

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	160247
Inspection date	24 July 2007
Inspector	Pamela Woodhouse
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 2001. She lives with her husband and their four children aged 17, 14, 11 and nine years on a residential estate in Verwood, Dorset. The ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding. This includes, the playroom, dining room and kitchen, with toilet facilities accessed off the hallway. The lounge is used for children who require a sleep during the day. Children can also access a large, fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have three guinea pigs, which are housed in a hutch and run in the garden and a border collie dog. Children have occasional access to the animals under the supervision of the childminder.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding five children aged under five on a full and part-time basis. She also cares for four children after school, two of whom also attend during school holidays. The childminder collects children from the local school. She takes children on outings to local attractions and attends the local toddler group with the youngest children.

The childminder is a member of the local support group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and well-being are promoted well due to the positive steps the childminder takes to reduce their risk of cross-infection. The premises, toys and all resources are clean and well maintained and sensible precautions are taken to ensure that the family pets do not pose a health risk to the children. For example, children have only supervised contact and the pets have a separate area outside which is situated away from the children's play areas. Children wash their hands after touching the pets and are encouraged to develop an understanding of their personal care routines. For example, they describe how they wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating, miming their usual routine to show how this is done. Children's exposure to illness is reduced due to the implementation of a suitable sickness policy, a copy of which all parents receive so that they are aware that children should not attend if they are ill.

The childminder clearly understands and responds to children's dietary needs because she has all the relevant information about their individual requirements. The childminder ensures that children's lunch boxes are stored appropriately to keep the contents fresh and keeps their drinks within reach. This enables them to help themselves to a drink when they are thirsty.

Children's physical well-being is promoted well. They enjoy a range of activities which contribute to their good health and there is plenty of ventilation and fresh air circulating within the home which keeps their environment cool and fresh. Children's physical skills are promoted through their outdoor activities. For example, they enjoy playing on their wheeled toys in the garden and using the adventure play equipment on their regular visits to Moors Valley Park.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, clean and well-maintained environment where they can relax and play in safety and comfort. They have access to a wide range of clean and well-maintained toys which are rotated regularly to maintain their interest. Children are beginning to understand about keeping themselves and others safe, for example, helping to put toys away before another box is brought down so that there are not too many toys to cause a tripping hazard. They know that they must stay close to the childminder on outings and listen to her instructions. The premises are kept secure and regular fire drills familiarise the children with the procedure thereby ensuring that they know how to evacuate the premises in an emergency situation. The garden is securely enclosed so that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised, however, their safety is compromised because garden machinery and filled water containers are within their reach. Suitable precautions are taken to keep children safe when on outings, for example, younger children wear a harness in their pushchair and young walkers use reins. Children also wear wrist bands which have emergency contact details inserted so that in the unlikely event that they become lost she or their parents can be contacted by telephone.

Children's welfare is safeguarded due to the childminder's sound knowledge of child protection issues. She understands about the procedures to follow should she have an concerns about a child in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have developed a very good relationship with the childminder and there is good interaction between them. They are very happy and settled, readily approaching the childminder for reassurance and support in their play. Children are confident in their surroundings and know their way around the home, they know where their toys are kept and ask for additional toys to be brought down from the shelves or for the childminder to join them in their play. For example, a pretend picnic.

Children's language and communication skills are promoted because the childminder talks to the children about what they are doing and encourages them to communicate by asking open ended questions. She raises their awareness of simple mathematical concepts such as calculation and problem solving, for example, counting the number of candles on a birthday cake and calculating how old children will be at their next birthday. Children play very well on their own and alongside their peers, for example, they help to prepare the pretend picnic together and play on their own with toys which they have a particular interest in, for example, role play and constructing a train track.

The childminder plans some different activities during school holiday. This means that children can have a change in their term time routines and enjoy different experiences such as visiting Honeybrooke Farm and Farmer Palmers. They also regularly meet up with other childminders and their minded children so that they can play together with an even wider range of activities and toys.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are responded to by the childminder who makes sure that she gathers relevant information to enable her to plan for these accordingly. However, information about siblings is recorded on the same form which compromises their differing needs. The childminder works in liaison with their parents to ensure that children's specific needs are met and puts plans in place to stimulate their interest in favourite activities. Play resources and free play activities are arranged to suit the children's stage of development, for example, extending or simplifying role play to engage them at an appropriate level. Children's awareness of the wider world is not actively promoted, a few resources portray positive images of disability and culture such as, small world toys and books but there are few activities which celebrate difference.

Children's behaviour is managed satisfactorily because the childminder is clear about expectations of behaviour and her house rules are kept simple. She gives clear explanations about certain behaviour not being acceptable and is consistent in her approach. Consequently children behave well and understand what is expected of them. The children receive frequent praise and encouragement which helps to promote their confidence and raise their self-esteem.

Parents receive a range of information about the service provided and clearly written agreements ensure that the childminder is clear about their wishes for the care of their children. They regularly exchange information about the children's progress and any events that the childminder has planned, for example, when a fire drill is to take place. This ensures that they know what is happening during the children's day. Parents' views are welcomed and comments from a recent survey amongst parents about the quality of her service are positive, confirming to her that they are satisfied with the level of care their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's experience and commitment to her role. She is currently undertaking training to update her skills and using her new knowledge to improve her service. For example, by evaluating her childcare provision. Space is suitably organised so that children can move around freely and rest quietly in a room away from the other children.

Documentation is maintained and required parental consents are in place. However, some personal information forms require attention and more secure storage. The childminder makes sure that her documentation is readily available at all times.

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 agreed to; develop a behaviour management strategy and maintain records of behaviour incidents which are shared with parents, and make sure potential risks to children are inaccessible. She has addressed these issues by introducing a comprehensive behaviour management policy and has included this in her parents welcome pack so that they are fully informed about her procedures. She has removed the hazardous items pertaining to her previous inspection, however, new issues have arisen which require attention and have been raised in this report.

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 that areas of the garden accessible to the children are made safe
- ensure that personal information is recorded separately for each child and stored securely

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