

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	104224
Inspection date	13 November 2007
Inspector	Brenda Joan Flewitt
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1998. She lives with her husband and two sons aged 14 and eight years, in the village of Musbury, Devon. The childminder works with her husband, who is also a registered childminder. The whole of the ground floor of the house is used for minding, with the first floor accessed to use the bathroom. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding nine children under five years, and three school-aged children. Of these, two children receive funding for early education. The childminder also cares for children over the age of eight years.

The childminder is a member of the East Devon Childminding Network. She has a Certificate in Early Years Practice and an NVQ Level 3 in Childcare and Education.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted. They learn good procedures for their own personal hygiene which includes washing hands after using the toilet and before handling food. They are protected from the spread of infection through the childminder's routine practice which includes a hygienic nappy changing system. There is a clear sickness policy which ensures that parents know that children must not attend if they have an infectious illness. Children's medication and accidents are managed well. The childminder keeps up-to-date with first aid training, the first aid resources are readily available and the relevant records are completed clearly and signed by parents to acknowledge the entry.

Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle. They have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise as they play in the garden. This includes manoeuvring wheeled vehicles around each other, stopping, starting and weaving as they play imaginary games. They sometimes visit a local play park where they use large equipment such as swings, slides and climbing frames to help develop large muscle skills. Young children who are starting to move are given space and encouragement. For example, a young baby practises pushing legs out to aid wriggling while lying on the floor, determined to reach the identified toy. Children learn to make healthy choices in what and when they eat through good example and discussion. Parents provide packed lunches which are stored appropriately to keep food fresh, and supplemented as required by the childminder. For example, children enjoy a snack of grapes, satsuma and rice cakes which are arranged attractively in small portions on individual plates. They can have a drink whenever they feel thirsty as their specific cups are available at all times.

Babies routines with regards to food and sleep patterns, are discussed with parents and respected. For example, babies sleep at times agreed with parents, on a low-level futon in the main play room, to allow effective supervision.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in safe and secure premises where hazards and risks are identified and minimised. The front door is kept locked at all times, and the rear garden is fully enclosed which means that children are protected from uninvited visitors and cannot leave the home unsupervised. The satisfactory organisation of the childminder's house means that children generally move around freely and in safety as they choose their activities. The childminder puts measures in place to help prevent accidents such as locks on kitchen cupboard doors and safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Children use play provision which is kept clean and in good condition. Effective communication between the childminder and her husband leads to the children being supervised well.

Children learn what is expected if they must leave the building in an emergency because they are involved in regular fire drills which are recorded and evaluated. This promotes their safety in a real situation. Children are kept safe on outings through the childminder's procedures which include children holding hands with an adult, learning safe routines for crossing roads and the dangers of talking to people they don't know. The childminder makes sure that she takes first aid equipment, a phone and contact numbers.

The childminder has a good understanding of how to recognise sign and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow with concerns. She has recently attended a course to update her knowledge and informs parents of her responsibilities via a written policy. This all contributes towards protecting children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and secure. They enjoy the time they spend with the childminder and her co-childminder. Working together, they provide a caring family environment which encourages children to develop and learn. Children make very good relationships with the adults and each other, and develop confidence in making their needs known, as they can be sure of a friendly response. They are encouraged to practise skills to develop their independence in some practical activities such as managing their clothes and using the toilet facilities.

The childminder has a good understanding of how children learn through play, particularly with activities linked to their interests. She uses effective planning and assessment for all children, which links to the Birth to three matters framework for the younger ones. Children take part in a good range of activities that promote their learning in all areas of development. These include messy play, art and craft, dressing up, role play, books, music, construction and small world toys. They use a wide range of play provision and resources which are organised to allow them to select for themselves according to their age and stage of development. For example, a toddler finds a 'hoola' skirt in the dressing up box and asks for help putting it on, then joins in moving to classical music. A young child finds a telephone in a trunk of toys and talks to her 'Mum'.

