

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109749
Inspection date	20 July 2007
Inspector	Carole Argles

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 1992. She lives with her husband and two teenage children approximately four miles from the centre of Poole, Dorset. Children have access to the lounge and conservatory for play, and two first floor bedrooms for sleeping facilities. Toilet facilities are on the first floor. Access to the fully enclosed rear garden is via the conservatory at the back of the house. The family have a pet guinea pig.

The childminder is registered to care for six children aged under eight years. No overnight care is provided. At present she is caring for three children aged under four years. She is not currently caring for children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language.

The childminder is a member of Poole Childminding Network and holds an NVQ Level 3 childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

There are effective strategies in place to promote the children's health and to help keep them fit. The childminder has a clear understanding of how to reduce the likelihood of infection spreading between individuals and effective procedures are in place. She does not care for children if they are ill or infectious and has good nappy changing procedures. The childminder's home, toys and equipment are kept clean and hygienic. Extra attention is given to toys when babies are cared for and their toys are cleaned or sterilised daily. The children develop good hygiene routines and they wash their hands thoroughly using soap and dry them with paper towels. They know that they must wash their hands after using the toilet and before they eat and they learn why this is important. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and has a well stocked first aid kit readily available. Appropriate records of accidents are maintained. There are sound procedures for the safe administration of any required medication to the children.

Drinks are readily available at all times for the children and so they can help themselves if they are thirsty. Parents provide much of the food for their children and this is stored appropriately. The childminder supplements this with additional meals such as breakfast or a home-cooked evening meal if required; she provides snacks of fruit and perhaps a biscuit for the children. She has a good understanding of children's nutritional requirements and gives parents advice about a healthy diet for their child. She ensures that any specific dietary requirements and children's preferences are respected. There are cooking, collage and other activities to help the children learn about the importance eating a healthy diet. Recently they have made pizzas which they ate for their lunch and they are helping to grow tomatoes and herbs in the garden.

The children have exercise daily and frequently play out in the garden where there is a good range of age-appropriate toys and equipment. They enjoy being active and decided to put on their coats so that they could play outside even though it was wet. They often walk to local parks where they can run freely and play ball games with the childminder, or use a varied range of larger apparatus, such as swings and slides. The childminder arranges music and dance sessions for the children and sometimes take them to local play centres, ball parks, or to the beach. She plans and provides fun activities for the children sometimes making an obstacle course with slides and hoops, and provides challenges for them such as balancing a bean bag on their head. As a result, the children are developing good control and coordination of their movements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are well maintained, comfortably furnished and made welcoming for the children who are settled and relaxed. The childminder makes good use of space in her home to ensure that the children's needs are met well. She has dedicated her conservatory as a playroom. This is a child-friendly environment for the children and is decorated with many posters, examples of their artwork, and is set up so that they have ready access toys and equipment and can make choices about what they do. First floor rooms are available so that children can rest undisturbed whilst others play. The children have direct access to the enclosed rear garden from the playroom. There is a wide range of good quality toys and equipment to support all the children's development and learning needs. The childminder is careful to ensure that these meet safety

standards and are suitable for the age of children using them. To provide variety and ensure that the children do not become bored with the resources, the childminder rotates the range of books and toys available and borrows additional items from local libraries.

The risk of accidental injury to the children is reduced effectively because the childminder has a good understanding of safety issues. She conducts frequent risk assessments of the premises and gives careful consideration to children's safety when out. Age-appropriate safety seats are available for use in her car. Suitable safety equipment is also used in her home. To prevent children accessing potentially hazardous areas, cupboard locks are in place, garden sheds are locked and the children never enter the kitchen. The smoke alarms are tested regularly and a carbon monoxide detector is used. The children regularly practise the fire evacuation plan so they understand how to act in an emergency. The children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe in other ways. The childminder talks with them about the importance of road safety and, for example, why they must be very careful in car parks as they may not be seen. She explains to them what they must do if they ever become separated from their carer when they are out, and why they must take care at the beach. This raises children's awareness of safety issues and helps them begin to consider the consequences of their actions.

The childminder has a clear understanding of how to safeguard children and how to act if she has concerns about the welfare of a child in her care. She has robust procedures in place to be certain that only authorised adults collect the children and usually makes sure that she has met these people in advance. This action contributes well to protecting the children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The children are very happy, relaxed and confident with the childminder with whom they have an excellent relationship. There is plenty of interaction between them and children often go to her to talk or for a cuddle. The children play very cooperatively, talking and planning games between themselves or deciding to work together to complete a jig-saw puzzle. They are self-motivated and concentrate well, persisting until they have completed what they doing. The children are very independent and they readily go to find their shoes and coats and put them on so they can play out in the garden; they help to tidy up the toys, wash their hands and fetch their chairs at lunch time. The children speak clearly and confidently to others and are developing a wide vocabulary. The childminder asks them many questions as they play to encourage them to talk about themselves. She extends their thinking and learning. For example, they count the stairs together as they walk down, and she asks them if they think the rain is good for their plants and why. At all times their contributions and achievements are acknowledged and praised so the children develop good self-esteem.

