

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118285
Inspection date	17 April 2008
Inspector	Kay Roberts
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 satisfactory.

the time of the inspection there were no children in receipt of nursery education. Ofsted judges that the provider remains suitable to provide nursery education.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder registered in 1995 and is a qualified nursery nurse. She lives with her husband in a three bedroom, semi-detached property in Portishead, North Somerset. The whole of the house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed back garden. The childminder has two dogs and a tortoise. When working alone the childminder may care for care for no more than six children at any one time and is currently minding 11 children, four of whom are under five years. The childminder is registered to work with an assistant and at such times may care for no more than nine children under eight years at any one time. The childminder provides overnight care. The childminder takes children to and collects them from local schools, pre-schools and nurseries.

The childminder is an affiliated member of the Avon and Somerset Constabulary Network and an accredited member of North Somerset Childminding Network, but there are currently no children in receipt of nursery funding. When a childminder does not have children on roll at the time of the inspection, inspection judgements are based on evidence gathered from discussions with the provider and an inspection of the premises, equipment and relevant documentation. As there are no children on roll, the quality of the provision cannot be judged better than satisfactory because there is no reliable evidence on which to assess its impact on children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's good health is actively promoted. They have excellent daily opportunities to play outdoors where they are protected from the elements. Children remain interested in playing outdoors as they have access to a wide range of resources, the back garden duplicating the indoor learning environment. Children develop large muscle skills as they chase and throw balls for the dogs. Children use co-ordination to move around on bikes and, sit and ride toys. Young children make a line with a range of toy vehicles, whilst others use hand-eye co-ordination to steer small toy cars along the roads on a map. They are enthusiastic about playing with dry sand and later the childminder extends their experience by asking if they would like to add water. Children anticipate that it will make the sand 'soggy'. Physical skills are regularly extended when they visit parks where they balance, swing and climb up a rock wall.

Snack time is made more exciting as children are able to sit outdoors at the patio table. They are independent in pouring their own drinks and help themselves to a wide selection of fresh sliced fruit, including more unusual fruit, such as, kiwi and pineapple, which children are able to name. It is a social occasion as children chat about where they have visited with the childminder during the school holiday. Children eat varied, healthy, home cooked, mid-day meals which take into consideration special dietary requirements. The meal is well presented as there is a table cloth and serviettes. Children do not go hungry and show their appreciation of the food by having a second helping. Parents are aware of the type of food children eat as they are provided with a four week sample menu and on a daily basis parents of younger children are updated via a diary.

Children play in a clean environment and know that they must take off their shoes when coming indoors. They learn the importance of hygiene through the daily routine as they place their hand over their mouth when coughing. Children are independent in washing their hands before snack and after using the bathroom. They recognise their own towel as each one has a different embroidered picture. The risk of infection is greatly reduced as the childminder follows hygienic procedures, for example, providing individual bedding for children who need to sleep and ensuring that the dogs do not pose a health hazard. Parents sign to agree the childminder's policy for excluding children who are sick and the childminder has a list of exclusion periods for communicable diseases. There are very safe procedures for administering medication and first aid, so that children's welfare is actively promoted.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move around freely between the lounge and dining room, and as furniture is placed to the sides of the room, space available for play and physical activity is maximised. There are sofas for relaxation and children who require a sleep are placed in separate bedrooms, so they are not disturbed by their peers. Premises are decorated and maintained to a high standard, but children do not have a sense of belonging as no art work or photographs are displayed. Children also benefit from having access to the back garden which is mainly laid with lawn, but the patio enables children to continue playing outdoors in all weathers and is suitable for riding bikes. Children have access to a wealth of clean, safe resources covering all areas of learning. Resources are stored in clear boxes to facilitate children making informed decisions about what they wish to play with.

Children play in a secure environment so they do not leave unnoticed. There are good procedures in place so that children are only released to authorised adults and protected from people who have not been vetted. The risk of an accident is greatly reduced as the childminder provides close supervision at all times. In the event of a fire, children know how to evacuate the premises safely as they practise the fire drill on a regular basis. Through discussion with the childminder, children learn to keep themselves and others safe, for example, children understand that they should keep sand in the sand tray or it may go in someone's eyes. When on outings with the childminder, for which there is a safe procedure, children know that if they get separated from the group they should talk to someone who is wearing a uniform and that they should not talk to strangers, even if sweets are offered. Children are further protected as the childminder has an excellent understanding of local safeguarding procedures, for which she has recently undertaken further training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children play together exceptionally well and younger children learn from those who are older. Often children move from one activity to another as a group. Young children's social skills are regularly extended when they visit toddler groups. Older children are developing a sense of humour and say that they drink wine. They show very good reading skills. They read 'The Guinness Book of Records' and inform every one of facts which they find interesting. Young children complete simple jigsaw puzzles with the assistance of the childminder, who explains that they need to match pieces of the same colour. As they complete the puzzle, two year olds explain that they are making a long line. Older children show good mouse control as they complete jigsaw puzzles according to their level of ability on the computer. As older children complete a 100 piece puzzle of a snake they show good problem solving skills as many of the pieces are very similar in colour, and afterwards proud of their achievements, ask the childminder to look. The constant gentle interaction of the childminder promotes language well so that young children have a broad vocabulary and speech is very clear. The childminder follows through on children's interests so they are motivated to learn, and when they pick up a book asks if they would like her to read it. As they go through the book children's learning about the wider world is extended as the story tells of how frogspawn changes into frogs. Children

count the number of tadpoles on each page and as they do so and the number is reduced by one each time, they begin to understand the concept of subtraction. They learn that turtles are similar to tortoises, but live in the water. Older children are curious and look to the back of the book to see how at the end of the story the book is able to make a sound like a croaking frog. Children use their imagination well to create a very realistic satellite dish from good quality construction. They have excellent concentration. Children are provided with the time and opportunity to be independent, for example, putting on their own shoes and pouring their own drinks. They use tools to grate carrot for the childminder's tortoise.

