

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	144184
Inspection date	10 January 2008
Inspector	Dinah Round
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 registered to care for children in 1995. She lives with her husband and two children aged 10 and 15 years. They live in a house in Colehill on the outskirts of Wimborne, in Dorset. The whole of the ground floor of the house is used for childminding which includes the lounge, conservatory, playroom and kitchen, with bedrooms two and three on the first floor as well as toilet facilities. Children have access to a rear enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder, whose husband occasionally assists her, is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently caring for nine children all on a part time basis. The childminder walks to the local school and nursery to take and collect children. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and of the local childminding support group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and well maintained family home. They are protected from the risk of cross-infection due to the effective practices followed by the childminder, such as the provision of liquid soap and paper towels. Children are taught the importance of washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet, which helps them learn about keeping healthy. For example, children know the routine and readily get the step to wash their hands before having their morning snack. A sick children policy is shared with parents which details the exclusion periods for children who have infectious illness. This helps to reduce the risk of spreading illnesses. The childminder has a current first aid qualification which ensures children would be suitably supported in the event of an accident. Clear accident and medication records are maintained.

Children have access to regular drinks during the day which makes sure that they do not get thirsty. Parents provide children's lunches and the childminder links with parents to encourage children to try new tastes. Younger children benefit from being provided with healthy snacks, such as fruit and breadsticks, but this is not extended to the older children after school, as they are generally offered biscuits. Children's individual dietary needs are clearly recorded and followed so children remain healthy. Children's awareness of healthy eating is raised through discussion and activities, for example, they stuck pictures of healthy foods on paper plates.

Children have many opportunities to take part in physical activities through regular use of the garden and frequent outings. The daily walk to and from school provides children with plenty of fresh air and exercise. Children enjoy trips to Avon Heath Country Park and local parks where they can explore large play equipment, such as climbing frames, swings and slide. This provides fun experiences and promotes children's physical development and co-ordination skills. In the warm weather the childminder makes sure that children have sun cream on when outside so they are protected from the sun.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is assured due to the provision of a safe and secure environment. Good levels of safety equipment are in place, such as safety gates to prevent access to the stairs and safe storage of hazardous materials and objects. Children are able to move freely and safely around as they choose their toys, and benefit from the good levels of supervision by the childminder. However, there is no clear risk assessment system to identify and minimise potential risks to children both inside the home and when on outings. Children have access to an extensive selection of clean, good quality age appropriate play provision and equipment. These are stored in separate labelled boxes and positioned so easily accessible, for example, toys for the younger children are stored on low shelves to ensure they can access them safely. The childminder ensures older children play with resources that contain small pieces in separate areas so they are not within the reach of the younger children.

Fire safety equipment is securely in place and a clear fire escape plan has been developed. Children take part in regular evacuation practises which helps them learn what to do in emergency situations. Children are protected on outings due to the good procedures followed

by the childminder, such as age appropriate car seats in the car, and use of reins and buggies for younger children. Children are taught road safety when out walking to help keep them safe.

The childminder has a sound understanding of possible indicators of child abuse and is confident of her role to safeguard children. This contributes towards ensuring that children are well protected. Clear records of existing injuries are maintained, and a child protection policy is shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled and have a warm relationship with the childminder. Their individual needs are followed as the childminder recognises when a child is tired and provides a quiet time and a cuddle. Children's independence is encouraged, they confidently make choices about their play and ask for help when they need it. Children's learning is promoted well due to the positive interaction from the childminder as she supports and encourages them during their play, for example, children are encouraged to count the numbers of train carriages on the track.

Children are provided with a good variety of interesting activities and play experiences. These include construction, books, small world toys, role play and music. Activities are very much led by the children. The childminder follows children's preferences and ensures they have access to resources and toys which stimulate them and keep them fully engaged. Children take part in various art and craft activities, for example, they painted 'autumn pictures' and used leaves that they had collected on their walk. Children enjoy exploring and manipulating the playdough, they use the safety scissors and cutters carefully to create different shapes. This helps develop their hand-eye co-ordination. Children enjoy listening to the music tape and join in with the different nursery rhymes, such as 'Five little ducks'. The childminder has an understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and refers to the resource to help develop learning outcomes for the children.

Children enjoy regular experiences outside the home, such as taking part in music and movement sessions and attending a local parent and toddler group. This encourages socialising and helps to develop children's confidence.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected as individuals. The childminder gets to know each child's needs through on-going communication with parents which contributes towards children's care and well-being. Children develop a strong sense of belonging through having their own named coat pegs and seeing their artwork displayed in the playroom. Children benefit from the well-balanced attention by the childminder which makes them feel settled and secure. Activities and play experiences are effectively adapted to suit children's differing age and stage of development, and children with additional needs are given extra support to make sure they are fully included. Children develop a positive attitude to the needs of others as they help each other put on shoes. Children gain awareness of the wider world through access to resources that reflect diversity, this includes books, puzzles, and small world equipment.

Children are well behaved. The effective use of distraction and close supervision by the childminder makes sure children are kept well occupied and interested. Children show

consideration to others, for example, one child happily carries another child's drink container to the snack table. The childminder's calm and caring attitude promotes a good role model for children, they are encouraged to say 'please' and 'thank you' to help them learn good manners. Children receive regular praise which makes them feel good about themselves.

Children's individual needs are continually discussed with parents. Daily opportunities to exchange information ensures that any additional requirements are addressed and parent's wishes followed. The childminder shares children's art work and photographs of children taking part in activities with parents. Diaries are used to record daily routines for any younger children. This means that parents are kept successfully informed about their child. Positive comments from parents show they are happy with the care provided by the childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are settled in the warm, welcoming and relaxed environment. The play areas are well organised so that the different age groups can enjoy their own space when needed, which includes a separate playroom geared to children's needs. The wide selection of toys are well positioned to ensure children can safely select their own resources. Children's health and safety is promoted well through the childminder's practices. Although, healthy eating is not always followed for the older children and a clear risk assessment process is not in place. Children are provided with interesting play opportunities and activities which include regular experiences outside the home. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to her on-going development through studying for a child care qualification. Policies and procedures are in place to support the childminder's working practices and provide positive outcomes for children. These are shared with parents to make sure they are kept informed about the provision, however, the complaints policy does not have Ofsted's updated address. Documentation is well organised and stored securely to ensure confidentiality. Individual contracts and written consents are in place for all children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to make sure that garden tools were inaccessible to children. The tools have now been removed and the childminder makes sure they are not left out when children access the outdoor play space.

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 complaint 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):

- review the snacks provided for the older children, to promote healthy eating
- continue to develop the good practice by incorporating a system of risk assessment, and update Ofsted's details within the complaint's policy.

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