Children use their senses to explore various materials. For example, most children enjoy manipulating dough into different shapes, pushing, rolling and squeezing with their hands and tools. Young babies generally play with manufactured toys and do not always have opportunities for exploring natural objects. Children receive positive interaction from the childminder who is interested in them as individuals and supports their activities with questions and discussion to help them learn.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The childminder has a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and uses this to provide a broad range of activities across the six areas of learning. She uses an effective assessment and planning system, which builds up a profile for each child, including photos and dated observations, and some adult-led activities are evaluated. Together, this informs the planning for each child's next steps. The childminder uses a range

of teaching methods. This includes a balance of adult-led and self chosen activities and effective questioning which encourages children to think, recall and solve problems. Children are making good progress in their learning.

Children develop a good sense of maths through everyday activities. They hear and use shape, positional and comparative language as they play. For example, as they 'warm up' for dancing, they make a triangle shape with their bodies, and move 'high and low'. While enjoying parachute games they know how to move 'under and over', 'forward and back', and identify names of colours correctly. They help to count in everyday tasks such as the number of 'scoops' used in making up a bottle for a baby. Children confidently help count up to nine. Children use language confidently to communicate, they often initiate conversations with adults and each other, and talk about events and home life. They enjoy books and stories and are starting to link initial sounds with letters. Three-year-olds often refer to the initial sounds of their own names. They practise skills for 'writing' by using various one-handed tools such as paint brushes, roller-ball paints and pens. They transfer these skills during tasks such as naming their art work.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted through discussion during spontaneous situations as well as planned activities. For instance, children are fascinated as they watch through the window as a crane lifts a 'port-a-cabin' for transporting. A child asks 'where is he going to put it?' and suggests 'I couldn't lift that'. The child then finds a book to look at about vehicles and asks more questions to confirm his understanding. They use various resources for constructing models, but do not have regular opportunities to access technology equipment. Children use their imagination well as they act out real life and everyday situations during role play and when using small world toys.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals. The childminder knows each child well through effective communication with parents and as she supports their activities. The clear observation and assessment system helps to identify any additional needs in children's learning and development. A Local Authority Special Educational Needs Coordinator is available to offer advice and support as required.

Children develop a good sense of belonging. As they arrive each day, they are welcomed into the family home by both the childminders and each other. They like to see photos of themselves and their art work displayed. Children start to become aware of people's differences as they play with toys and resources that reflect diversity. There are some planned activities which include looking at festivals and celebrations such as Diwali and Christmas.

Children behave well. They learn to share and take turns through routine and as they play. They get to know what is expected through explanations, and unwanted behaviour is managed with distraction. Children receive constant praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements, which helps build their self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from the childminder's positive relationship with parents. They receive good information about the setting, which includes written policies and procedures, and regularly reviewed contracts. The childminder seeks and records information to help meet children's individual needs, which is supported by daily conversations, and written diaries for each child. Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are well informed about their child's learning and progress. The childminder completes a termly report and invites parents to write their comments and discuss the record. The individual profiles are given to parents to keep when the child leaves the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children gain from the childminder's commitment to developing her role. She attends training courses to keep up-to-date with various aspects of children's care and education. The childminder has regular contact with the network coordinator who supports and monitors the provision for nursery education.

The generally good organisation of the premises, resources and structure of the day leads to children being active in a safe environment, eating and resting as individual needs require and being involved in a good range of learning experiences. However, daily routines do not regularly include natural items for babies to explore or opportunities for children to use technology. The effective communication between the childminder and her co-childminder, means that children are well supervised and supported. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

All the required documentation and records are in place, well organised, completed clearly and stored confidentially. Written policies and procedures regarding the health, safety and welfare of the children are regularly updated and shared with parents.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended that current systems for planning and record keeping were developed further to develop the provision for children from birth to three years.

The childminder has adapted the planning and assessment system effectively, linked to the Birth to three matters framework, which means that the younger children are well supported in their development.

This is the first nursery education 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 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):

- provide more opportunities for babies to explore natural objects and materials.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- increase children's opportunities for using technology.

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