

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY266467
Inspection date	27 June 2007
Inspector	Carol Cox
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 2003. She lives with her husband, adult son and two younger children aged five and ten years. They live in the Milton area of Weston-Super-Mare, North Somerset. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, with its own bathroom facilities and a designated playroom. Two bedrooms and the bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding overnight. There is a fully enclosed section of the garden available for outside play. The family have a large dog, cat and two rabbits.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She may also care for six children under eight years when an assistant is present. She is currently caring for eight children under eight at different times during the week. She may also offer overnight care to two children under eight years. She takes and collects children from nearby schools and offers care to older children.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and a local childminding network. She is accredited to receive funding for early education.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted thorough good routines and daily practice. Children know when they should wash their hands, help themselves to aprons before painting and sit at the table to eat. They enjoy activities to promote their physical development at home, in the garden and on visits to toddler groups and the park where they are further challenged by large equipment.

There are clear policies in place to prevent spread of infection between children, for example, the childminder provides individual towels, flannels and toothbrushes for each child. Parents are given clear information about exclusion policies for infectious diseases. The childminder has a current paediatric first aid certificate and is able to give appropriate treatment should children have minor injuries. There are robust systems in place to record any medications administered to children. The childminder rigorously ensures that her pets are treated appropriately and present no risk to children's health. Children sleep in line with home routines and the childminder provides children who sleep overnight with their own fresh bedding and nightwear to help them feel comfortable.

The childminder provides healthy snacks and drinks for children and works closely with parents to ensure that any food allergies or particular needs are identified and met. Babies are cuddled whilst being bottle fed and older children sit at the table with the childminder and her student to enjoy a sociable mealtime.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a large, safe home in which they can move around freely and benefit from a range of activities. The childminder makes regular checks of her home, car and garden and records any action required. There are appropriate measures taken to safeguard children, however, there is no stair gate used at the top of the stairs which could present a risk when children are cared for overnight. The childminder actively promotes children's awareness of keeping themselves safe through everyday routines and special activities, such as visiting a Life Skills centre where they can learn about home safety at a level appropriate to their ages and understanding. Toys and resources are made readily available to children who freely help themselves to whatever they need to progress their games.

The childminder has a good knowledge of child protection practice and has recent experience of working in partnership with parents and social workers to safeguard children. The child protection policy is shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle easily and are eager to play and explore the wide range of toys and resources available to them. They choose their own toys and games which the childminder has carefully planned to promote their learning and development. Children benefit from the childminder's very good knowledge of how children learn and uses the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum effectively. She keeps meticulous records of children's achievements and development and uses these to identify next steps in learning for each child. Children are eager and enthusiastic learners and enjoy the challenges set for them. For example, children delight in trying to move paper and balloons by blowing through straws. A three-year-old child takes the opportunity to explore the balloon pump and is immensely proud to demonstrate how to blow up a balloon. The very young baby gurgles happily in a bouncy chair whilst watching the older children with fascination. Activities are adapted for children of all ages and the childminder is vigilant in making sure that the freely available toys are appropriate for all children present.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children make very good progress in all areas because the childminder has an excellent knowledge of how children learn. She uses her knowledge of each child with her detailed records of observations of their achievements to plan individual learning targets based on their individual interests. The childminder is expert at stimulating further learning by suggesting challenges to extend activities. For example, she scribed a story which a child made up and then helped him make a book which he illustrated to share with others.

Children are happy and enthusiastic learners who thrive on making choices and choosing resources to progress their own games. Children love dressing up to act out stories and scenarios from their own lives, their imaginations are further exercised through small world play with an abundance of resources. The childminder uses all play to promote children's language skills and chats with children about events in their lives to help their understanding of the world around them. Children are beginning to form letters and write their own names, they love books and stories and use a computer with support.

Children learn from the world around them on visits to local parks, farms and children's festivals. They enjoy experiencing different weather and can express their responses fluently. For example a child talks about the wind 'whooshing' along and how it feels when the wind tugs your hair. Through careful observations children learn about characteristics of different animals and their life cycles. They are able to describe how tadpoles become frogs and caterpillars become butterflies. They make comparisons based on their observations, for example, when comparing butterflies and snails a child says 'butterflies don't have shells'.