Children say they enjoy being with the childminder, they make lots of things. Children also have many opportunities to learn from first hand experience as they go on many outings to places, such as, Hengrove Park, Blaise Castle, Ashton Court, Noah's Ark and Weston-super-Mare. The childminder monitors young children's progress in well presented files, which include photographs with pertinent comments. Parents are able to see their children's records at any time and their written contributions are welcomed. The childminder has an excellent understanding of how to promote learning so that children make outstanding progress, so much so that it is quite easy to forget that some children are so young. Older children select a subject they would like to find out more about and this is developed into a topic. Children talked enthusiastically about the pirate topic when they made hats, boats and telescopes, and were able to use water guns.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The childminder:

has a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn

is able to plan and provide a suitable range of activities and experiences across the six areas of learning taking the needs of individual children into account

is able to assess children's progress towards the early learning goals and help to move them to the next stage in their learning, although planning could be further developed to ensure children's interests are also taken into consideration.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder listens to what children say, follows through on their interests and strives to meet children's individual needs through effective communication with parents. Parents are well informed about both practices and their child's day. The close partnership between parents and childminder ensures that children are emotionally secure. Parents written comments about the provision are extremely positive '..... speech and dictation continues to improve as does her interaction with other children. The daily diary is comprehensive and thorough, and demonstrates the care and commitment she has in looking after my and other parents children'. Children are extremely confident as the childminder praises and applauds their achievements. When children do something they are particularly proud of the childminder takes a photograph

and leaves things, such as, completed jigsaw puzzles for parents to see. The childminder is sensitive to individual needs and provides resources on an individual basis. She values and includes all children, and older children learn from this example and happily include those who are younger in their play. Children are polite, able to share and take turns. Their behaviour is exemplary. Children develop a positive attitude to difference as they play with readily accessible resources reflecting positive images of our diverse society. They share holiday experiences abroad and after looking at a number of artefacts from the holiday, try to locate the holiday destination on the globe. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children have many opportunities to learn about the wider world as they go on outings with the childminder, such as, a visit to Ashcombe Children's Centre when it was opened by the Queen. As they go out and about with the childminder they discuss people in the community who may be of assistance, for example, police officer, bank manager, pet shop assistant, postman, staff at Noah's Ark and a lady from the Salvation Army. Children take photographs and collate them in a book. Children have a love of nature. They understand that the childminder's tortoise must hibernate in the winter and explain how they washed it when it woke up. Each child has planted sunflowers and nasturtiums, the tortoise's favourite flowers. Children recall the butterfly house. They observed the caterpillars change into a cocoon and when they emerged as butterflies released them. Children are currently waiting for the tadpoles to change into frogs. As children point out the picture of a rattle snake in a book the childminder explains why snakes behave the way they do. Children talk with enthusiasm about the animals at Noah's Ark Farm, Gerald the giraffe, feeding the goats and holding the rabbits.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. The childminder explains that she is able to provide parents with information about the education programme. Parents are able to view children's progress records and are encouraged to record their views. The childminder also encourages parents to become involved in children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. Documentation complies with both the National Standards and regulatory requirements so that children's health, safety and welfare are actively promoted. The childminder is appropriately qualified and keen to extend practice has undertaken further training since the last inspection relating to both care and education. The childminder is passionate about her work and this is reflected in her interaction with children. The childminder's excellent organisational skills enable her to offer children a high level of support. She provides a welcoming home where children have space for play, physical activity and relaxation. Children have access to a wealth of clean, safe resources and particularly benefit from access to the back garden, which duplicates the indoor learning environment. The childminder's knowledge of Birth to three matters and effective planning for young children facilitates their exceptional progress. Leadership and management is satisfactory. The childminder is able to assess her provision. Aware of her weakness relating to documentation, she has taken steps to address this.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there were no recommendations as the childminder was judged outstanding.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard 1 - Suitable person. A concern was received that the childminder is caring for more children than her registration allows and that she is leaving minded children with unvetted individuals. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit. The visit established that the childminder was caring for relatives whilst minded children were present so that the total number of children she was caring for was more than six. The childminder also admitted leaving children with an unvetted individual when she collected other minded children. In addition, the childminder was found not to be maintaining an accurate attendance record. In view of this four actions were set under National Standard 1, National Standard 2 - Organisation and National Standard 14 - Documentation. Ofsted received a suitable response to the actions set. In view of this we took no further action and the registered person remains qualified for registration.

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.

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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):

- further improve the environment so that children have a sense of belonging

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):

- continue to develop planning by taking into consideration children's interests.

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