

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY349739
Inspection date	16 April 2008
Inspector	Carole Argles
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 2007. She lives with her partner, their one year old child and a lodger in Shaftesbury, Dorset. All areas of her home are used for childminding and there is an enclosed rear garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to provide care for five children aged under eight years during the day and for one child overnight. The family's pets include a cat.

Currently, the childminder has three children aged under five years on roll, of whom two attend part-time. She also provides holiday care for four children of school age. At present, the childminder does not provide care for any children who have learning difficulties or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and holds a relevant child care qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

There are effective measures in place to promote the children's good health. The childminder minimises the risk of infection spreading between them through sensible precautions. She does not care for children if they are ill and provides separate bedding, flannels and towels for each child. The children learn good hygiene routines and know that they must wash their hands before eating. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and has support available in the event of an emergency involving a child. There is a sound procedure in place for the safe administration of medication to children and the required consents, accident and medication records are maintained.

The children receive a healthy and balanced diet of home cooked food. They have snacks of fresh and dried fruit and drinks are readily available for them whenever they are thirsty. The childminder meets their dietary requirements well and carefully considers what the children would like to eat. The children take part in many cooking and food preparation activities. They often help the childminder prepare their lunch and snacks, making pizzas, fruit kebabs and cakes.

The children have exercise daily and this helps to keep them fit. They go for walks with the childminder, visiting the nearby town centre or park and they often play outside in her garden. There is a good range of age-appropriate equipment and toys for them to use, including a small slide and trampoline as well as wheeled toys to ride on and push. They enjoy playing active games inside the house, catching balloons, jumping, dancing and moving enthusiastically to music. Consequently, they are developing good control and coordination of their movements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder's home is suitably maintained and comfortably furnished. It is a welcoming environment for the children because there are toys readily available for them to select independently and displays of posters and pieces of their artwork. There is a range of attractive child-size furniture which they use for creative activities and snacks. The childminder uses her premises well to provide a range of activities for the children and by using several bedrooms they can sleep undisturbed. The childminder has a wide variety of toys and activities to support the development and enjoyment of younger children and uses a toy library to extend the range when she is caring for children of school age. However, at present, she has fewer resources which show positive images of diversity.

Suitable measures are taken to reduce the likelihood of accidental injury to the children and the childminder has safety equipment, including cupboard locks and stair gates, in place. She ensures that her house and garden are kept secure. The children are well supervised at all times and the childminder helps the younger ones learn how to negotiate stairs and steps safely. Suitable fire precautions are taken and the children practise the fire evacuation drill regularly so they begin to learn what to do in the event of an emergency.

The childminder has a sound understanding of how to safeguard children from harm and knows what she must do if she has concerns about the welfare of a child in her care. Children do not

have unsupervised contact with people who have not been vetted. However, the childminder has not ensured that all the required suitability checks have been completed for her lodger.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are very happy and settled in the childminder's care. They develop warm relationships with her and there is plenty of interaction between them. The children receive praise and encouragement and the childminder takes time to ensure that she understands what the younger ones are trying to communicate to her. This helps them to feel valued and to develop good self-esteem. The children's communication skills are well supported by the childminder, who talks with them about what they are doing. She uses books and pictures effectively to help them learn a wide vocabulary, for example, by talking about butterflies fluttering and moving her hands to show what she means. During their play, she frequently refers to colours and numbers, for instance, talking about two blue pencils as they pick them up, and this promotes their knowledge and learning.

The children's day is structured to take account of their individual needs and the younger ones usually sleep after having lunch and a story. The children have a wide range of experiences which increase their understanding of the world around them. They help to look after the two tortoises, picking leaves for them to eat, and they talk about what they see and hear when they go out for walks. The childminder plans and prepares some activities in advance, particularly for children of school age, but is generally led by what they wish to do. Many toys and resources, including train sets, dolls and puzzles, are stored so that children can select them independently and make choices about what they do. The children take part in a variety of age-appropriate, creative activities, including painting, collage and drawing, and thoroughly enjoy singing, music and action rhymes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Good two-way communication between the childminder and the parents ensures that the children's individual needs are met well. The childminder has a clear understanding of their routines and preferences and she gives parents a brief written account of their child's day. They talk together daily and this helps to ensure that there is continuity in the children's care. Young children are encouraged to bring a comforter, such as a blanket, from home to help them feel secure. Written agreements are in place and parents receive copies of some of the childminder's policies and procedures so that they understand what is being provided for their child. The childminder keeps appropriate details and consents so that she can be sure that she is respecting parent's wishes for their child. She is flexible to accommodate their working patterns.

Children's cultural backgrounds are valued and celebrated by the childminder, who sometimes asks parents for extra information to extend her knowledge and understanding. She works closely with parents of children who have learning difficulties or disabilities and ensures that they are well supported and care is adapted to meet their needs.

The children generally play harmoniously together. Many are very young and the childminder gently helps them learn to share and take turns, often using distraction to another toy or activity to good effect. There are consistent, age-appropriate expectations for the children's behaviour. The childminder explains why sometimes their behaviour is unwanted and gives them praise and encouragement so that they understand when they have done well.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder is well organised and has all the records, policies and procedures necessary to promote the children's safety and welfare in place. However, the required suitability checks have not yet been completed for all adults living in her household.

The childminder holds an appropriate childcare qualification and attends relevant training. She keeps to the required adult-child ratios and manages her time effectively so that she can give her attention and support to the children. For example, she prepares food for cooked lunches before they arrive. She makes good use of her home so that the children can take part in a variety of activities in the house and garden. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the childminder or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The childminder 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:

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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):

- ensure that suitability checks are completed promptly on all members of the household
- continue to extend the range of resources which raise children's awareness of diversity in society

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