



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY278186
Inspection date	10 November 2005
Inspector	Dinah Round
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 registered in 2003. She lives with her husband, who is also a registered childminder and their 2 children aged 4 and 6 years. They live in a house, near-by the centre of Dorchester, in Dorset, close by local schools and amenities. The family have two pet dogs.

All areas on the ground floor are used for child minding purposes, plus two rooms on the first floor for additional space and sleep provision. There are toilet facilities accessible on both levels. Children have access to an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play, with separate areas provided for the family's two dogs.

The childminder is registered to care for 4 children under 8 when working alone. When working with another childminder, they may jointly care for up to 7 children. There are currently 12

children on roll, all cared for on a part-time basis. The childminder is registered to provide overnight care for 2 children under 8.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is an accredited member of a childminding network. She is currently undertaking a Diploma of Childminding Practice, and also regularly attends courses and workshops which support her in her childminding role.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is given top priority. They are protected from the risk of cross-infection due to the extremely effective practices followed by the childminder. She actively encourages children to wash their hands well, and provides appropriate resources, such as liquid soap and paper towels. Through the familiar routines children learn the importance of good personal hygiene. The childminder shares with parents her policy regarding the exclusion of children with infectious illnesses, to make sure the risk of cross-infection is minimised. Nappy changing procedures are very good, ensuring children's health is maintained.

Children are developing an excellent awareness of healthy eating. They are offered an appetising selection of nutritious snacks and meals, which includes organic foods, and lots of fresh and dried fruit. In liaison with parents she encourages children to try new tastes. Drinks are provided at regular intervals throughout the day, which makes sure children do not get thirsty. Children's dietary requirements are recorded, and the childminder adapts the menus to ensure any individual needs are met.

Children's physical health is very well promoted. They benefit from quiet and active times during the day, and the daily routine includes times to rest and sleep according to their individual needs.

Children frequently engage in a wide range of fun and enjoyable activities to keep them fit and healthy. They have regular opportunities to go on local walks, play at the park and use the variety of play equipment in the garden. For example, the children negotiate space with increasing skill as they manoeuvre the bikes around the garden. The childminder offers support to the less confident children, to help them develop new skills. Children have access to a range of small tools and equipment, which develops their fine motor skills

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is given top priority. They remain safe and comfortable within the homely, well organised environment. This is due to the high levels of safety measures in place, including stair gates to prevent access to the stairs, cupboard locks and doors secured with hooks. Space is maximised to allow children to move around freely and safely within the different areas. Children are able to select toys and resources easily, due to the effective low level storage units

which allow independent access. The extensive range of good quality play equipment is organised carefully to make sure it is age appropriate.

Children are learning about safety and potential risks from an early age. The childminder gives the children clear explanations why they need to wear cycle helmets when riding the bikes, to keep them safe outside. Children's safety is maintained very well due to the on-going monitoring of safety measures and the clear emergency procedures which are regularly practised. The childminder carries out a pre-visit to assess the safety and suitability of new venues for outings.

The childminder has a comprehensive knowledge of child protection procedures which supports her in her role of keeping children safe. Her clear child protection policy ensures parents are familiar with her responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and content, forming excellent relationships. They are confident in the familiar routines, which take account of their individual needs. Children benefit from lots of good quality interaction from the childminder, which helps them to feel settled and secure. The childminder uses the Birth to three matters framework effectively to promote younger children's learning and involvement in activities. From an early age they enjoy using their senses to explore and experiment with sand, water, and paint. For example, children happily sing as they roll and manipulate the play dough to create their individual models.

Children are eager to take part in the wide range of exciting and fun activities the childminder plans for them. For example, they have regular opportunities for both indoor and outdoor play experiences and activities, including outings to local parks and places of interest. The childminder's secure knowledge of child development successfully supports children's learning and development. All children's progress is successfully monitored through on-going assessments; however, the full opportunities to challenge the older children and extend their learning are not always explored.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The childminder has a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. She plans a wide range of interesting and fun activities which keep children motivated and promote their learning. The routine is flexible to suit the children's individual needs, although, at times during activities insufficient challenge is offered.

The childminder listens carefully to what children have to say, and uses open-ended questioning to help children think, for example, when reading stories. Overall children are making good progress in their learning. This is recorded in photographs, children's work and written observations which link into the stepping stones. Tracker books are used effectively to record the children's progress and are shared with parents.

Children are confident and developing increasing independence, for example, when washing their hands before snack time. They independently choose books for the childminder to read,

or to look at by themselves, and enjoy listening to familiar stories. Children happily join in with the nursery rhymes, during spontaneous singing sessions. They count during their play and the childminder offers good support, such as when counting how many eggs they'd made from the play dough. However, opportunities for children to solve simple problems are not fully explored.

Children explore and learn about objects, living things and changes through various planned activities, such as growing carrots, peas and onions in the garden, and making cakes for the bonfire party. They are gaining confidence in using simple equipment, such as the tape recorder and microwave. Children regularly enjoy creative activities, and have good opportunities to experiment with different media, such as paint, dough, sand and water.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a strong sense of belonging. They feel settled and secure within the childminder's welcoming home environment. Children's photos are displayed on the walls and on the computer slide show, promoting their self-esteem. All children are included in the full range of activities, as the childminder effectively adapts the experiences to suit each child's age and stage of development. The childminder liaises closely with parents, which contributes to making sure that all children are well supported and their individual needs are met. Children's awareness of diversity and the wider world is promoted very well through the provision of various resources, such as a box of musical instruments from different countries borrowed from the toy library. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is good. They are learning to share and take turns, due to the childminder's clear explanations. For example, all three children are provided with their own crayons, paper and space at the easel. Children are kept well occupied, and benefit from the childminder's regular praise and encouragement which helps promote good behaviour. They learn to have consideration for others through the childminder's good role model.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Children's individual needs are very well met due to the effective systems in place to keep parents fully informed. They receive clear written information about the childminder's policies and practices. Regular newsletters successfully inform parents of the planned activities and the areas of learning to be covered. The two way diary system, and daily opportunities to talk to the childminder makes sure detailed information about the children's routines and activities is consistently shared with parents. Children's artwork is collated in scrapbooks, and along with the childminder's on-going assessments inform parents of their child's individual progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are settled and confident to explore within the very well organised environment. Resources are positioned extremely well to ensure children can access them easily by themselves or with minimal adult support. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to ongoing training. She actively seeks courses and workshops to update and learn new skills, such as, a recent course 'working with children with special needs'. This enables her to continually improve the care she offers to minded children. The on-going communication between the two childminders is effective in ensuring consistency in promoting children's care and well being.

Documentation is well organised, and regularly reviewed and updated. The clear policies and procedures support the childminder's good practice. These are shared with the parents to ensure they are kept fully informed about the provision. The childminder keeps all necessary records accurately, whilst maintaining confidentiality.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to make sure more detailed records of children's attendance were recorded, and to obtain written permission before administering medication to children.

These have been effectively implemented, with the actual times of children's arrival and departure now clearly recorded in the register. Parents' written consent to administer medication is now clearly detailed in the medication book.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 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 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):

- increase opportunities to further challenge the pre-school children, to help them to reach their full potential.

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 opportunities to further challenge children, and help them to reach their full potential

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