

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142602
Inspection date	02 July 2007
Inspector	Mary Daniel
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 1989. She lives with her husband and three daughters aged, 11, 19 and 21 years in a detached house situated in the town of Somerton. Minded children have use of the living/dining room and toilet facilities on the ground floor of the property. There is an enclosed garden at the back of the house used for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years at any one time, and there are currently 11 on roll. Overnight care is not included within the registration.

The family have a pet dog who has his own separate area within the house.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well supported. For example, through use of effective record keeping. Parental permission for any necessary emergency medical treatment is obtained and dietary

needs are discussed with parents and recorded. Accident records are clearly detailed and parents asked to acknowledge any entries. As a result, children's continuity in care is well promoted. Children are able to easily access their colourful beakers of juice, which encourages them to drink often and so have a good intake of fluid. Babies' bottles are managed appropriately, stored in the fridge and heated as parents request. Babies are cuddled while having their bottles, which helps them relax and enjoy their feed. Children enjoy a range of healthy foods for a snack, such as grapes or apple, pieces of cheese or raisins. This effectively promotes their understanding of foods which are good for them.

Children have exciting opportunities to exercise and be outside. For example, they play in the garden on the slide, the ride on motor bike or hippo. Babies can lie quietly on a blanket outside and listen to the wind chimes hanging on the trees. Children enjoy going for local walks and sometimes visit a 'tumbling tots' group where they have fun joining in with the action, music and soft play activities. As a result, they have frequent chances to use up their energy through enjoyable play experiences and benefit from being out in the fresh air. Clear and suitable procedures are followed to minimise cross contamination when nappies are changed. The childminder uses disposable gloves and nappies are efficiently disposed of in outside bins. Children wash their hands after going to the toilet, using liquid soap and paper towels. However, they do not always wash their hands before eating their snack or lunch. This means at times, procedures to help in preventing the spread of infection are not consistently followed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming home, where they are included within the childminder's family life. The play areas show as very clean, tidy and inviting for children. For example, they enjoy playing with their cars on a brightly coloured road mat, or stretch out for a rest on a comfortable sofa. Children's needs are effectively met through use of a wide range of good quality equipment and resources. Babies sleep happily in a large, comfy travel cot, with net sides so they can see out easily and not feel closed in. Toddlers sit comfortably at the lunch table with their friends, supported by sturdy child seats. This promotes their social and independence skills well. Children have their own attractive, character plates for their meals, which encourages them to enjoy their food. Toys are bright and clean, showing as in good condition as they are regularly washed and checked for broken parts. This effectively supports children's health and safety in play.

Suitable safety prevention is in place. The childminder is careful to ensure sockets are covered, stair gates are in place to prevent children's unsupervised access and corner covers are fitted to prevent sharp edges. This promotes children's safety very well. Smoke alarms are checked weekly and an emergency evacuation plan is in place, clearly identifying where exits are sited. This means the management of any emergency situation has been well considered to ensure children's safety and well-being. Children are well encouraged in their own awareness of safety, for example, on outings. They wear fluorescent jackets, which contributes to them being clearly visible when walking along the road and they know to hold onto the pushchair or wear reins to keep themselves safe from harm. The garden area is enclosed and children are supervised outside. However, access to the greenhouse is not securely prevented. The childminder has a secure understanding of child protection issues that may cause concern, and has formed a clear policy to reflect her responsibilities to children. She discusses and records any incidents that occur, and has updated written information available to support the management of any concern arising. This promotes children's welfare very well.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children relate very well to the childminder, who is reassuring and friendly in her approach. This helps children to feel at ease in the home and they are happy and content to play. Exciting activities are provided to support their interests. For example, a visit to a nearby fire station is being planned. Children talk excitedly about a bus ride they went on to a larger town, where they visited a big play park. They regularly go to a local toddler group to meet up with their friends and join together for celebrations, such as a Christmas party. This effectively helps children with their early social skills and provides them with an interesting variety of play experiences.

Children are very well supported in making their own choices in play. Toys are stored in clear boxes with pictures and labels on, which encourages them to choose for themselves. For instance, from the range of puzzles that support their different levels of ability, such as a simple animal inset one to those with many pieces. They eagerly talk about the farm puzzle they see showing goats, horses, sheep and an 'incy wincy' spider hanging from a barn. This encourages their language and communication very well. Children have fun playing with the great variety of toy cars available. They line these up in a row for their game. The childminder extends this play with them as they find a toy dustbin lorry and she reminds them of one they saw that morning. Children's development is clearly encouraged as they learn the colours of their cars and how many they have put out. They talk about the toy dinosaurs they play with and look at the 'very long' neck on one of them, trying to imagine how big these creatures were. Children's imagination is well supported as they play 'cafes' and sort out the colourful tea set to provide their 'cups of tea'. They ask for some play money, understanding how to act out real life experiences. They have great fun wearing their 'firemen' tabards and try on a variety of hats, becoming a pirate, policeman or builder. As a result, children enjoy their time with the childminder and their developmental needs are well supported through the variety of play opportunities offered. Consequently, children's interests are promoted and this helps them enjoy 'learning' through play. The childminder has the information pack on the Birth to three matters framework, and at times refers to this for ideas, but is not yet using this to give clear focus to all activities provided.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children and families are welcomed and valued. Children's particular developmental needs are discussed with parents and clear support is given to ensure appropriate care and play activities are provided. Such activities are offered to all children helping them to feel included. This effectively encourages good integration. Children play with a range of toys and resources that reflect positive images of diversity. For example, they play with multi-cultural dolls and look at books showing other ways of living, such as 'my childminder'. This helps children in understanding their lifestyle and that of others. Friendly, relaxed relationships are formed with parents by the childminder, which gives clear reassurance to children and they settle easily. Parents' involvement in the provision offered is well encouraged through discussion of daily activities at collection times and sharing of children's art and craft designs. The childminder listens to parents' wishes and respects their ideas. This supports children in familiar routines and helps them feel valued. Parents are able to record most of their child's individual needs on the registration form provided, although their language and religion is not noted. Relevant parental permissions are obtained, such as for taking photos, going on outings or administration

of sun cream. This effectively supports ongoing and open communication, which promotes children's continuity in care.

Children benefit from the calm, consistent approach given to the management of behaviour situations. Praise is given often and achievements celebrated, which promotes children's self esteem. The clear explanations given at children's level of understanding support them well in learning about right from wrong. They are encouraged to share and be helpful, such as in tidying up some toys. They learn to be kind to others and fetch a younger friend a toy. Consequently, children generally play happily together and any minor altercations are easily resolved.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. Play areas are organised well to provide messy play activities and space to do puzzles or build with some colourful bricks. Children's care is monitored well through use of effectively organised records and documents. These are stored securely and used with clear regard to confidentiality. For example, accidents are recorded on separate sheets for each child. Attendance registers reflect the actual times of arrival and departure, which supports children's overall safety and well-being. The childminder is clearly aware of her responsibilities regarding her registration requirements and keeps Ofsted informed of relevant events and changes. For example, in requesting a variation in her registration conditions to support continuity in children's care. However, some health and safety issues are not fully organised. Clear and suitable policies, such as for child protection and behaviour management, have been formed to support the practice provided. General daily routines are clearly established to enable children to know what will happen next, so they feel secure and relaxed within the setting. The childminder stays involved with a local childminder and toddler group. This supports on going communication and awareness of any relevant changes in registration. The childminder continues to attend training opportunities as and when she can.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made relating to safety in the garden. The childminder has now fitted a trellis panel across the green house door to prevent children accessing entry. However, this still leaves some risk to children if the glass panes are broken as glass could fall where they play. The childminder is giving clear consideration to managing this situation, and this has been brought through as a recommendation from this inspection.

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 any complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain some 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 children consistently follow good hand washing procedures to help prevent the spread of infection
- ensure the garden is safe for children's play, with particular regard to their access to the greenhouse and surrounding area.

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