Children count in everyday activities and use maths skills in their play. For example, when building with duplo they count bricks, identify shapes and colours and compare size and position. The childminder makes observations of their play and can describe how she will use these to progress learning next.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals and actively involved in choosing their activities. For example, the childminder plans a big treat for them every summer, they discuss where they would like to go and all are involved. This summer children are going to spend a day at Longleat, last year they visited Legoland. Each child's needs are carefully discussed with parents who are consulted and involved in settling them. For example, the childminder was asked to use a favourite TV programme to settle a child. There are resources to help children learn about the differences between people and understand the value of every person. The childminder discussed observations of different people which arise through routine visits and activities. The childminder adapts all activities to provide a fully inclusive environment. For example, when talking about bugs older children learn about life cycles and younger children identify colours, count spots and talk about where the bugs might live. The childminder has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities and has a good knowledge of how to work with parents and access further support.

Children behave very well and benefit from a consistent environment where their ideas are accepted and they understand the simple house rules. The childminder negotiates with children about behaviour at a level appropriate to their understanding. They are offered chances to reflect on their behaviour and encouraged to take positive alternatives. The childminder works closely with parents to provide a consistent framework and to keep them fully informed of their achievements as they happen. For example, she uses her phone to send parents photographs of their baby to show her confidently and happily sitting and watching older children at play. The childminder is open and positive in her relationships with parents. For example, when a complaint was made to Ofsted she made all the information available to parents. Many parents wrote letters of support to Ofsted following the investigation.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. The childminder offers regular written and verbal feedback for parents who actively contribute information about their children to help the childminder provide best care and learning for their children. For example, she keeps very detailed records of children's achievements within the Foundation Stage curriculum. These exceptionally meticulous and well evidenced records link directly to stepping stones towards the early learning goals and form the basis of discussion with parents about how children learn. Parents are invited to contribute to these records and discuss next steps in learning for their children. The childminder has ensured that she has the necessary consents from parents to allow for spontaneous outings which will enhance children's learning. For example, visiting the park on a very windy day to experience the sensations of strong winds. Children learn about the value of diversity through regular outings in the community and opportunities to meet different people. They learn to interact with children of differing ages and abilities and older children show care and consideration for others. For example, a three-year-old child showed great kindness and attention to the baby who chuckled in delight at the attention.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, homely environment who is committed to providing good care. The childminder is well qualified and organises her provision to offer care to a range of children whilst balancing the needs of each. She has an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn and uses this to help children make very good progress. She offers care to older children but ensures their presence does not impact negatively on younger ones. She maintains all necessary documentation and records. However, she completes the register, with actual times of attendance, at the end of each day not as children arrive, therefore, children might be at risk in case of an emergency. The childminder works with assistants and accepts students from a local college. All are checked for suitability and the childminder is careful to inform Ofsted of any changes to her practice or household. 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 address the following recommendations: ensure attendance records are recorded daily; ensure knowledge of local child protection procedures; obtain permission from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice. The childminder now records each child's actual times of attendance. The childminder has good knowledge and experience of local child protection procedures, thus children are safeguarded. The childminder has recorded written permission from all parents to obtain emergency treatment or advice, thus children can be appropriately treated in event of an emergency.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to: National Standard 1 - Suitable person; National Standard 3 - Care learning and play; National Standard 4 - Physical environment; National Standard 5 - Equipment and National Standard 6 - Safety. An unannounced visit was made at which the provider was not meeting National Standard 1; National Standard 2 - Organisation; National Standard 6; National Standard 14 - Documentation. Actions were set under National Standard 1 - to "ensure that all individuals regularly present in the household whilst children are being minded have undergone appropriate checks including a CRB check"; National Standard 2 - to "ensure that students on training placements are supervised appropriately and are competent in the areas of work undertaken."; National Standard 6 - to "ensure that reasonable steps are taken to promote safety within the setting and on outings; National Standard 14 - to "ensure the daily attendance register is accurate and maintained to show the attendance times of both children and all adults caring for children on the premises". A response to these actions was received confirming that all the required actions had been undertaken. The provider remained qualified for registration.

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.

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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):

- ensure children's safety when staying overnight by the provision of a safety gate at the top of the stairs
- record the actual times of children's arrival and departure as they arrive and leave the childminder's care

The quality and standards of the nursery education

recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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