



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	139239
Inspection date	16 August 2005
Inspector	Janet Armstrong

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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1983. She lives with her husband, who is also a registered childminder, and one grown-up son. They live in a three-bedroom semi-detached house in the village of Puddletown, 6 miles from the county town of Dorchester. Nearby is a forest, nature trails and parks. The family have three pet dogs, to which the children have supervised access.

The downstairs is used as the main accommodation for childminding purposes, with a lounge, hall and kitchen. Children have access to upstairs bedrooms for sleep and rest arrangements as required and toilet facilities. The back garden is included in the

registration and provides a safe outdoor play area for minded children that is laid to paving.

The childminder is registered to care for up to four children under the age of 8 at any one time when working alone and is currently minding three children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted very well. Through good personal hygiene routines and discussions about germs they learn the need to wash their hands regularly, such as before mealtimes and after using the toilet and handling pets. Their exposure to germs and cross contamination is reduced through the childminder's thorough daily cleaning routines. This enables children to play freely and learn to take care of their own needs.

Children have a strong introduction to a healthy lifestyle. They learn which foods are healthy for them, and why, through visits to local organic shops and other grocery stores. They are provided with nutritious snacks, such as organic bread, dates, apricots, fresh fruit and vegetables. This introduces children to new tastes and gives them some understanding as to what the fruit is and where it is grown. Appropriate discussions between the childminder and parents enables the childminder to meet children's individual dietary needs. However, systems for obtaining detailed information from parents regarding allergies and food intolerances are not thorough enough.

Children's physical development is promoted well. They have regular opportunities to use outdoor play equipment, experience walks, run around and let off steam when visiting local parks, forests and nature trails. This helps them to develop their large motor skills and spatial awareness.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and well organised family home under the close supervision of the childminder. All the necessary precautions have been taken to reduce potential hazards, both indoors and out in the garden; for example, stair gates restrict access to the upstairs of the property and hazardous substances are locked away. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised with the children every three months. All of these measures allow children to play freely, explore and have the freedom to make their own choices in an environment free from potential hazards.

Children learn about the potential risks around them through consistent ground rules and guidance; they are taught not to eat or drink when running about, how to walk safely when on outings, and how to use the Green Cross Code. Children are

especially protected when visiting local places of interest. The childminder visits all new ventures to conduct a risk assessment to ensure it is safe and suitable for children to enjoy. All this enables them to start making safe choices for themselves.

Children are protected from harm through the childminder's clear awareness and understanding of child protection issues. She is clear on what procedures to follow, should she have a concern about a child in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and confident in the childminder's care. They show good levels of personal independence as they select and access a suitable range of play provision to create their own games and ideas, such as building a bridge out of duplo to go over a train track, playing with a hammer and ball activity that develops their hand-eye co-ordination and singing familiar and favourite songs and rhymes. The children, regardless of their age, receive a good balance of adult-initiated and child-led activities that promote their all-round development well; for example, a relaxed, informal and casual environment is provided for school-age children during term time. During school holidays, activities, outings and trips are planned together, ahead of time, to provide the children with a stimulating and fun-packed day.

The childminder has a very good awareness of the children's individual needs and supports them positively in their play and daily routines. Strong relationships have been developed with the childminder, with whom the children share their thoughts and ideas and seek to extend their own play. They chatter confidently amongst themselves and with the childminder. The children receive positive input from the childminder, who stimulates and challenges them throughout their day, such as counting how many balls they have. This means that children have developed high levels of confidence and motivation through the childminder's positive interaction.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and cared for as individuals. The childminder has a good awareness of the children's individual needs and caters for these through providing children with positive experiences, access to play provision and through her positive attitude. Children learn about diversity, both locally and in the wider world in which they live. They learn about their local community through regular walks and visits. Children with special educational needs are supported well. Written records of their needs, concerns and development are shared with parents and other professionals, as required. This positive approach and introduction to the world in which we live teaches children compassion and acceptance.

There is good partnership with parents. The childminder works closely with parents through effective verbal communication and written documentation. For example, a contact diary is completed for children under the age of four, which details activities,

achievements and concerns and is shared with parents. These strong relationships enable the childminder to support each family, cater to the children's individual needs and provide continuity of care.

Children are well-behaved. They know what is expected of them and why through clear guidance and boundaries from the childminder. They learn to manage their own behaviour as they get older and make their own choices. This enables them to develop positive relationships and get along with others.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and settled in this welcoming, family orientated home. Good use has been made of the space within the rooms available to enable the children to play freely and safely. They have access to play provision to support their needs and development. Effective use of time, daily routines and positive interaction provides the children with valuable learning experiences.

Children's wellbeing is effectively supported through clear paperwork and documentation. Competent communication with parents supports the continuity of care between home and the childminder, although more detail is needed when obtaining information from parents regarding allergies and food intolerances. The childminder attends regular training courses to update and improve her child-care knowledge and practice. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides; this is achieved through her sound knowledge of childcare and qualifications, and positive interaction with the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to devise an emergency evacuation procedure that is practised with children and to ensure that records are securely kept to maintain confidentiality.

These have been addressed well to promote and support children's safety. A written plan is now in place which details evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency; this is practised every three months with the children. Records are now securely kept in an upstairs room to maintain confidentiality.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- improve systems for obtaining information from parents regarding children's individual dietary needs, such as allergies and food intolerances

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk