

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118361
Inspection date	05 September 2007
Inspector	Deborah Jane Starr

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 satisfactory. 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 1999. She lives with her husband and two children aged 14 and 16 years in Pill, North Somerset. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding and a designated room on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have pet dogs and cats

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children any one time and is currently minding 19 children; six of whom are eight years and over. All children attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder takes children to and collects from the local primary school. She attends the local toddler group, takes children to the local library, parks and places of interest.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted through well-established good hygiene routines. Policies such as the exclusion of children when unwell prevent the spread of illness. Procedures, such as the use of individual hands towels by children and thorough nappy changing procedures safeguard children from the risk of cross-infection. Procedures for the administering of medication and recording of accidents are appropriate. The childminder is in breach of a requirement of registration as she does not hold a valid first aid certificate.

Children benefit from a varied range of activities that contribute to their physical health and development. Frequent use of the garden and visits to local parks provide opportunities for children to develop control and co-ordination of their bodies. A see-saw, trikes, slide, swing and low-level climbing frame promote children's balance and co-ordination. Children develop throwing and kicking skills using a variety of balls. Daily walks to school provide plenty of fresh air. Children are able to sleep comfortably in cots and on a sofa according to their individual needs.

Children's dietary needs are discussed with parents and taken account of. Children develop a good understanding of a healthy, well-balanced diet through snacks of fresh fruit. They enjoy light meals, such as sandwiches at lunch time accompanied with a range of raw salad vegetables and home-prepared evening meals. Cookery activities and the introduction of healthy foods during play, such as sunflower seeds, promotes children's understanding further. Children drink water and diluted squash throughout the day from individual, easily accessible cups.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her home effectively to accommodate a varied range of play activities to meet the individual needs of a wide age range of children in her care. Her use of space ensures children move independently around the well-maintained home. Most hazards are minimised through the provision of stair gates, covering of low-level glass and smoke detectors. However, children's safety is not fully assured as low-level plug sockets in the main play area and the large trampoline in the garden are not made safe. Children play with, and use a varied range of good quality toys and equipment that are regularly checked, age-appropriate and meets their developmental needs. Children's understanding of their own personal safety is promoted within the home and when outside. For example, children are guided to play safely with a toy hammer and not to stand on furniture. The childminder occasionally practises evacuation procedures when small numbers of children are present. Young children are strapped securely into a buggy, hold the childminder's hand when walking and wear reins or a wrist strap when appropriate. Children develop an understanding of road safety when walking to school. Young children play within close proximity to the childminder in the park, whilst older children play within agreed boundaries and within sight. Children wear identification wrist bands when on outings. Discussion about 'stranger, danger' promotes children's understanding further.

The childminder has all policies and procedures in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and protected; this includes procedures for the collection of children by unauthorised persons and an uncollected child policy. The childminder's secure understanding of child protection issues and knowledge and understanding of her responsibilities, and local

reporting procedures protects children from harm. Parents are informed of her responsibilities through discussion.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and settle quickly. They self-select toys and play co-operatively together for example, when creating their own music with instruments in time with C D's. The positive relationship between the childminder and children promotes their self-confidence and enables them to try out new experiences and to approach unfamiliar adults such as the visiting inspector. Children eagerly participate in a prepared activity in which the childminder encourages them to develop their manipulation skills, creativity and to make connections between living things and foods we eat. They spread glue and attach pre-cut petals; look at dried and fresh sunflowers as a guide, and are fascinated by lentils as they pour them into a bowl. They recognise them and talk about how they eat them when cooked. Children enjoy spreading and placing these onto their designs, looking closely at the centre of the dried sunflower and observe the seeds. Children are keen to try new experiences. They eat sunflower seeds at snack time and eagerly request more. The childminder knows the children well and uses her sound knowledge and understanding of child development to ensure that toys and activities that interest children are easily accessible and stimulate them. Children are intrigued by toys that create sounds when pressing buttons and cause objects to pop up; for instance, when investigating a play toaster. Children are encouraged to share, take turns and to be helpful; for example, by tidying toys away. Children are relaxed with the childminder, ask questions and talk about what they are doing. They enjoy cuddles when in need of a rest.

Weekly activity mornings with other childminders, attendance at several local toddler groups and visits to local shops, allotments, garden centre, library and zoo help children develop their social skills, extend their experiences and develop a sense of their local community.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are clearly identified and met. This is achieved through regular discussion with parents to ensure consistency of approach and the adaptation of activities that enables all children to be involved. Effective settling-in procedures and comforters from home promotes their sense of security. A flexible approach to each child's care consistent with routines at home supports children's well-being. Displays of children's own work promotes their sense of belonging. Children access some resources, that reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity and disability. They participate in occasional meaningful activities such as craft, food tasting and music. These activities offer opportunities that help children develop a positive attitude towards difference and to promote an awareness of the diversity of the wider world.

The childminder effectively balances the individual needs of the children in her care. Her calm, clear, and consistent approach to children and use of age and developmentally appropriate strategies, helps children understand what is expected of them. The childminder's good role modelling of negotiation skills and regular use of praise and encouragement effectively builds children's self-esteem and promotes their sense of well-being. Children's behaviour is very good.

Children benefit from the positive relationship between parents and the childminder. Parents are well-informed of the childminder's policies and procedures and their children's welfare and

daily experiences through written policy statements, a daily diary, newsletters and frequent discussion. Parents are well informed about procedures should they wish to make a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of the National Standards overall, as reflected in most of her policies and procedures. For example, she has undertaken appropriate checks of all household members of 16 years and over to ensure their suitability. However, she is in breach of the requirements of registration as she does not hold a valid first aid certificate. Consequently, children's health is not fully assured, as she has not made sure through training that her knowledge and understanding of first aid is up to date. Most documentation is appropriate, accurate, well organised, clearly displayed and maintained confidentially.

The childminder creates a homely and welcoming atmosphere in which children are relaxed and at ease. The lay out of the play areas and organisation of resources gives children space to move independently. They self-select and access toys from clearly labelled, well-organised storage boxes and low-level cupboards. A flexible approach to the day ensures children's individual needs are met; for example, they sleep during the day and the collection of children from pre-school and school. Forward planning ensures children's individual needs are met in the event of an emergency by the identification of alternative childminders known to the children. Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to develop her knowledge and understanding through training. For instance, she is currently working towards an NVQ level three in early years.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was requested to make the following improvement; to ensure the record of attendance is accurate and up to date.

This recommendation have been considered fully and steps taken to improve the provision. A daily record of children's attendance is in place and maintained and includes an accurate record of their time of arrival and departure.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard 1: Suitable Person and National Standard 14: Documentation. Concerns were raised that the childminder was caring for more children than her registered numbers. Following an investigation by Ofsted the provider was found to be in breach of the National Standards. Two actions were raised; under National Standards 1 and 14. The provider responded to Ofsted as to how they would meet the National Standards. No further action was taken and the provider remains registered to provide care.

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:

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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 that all hazards are minimised
- increase resources that reflect positive images of ethnicity, culture and disability and offer regular meaningful activities that promote children's awareness of the diversity of the wider world
- hold a valid first aid certificate at all times that includes training in first aid for infants and young children.

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