learn about diversity and equal opportunities through everyday experiences and access to resources which reflect positive images. For example, children visit the local library to obtain books which reflect diversity and planned activities increase children's awareness of foods from other countries and cultures, such as rice and curry dishes. Although, none of the children currently attending have any learning difficulties or disabilities, the childminder occasionally encourages children to watch selected programmes to introduce them to children with additional needs, which also promotes further discussion. The childminder updates her training regularly and has good knowledge and understanding of a range of additional needs through caring for such children previously.

Children behave well and are encouraged to share from an early age by the calm, confident childminder who has clear strategies in place to manage children's behaviour effectively. Good manners, such as "please" and "thank you" are actively encouraged and children's efforts are constantly praised and valued.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to improving her provision and the outcomes for children. She has completed Quality First Assurance and is currently working towards obtaining a NVQ level 3 in child care. She has booked on a child protection course to refresh her knowledge and has completed training on Birth to three, special needs and promoting diversity.

Children's records are well organised and stored confidentially, with clear recording of children's attendance on a daily basis. However, there is a minor weakness in the recording of medication. Overall, the childminder has a good knowledge of the National Standards.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection one recommendation was raised relating to National Standard 7 - Health. The childminder has requested parental consent for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment for all children, which has improved the system in place for caring for children in emergency situations.

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 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 all medication administered to children is agreed in writing with parents including the use of homeopathic remedies

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