

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	104381
Inspection date	12 February 2008
Inspector	Janet Butlin
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 1997 and lives in a three bedroomed detached house, situated in a quiet, residential area on the outskirts of Ivybridge, in Devon. She shares the house with her husband. Children mainly play downstairs, but may sleep upstairs. There is an enclosed outside play and deck area which is accessed through French windows. The dwelling is within walking distance of parks, schools and pre-schools. She is registered to care for up to six children under eight years, and there are currently nine children enrolled in this age range. Family pets comprise two cats and tropical fish.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy very healthy and nutritious snacks whilst at the childminder's. They benefit from the emphasis she places on healthy eating and they are provided with a plentiful supply of fresh fruit. The childminder encourages children to understand about healthy eating and only provides, for example, biscuits as special treats. She has sought the guidance of the local environmental health department and has been very proactive in arranging additional training

in food hygiene. Children remain well hydrated as they are provided with frequent drinks. Babies who are being bottle fed are held comfortably so they enjoy the experience. Children bring packed lunches from home and parents respond very well to the childminder's request that these boxes be packed with healthy food. The contents of the lunchboxes are promptly refrigerated to ensure they remain fresh.

Children play in a scrupulously clean home. Excellent standards of hygiene are implemented, for example, whilst changing nappies. All who enter the home are requested to remove their outdoor shoes and this ensures that carpets remain clean and fresh for babies to crawl on. Children wash their hands using liquid soap and their own individual hand towel. This protects them from the risk of cross infection. They are protected from catching each other's germs as those who are sick or infectious are requested not to attend. Children are well cared for in the event of having an accident or becoming unwell whilst at the childminder's. She has up to date first aid training and good systems in place to record any accidents or the administering of medication. However, the childminder's ability to respond appropriately in the event of an emergency is compromised as essential, signed, consents are not always promptly obtained.

Children develop their health and well being as they go on frequent walks and outings. The childminder ensures they take advantage of the spring sunshine and takes them on walks, for example, to the nearby countryside, where they can enjoy the fresh air. In the summer they are protected from the harmful effects of the sun as the childminder is conscientious about applying sun cream and providing the children with hats to wear. Children develop their muscles effectively as they bounce and crawl on low-level soft play equipment in the home. They also attend specifically planned activity sessions at the local leisure centre, and occasionally they go swimming.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in an exceptionally warm and welcoming home. They have comfortable spaces to rest quietly, ample room to play and set up games and peaceful bedrooms to sleep in. Young babies can swing, crawl and explore using equipment of excellent quality. All toys and games are pristine and in very good condition. They choose from an extensive range of toys and the childminder rotates these items to ensure children's interest is maintained. Toys and games are set out ready for children's arrival and they reach their favourite toys easily and safely. Children also occasionally play in the secure rear garden.

Children are kept very safe in the home as the childminder has assessed the dwelling for any risks and ensures children cannot access hazardous items or areas. Children are protected from, for example, hard edges of tables as they have been covered with soft bumpers. Children are confident in the procedure to be followed in the event of having to evacuate the premises in an emergency. They practise this routine regularly and this helps to keep them safe. An accurate and prompt register is maintained and this means there is a reliable means of telling who is on the premises in the event of such an emergency. The childminder also uses a highly effective additional security system when taking children on outings. Children are secure in the home and cannot leave the premises unsupervised. They are always rigorously supervised, whilst playing and when asleep.

Children's safety is further supported as the childminder has an excellent understanding of the child protection procedures. She regularly updates her training in this area and is confident in

the referral procedure. She has up to date guidance to help her in the event of having a concern. She keeps excellent records to support children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a superb time with the childminder. They have sunny, happy dispositions and eagerly hold out their arms to her when they arrive in the morning. They smile at their friends and swiftly join them to play. The childminder uses her excellent understanding of the Birth to three matters framework to ensure that games and activities match children's individual interests and stages of development and help them to progress. Young children eagerly chatter away to the childminder and to each other. She repeats their words back to them, as well as continually commenting on what she is doing and what they can see. This supports their communication skills. Children become competent learners as they work out how to stack different shaped boxes, nesting them within one another and exploring how things work. They listen as the childminder counts the items they are playing with, and attempt to copy the words she is using. They watch a short favourite programme on the television as a close, social group time. When it is over they wave goodbye to the characters and resume their exploratory play very happily. Children's enjoyment is extended as they go on frequent walks and outings. For example, they visit a physical activity group every week, attend toddler groups and go on walks to the farm in the countryside where they can splash in their Wellington boots. Older children make their own choices regarding activities in the school holidays. They look forward to train trips and a variety of nature walks and outings.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about cultural and social diversity in meaningful ways. They play with toys and look at books that depict positive images of diversity. The childminder uses these resources to inspire discussion and extend children's understanding. Children who have specific needs receive good care as the childminder is experienced in working very closely with parents to meet children's individual needs. She has also undertaken training, for example, in signing, to support her practice in this area.

Children are very well behaved. They share their toys good naturedly. They respond to the childminder's calm manner and her consistent expectations. She takes pride in being able to take her minded children out, for example, to restaurants in the nearby garden centre, knowing they will behave well. Children also respond to the constant attention she gives them and the positive reinforcement they receive for their good behaviour.

Children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes. They benefit from the good system of communication that exists between their parents and the childminder. Daily discussions at dropping off and collection times enable parents to discover what their child has been doing. The childminder also sends a text message to parents with an update, or item of news regarding the day's activities, halfway through the day. This helps parents to feel in touch with their child. The childminder establishes contracts and all necessary consents when children are placed with her, but these are not always signed promptly enough. There are good systems in place to keep parents informed of regulatory procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a very well organised home by a childminder who is sensitive, caring, and totally committed to the wellbeing of the children in her care. She plans and provides a stimulating and delightful range of activities that help children to develop in all areas. The childminder meets the needs of the children in her care. Children benefit from her enthusiasm for undertaking additional training to enhance their experiences, for example, she is about to attend training in forthcoming changes to early years care and education. The childminder regularly reviews her practice and even asks the children to contribute their thoughts. This results in very positive developments, for example, extending children's understanding of, and commitment to, healthy eating. All regulatory documentation is in place and is securely stored, although some requires more prompt completion.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to develop knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures. She has attended courses to increase and update her understanding and this has had a positive impact on children's safety.

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.

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 signed consents are in place for all 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