



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142616
Inspection date	13 March 2007
Inspector	Elaine Douglas
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 1995. She lives with her husband and teenage daughter. They live in a three bedroom barn conversion in the rural hamlet of Milton, near Martock. All areas of the house are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. Children also have supervised access to the rest of the small holding.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding one child under five full time, and six other children under five years part time. She is also caring for five children over five before and after school and/or in the holidays. The childminder drives to local schools and pre schools to take and collect children. The family has one rabbit and three cats. There are six dogs which are kennelled away from the house and eight Shetland ponies, chickens, ducks, geese and quail are kept on the small holding.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in the healthy environment because the childminder has a highly effective approach to health and hygiene. She has exemplary procedures to work in conjunction with parents to protect children from illness. Thorough documentation is in place to ensure appropriate medication is administered with parental consent. She has a current first aid qualification and an excellent supply of first aid equipment, both in the house and car. This ensures that minor accidents are dealt with very effectively. Parental consent is sought for emergency advice or treatment.

Children learn about the importance of healthy practices through the childminder's skilful support and guidance. For example, they know to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating, and clean their teeth after meals. The childminder reduces the risk of cross infection by ensuring that her home is always clean and by providing the children with individual towels, flannels and bed linen. Children sleep and rest, according to their own individual needs. The childminder's animals are kept in good condition and children develop a very good awareness of hygiene, when handling them. Every day they enjoy fresh air and exercise, in the garden, taking care of the animals and at the local park.

Children's health is enhanced by the provision of very nutritional, healthy meals and snacks. For example, they choose from a range of fresh and dried fruits for their snack. Meals are freshly cooked, using mostly organic produce; the children grow their own fruit and vegetables, which further extends their knowledge of healthy eating.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are kept very safe and secure, through excellent procedures and supervision. The childminder carries out thorough risk assessments of her property and takes very effective actions to minimise risks. She is currently having an extension built and this whole area is secured to prevent children accessing it. Stairgates allow children to move independently around the ground floor, giving them very good space to play. They are able to access the superb range of appropriate resources which are suitable for their ages and stages of development. Resources and equipment are carefully chosen to support children's development.

Children develop a strong awareness of keeping themselves safe through practising the well documented emergency evacuation procedures. They learn to handle and respect animals properly, and to listen to instruction when using the grounds.

Children's welfare is given utmost priority. The childminder has a very clear knowledge of child protection issues. She attended training to ensure she understood the Local Safeguarding Children Board's guidance, after it came in last year. She has excellent child protection documentation to provide further guidance. The childminder maintains relevant information leaflets to protect children. For example, on the new seatbelt laws and checking sleeping babies.

Children wear wrist bands as a precaution on outings, which provide information and contact details of the childminder.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are highly motivated to take part in the extensive range of activities. Excellent use is made of the outside provision to enhance children's development. The children plant their own seeds, and nurture their seedlings to grow fruit and vegetables. They help to take care of the childminder's many animals and this supports their development in many areas. For example, the children know the differences between a quail and a duck's egg and learn about sizes. Their creativity is promoted through activities, such as cooking, art and craft, and musical instruments. Children enjoy using the extensive range of dressing up clothes and small world toys.

Children become independent learners as they choose resources for themselves and can access a wide range of books. Their communication skills are enhanced by the childminder's effective interaction. She knows the children well and uses skilful questioning to make them think. Consequently children are inquisitive. For example, one child asks the name of a flower and notices that it has a nice smell, this prompts her to investigate the smell other flowers.

Children benefit greatly from the childminder organising regular trips and outings, for example, to the beach and show jumping events. Children make positive relationships with each other and the childminder, and get involved in each others events. For example, when one child was involved in their pre-school nativity play, the childminder went to watch with a younger child who was invited to be 'baby Jesus'. Although the childminder provides an excellent range of activities which meet the needs of all the children, she is looking to implement the Birth to three matters framework to further support the development of the younger children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the childminder's home. She gets to know the children well and effectively supports their individual needs, and promotes their independence. For example, she asks parents to provide packed lunches so they can practice opening packets etc before they start school. Children are confident and their behaviour is exceptional because the childminder respects and values their opinions, and provides consistent, appropriate behaviour management. The childminder has not cared for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, she has a good awareness of providing appropriate care.

Children gain an awareness of people's differences through accessing a good range of cultural resources, trying different foods and the childminder answering their questions honestly. However, there are limited resources which provide positive images of people with disabilities.

Children's care and well being is significantly enhanced by the very good partnership with parents. The childminder provides very detailed information on her provision and her procedures for caring for their children. Daily diaries and discussions ensure effective communication, and good consent forms ensure children are cared for according to their parents wishes. The

childminder provides a flexible service to meet the needs of both the parents and the children. She works closely with parents when children stay overnight, to ensure their routines and sleeping patterns are adhered to, and children feel secure.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the childminder's enthusiasm and very effective organisation of her home and time. Her extensive documentation is extremely well organised and used to support her in providing good quality care. Many of her procedures are in writing and parents receive copies. They are informed of the procedures to follow should they wish to make a complaint. However, there is currently no system to keep a record.

Children's welfare is protected by the childminder keeping Ofsted informed of any significant events. She continually evaluates her practice and identifies her own training needs. She continues to update her knowledge and has recently completed training in behaviour management, child protection and first aid; she is awaiting training in risk assessments and the Birth to three matters framework. 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 continue to attend training to enhance her knowledge of child care practice.

Since that inspection she has attended training on child protection, behaviour management and first aid. This increases her knowledge and awareness of child care practices, which she then implements to benefit the children's care and welfare.

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 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):

- increase the resources which provide positive images of people with disabilities
- devise a system to keep appropriate records in the event of a complaint

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