There are flexible routines for the children's day. They have frequent outings to the park or to toddler groups where they can socialise with others their own age; there are times for them to make choices about what they do selecting from a wide range of toys and activities, and for them to relax. The childminder has a very good understanding of how young children learn and this ensures that they are making good progress. She provides a stimulating and varied range of activities and outings for them sometimes based around a theme. Recently they have been growing plants such as tomatoes and enormous sunflowers in the garden, visited the beach and cooked pizzas. Making use of the Birth to three matters framework, she systematically monitors and records the children's progress and, based on this information, she plans activities for the following week which are very carefully matched to each child's abilities. For example, if she notices that a child requires extra help with scissors, there will be many opportunities for

them to practise cutting out. Although the plans provide a framework, the children are offered options and make many decisions about what they do, perhaps choosing to dress up and play imaginative games together, or to colour and draw, or to look at books. The children are well occupied at all times and thoroughly enjoy what they do.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The children benefit greatly from the close partnership between their parents and the childminder. They talk about the children daily to ensure that there is continuity in their care and their individual needs are well met so they are comfortable and secure. The childminder is very flexible, accommodating parents' varying working patterns and giving them confidence that their child is being well cared for. Parents receive comprehensive information about the childminding service provided and have their own copies of the childminder's policies and procedures. Information about the week's activities is displayed on whiteboards for them to see. Every Monday, the childminder asks the parents what the family have done over the weekend so that she can talk about it with the children. This recognises the importance of their families and homes and helps the children feel that they are really valued. The childminder keeps an attractive and informative photographic record of each child for their parents to see and she discusses their development with them. This ensures that they have a clear understanding of how well their child is progressing. Any concerns about a child's development would be brought promptly to their parents' attention.

There are many activities which raise the children's awareness of diversity and help them develop an accepting and tolerant attitude. There is a wide range of books, dolls and other resources which reflect positive images of other people in our society and help the children find out about different cultures and traditions throughout the world. This range is extended through use of libraries. The childminder plans many interesting and fun activities and outings to help children learn about different festivals and celebrations. For example, at Chinese New Year, they went to visit a local Chinese supermarket, learnt about dragon dances, and they cooked and sampled a variety of foods. They sometimes join up with other childminders to celebrate festivals such as Diwali. The childminder has a good appreciation of issues relating to any children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and she fully understands the importance of adapting care and activities to meet the children's individual needs. She has learnt basic sign language and, at times, uses this with all children to raise their awareness of different ways of communicating.

The children behave very well and show great care and consideration of others. They are learning to share fairly and to take turns and play harmoniously together. The childminder has an excellent understanding of positive ways to manage the children's behaviour. She has clear age-appropriate expectations for the children and they respond readily to these. She uses varied strategies to help them learn to manage their own behaviour, praising children and rewarding them with stickers both for their achievements, for example, when potty training, and when they are behaving well. She gently explains to them why sometimes their behaviour is unwanted, for example, that they may hurt themselves or others. Stories and television programmes are used as a tool to help the children consider their effect of their actions on others. For example, being kind and bullying are discussed when they talk about the Cinderella story. The childminder works very closely with parents to make certain that there is a consistent approach to behaviour management and this ensures that children do not become confused or receive conflicting messages.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She is dedicated to her professional development and frequently undertakes training and has recently obtained a childcare qualification. She keeps abreast of new developments, implementing them to further enhance the care she provides for the children. The childminder keeps to the required adult to child ratios so that the children receive plenty of attention and support. All the required records are in place and personal information about the children is regularly updated so that it is correct when required. Information is kept confidential. Suitable written consents are obtained from parents and their wishes for their child respected. The childminder has drawn up and implements comprehensive policies and procedures to support the children's care and welfare and gives copies of the documents to the parents. This includes a satisfactory complaints procedure and the contact information for Ofsted although some details are now out of date.

The children benefit from the childminder's good organisational skills. This includes the effective planning of activities and outings provided for them and monitoring of their progress. She makes good use of her premises to support the children's development and organises her toys and resources well so that the children can make choices about what they do and be independent. This ensures that they are happy, settled and secure in her care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder agreed to amend her registration records to show the actual times of children's attendance, and to improve her systems of sharing information with the parents about their child's progress and development.

Since that time, the childminder clearly records the times that each child is present in her care. She has extended systems of sharing information with parents. For example, diaries are used to exchange information daily with the parents of the youngest children to ensure there is continuity in their care and they are comfortable and secure. The childminder takes many photographs of the children on outings and when engaged in activities. She shows parents the records she keeps of their progress and talks with them daily. This has greatly enhanced the partnership with parents and promotes the children's care and welfare effectively.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the childminder or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The childminder 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:

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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):

- review the information given to parents which explains how they can contact Ofsted

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