

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY348010
Inspection date	17 August 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 has been registered since March 2007 and lives with her husband and their two daughters aged one and five years, in Shaftesbury, Dorset. All areas of the house are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have two dogs. Their home is close to local parks, schools and nurseries.

The childminder is registered to care for four children aged under eight years and is currently providing part-time care for three children aged under five and two children aged over five years. At present, she is not caring for any children who have learning difficulties or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Positive steps are taken to ensure that the children stay healthy. The childminder has a sound understanding of ways to promote good hygiene and minimise the spread of infection between

the children. For example, separate bedding is provided for each child and they use paper towels for drying their hands. The childminder takes alcohol hand gel to clean children's hands when out. There are good nappy changing procedures, with each child having their own equipment. The childminder ensures that her dogs do not pose a hazard to the children's health and they do not enter the rear garden where the children play. There are sound procedures to ensure that any required medication is administered safely and all accidents to the children are recorded. The childminder has a secure understanding of how to administer emergency aid and holds a current first aid certificate. She ensures that first aid kits are readily available at all times. This helps to protect the children's health.

The children receive a healthy and nutritious diet. Parents provide packed lunches for their child and the childminder works closely with them to ensure that children's nutritional requirements are met. She provides snacks which include wholesome foods such as rice cakes and fresh or dried fruit. Freshly cooked early-evening meals, such as a roast dinner, are available for children on request. Drinks are always available for the children to take when they are thirsty. Through activities and discussions with the childminder, the children begin to learn about the importance of healthy eating. They have helped to bake bread and the older children sometimes help to prepare the vegetables or fruit for their meal.

The children have exercise daily. This helps to keep them fit and encourages them to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They go for many walks with the childminder and her dogs; they play in the garden, and they dance and move to music. They often visit local parks where they use a range of age-appropriate apparatus and have opportunities to climb and balance on equipment. This promotes good control and coordination of their movements. The childminder encourages the children to enjoy being outdoors, making trips to the countryside fun; they collect natural materials to use in their craft activities and talk about what they see.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are well maintained, comfortably furnished and welcoming to the children. The childminder makes effective use of her home to meet their needs; there is ample space for the children to play and move freely and she has created a role play home area for them in the cupboard under the stairs. There is a suitable range of toys and equipment to support the children's development. This includes many toys and resources that are made of natural materials. There is a wide range of musical instruments and interesting pretend play resources. The childminder checks to make sure that all are safe and suitable for the children to use and she supervises the younger children closely when they are using smaller items. A variety of toys and resources are stored in boxes in the main play area and this allows the children to make choices about what they do and to select items independently.

The children's safety is promoted by the childminder who takes appropriate action to reduce the risk of accidental injury to them. For example, she prevents them gaining access to hazardous areas by using equipment such as stair gates, window and cupboard locks and socket covers. There are appropriate smoke alarms and the childminder has a carbon monoxide detector. However, at present, she does not have a fire blanket readily available for use. Sound measures are taken to protect the children when they are out. The children stay very close to the childminder when they are near roads and wear fluorescent bibs or sashes to ensure that they are visible when it is getting dark. Suitable restraints are available when children are taken out in the car. However, childminder does not have all the motor documentation, for example, her

insurance certificate, readily available for inspection. The children begin to learn about safety and talk about how they must stop at the kerb and watch for traffic before they cross the road.

There are sound arrangements in place which contribute effectively to keeping the children safe from harm. The childminder has a clear understanding of what she must do if she has concerns about the welfare of a child in her care. She ensures that children do not have unsupervised contact with people who have not been vetted and that they are only collected by adults authorised by their parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are happy and settled and have a relaxed relationship with the childminder. There is plenty of interaction between them and this supports the children's communication skills effectively. The childminder is enthusiastic and makes activities fun for the children. There is a flexible daily routine which accommodates their individual needs and sleep patterns. The children develop independence. Young children are encouraged to feed themselves; children help the childminder by tidying away toys or fetching items for her. The children receive praise and recognition for their achievements and this promotes their confidence and self-esteem.

There is a wide range of activities and experiences for the children. They go for many walks in the countryside and sometimes visit a local castle and the nearby town. They talk with the childminder about natural world around them, for instance, about the birds feeding on the table outside the window. There are many creative activities for the children and they use a wide range of materials and techniques. For example, they have made bracelets from pieces of felt, and wands from twigs and crepe paper. They have made model animals from clay, using their imaginations freely. The children explore objects to find out how they work and were experimenting with a wide variety of simple musical instruments to see what sounds they could make. The children develop new skills, such as good hand-eye coordination when handling small figures and animals, or when threading objects such as beads. Older children sometimes learn to juggle or use stilts. The childminder takes opportunities extend children's learning and thinking during their play. For example, she asks children about colour or number and talks with young children about the texture of the materials in a book. The children make decisions about what they do, asking to use toys and activities stored in boxes in the play area or cupboard. The children are well occupied and enjoy what they do.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children's individual needs are well met by the childminder who works closely with their parents to ensure there is continuity between their care at home and the time they spend with her. They exchange information about the children daily. There is an effective process to help new children become familiar with their new surroundings and the childminder so they feel secure and settle quickly. The childminder takes the opportunity to share information with parents about the service she offers and to find out about the children's normal routines. Suitable written agreements and consents are maintained and this helps the childminder respect parents' wishes for their child. The childminder monitors the children's development and keeps parents well informed about their progress or any concerns. Detailed daily diaries are maintained for each child, which the parents can read. The children find out about their own community through visits to the local town and toddler groups. There is a suitable range of books and

other resources, including dressing up clothes and dolls, which increase their knowledge about culture and diversity in wider world.

The children are helped to learn to manage their own behaviour by the positive strategies used by the childminder. She uses distraction to good effect with the children, perhaps offering a different toy or suggesting another activity. There are consistent age-appropriate expectations for the children's behaviour and they learn to be kind and caring to others, sharing fairly and taking turns. The childminder is a good role model for the children treating them calmly and with courtesy and consideration. The children are learning to follow this example, for instance, by saying please and thank you when appropriate. Children receive praise so they understand when they are behaving well and are helped to understand why sometimes their behaviour is unwanted through explanations.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children benefit from the childminder's sound organisational skills. She has devised and implements a range of policies and procedures which promote their safety and welfare. Copies of these documents are given to all parents so they understand what is provided for their child. The childminder maintains all the required records with the exception of having a copy of her motor insurance document available. The childminder has undertaken appropriate training and has a positive attitude towards continuing her personal development to further enhancing the care she provides for children. She keeps to the required ratios and ensures that the children have sufficient attention and support. She organises her home effectively, creating an interesting garden area with a play house, and has toys and resources readily available for the children to select so they can initiate their own play. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, 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:

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 there is a fire blanket which is appropriately sited and readily available for use
- ensure that documents relating to use of the car are readily available for inspection

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