



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142692
Inspection date	16 March 2006
Inspector	Bridget Copson

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 1999. She lives with her husband and 3 children aged 5, 7 and 15 years on the outskirts of Yeovil, Somerset. Minded children have access to a sitting room with dining area, dedicated play room, kitchen and toilet. The first floor has four bedrooms which are used for children's sleep times and for play. There is a garden at the back of the house for children to use.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 4 children at any one time. She currently cares for 6 children under 8 years, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder holds the N.N.E.B child care qualification and attends appropriate courses to update her knowledge and skills. She is an active member of Trio, the local quality assured childminding network as well as Yeo-care, a local childminding group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of play provision and activities to support their physical development and fitness. For example, children play with balls, ride on toys, the slide, jumping bags and bouncy castle in the garden. Also, indoors they dance to music and younger children's developmental needs are supported well through baby walkers and activity centres. In addition, children also enjoy using local facilities such as indoor play centres and parks.

Children learn about healthy eating habits through enjoying nutritious choice of snacks and drinks. For example, children choose fresh fruits, crackers and cheese and sandwiches as well as biscuits at break times. They have access to a choice of fresh fruit juice, squash or water throughout the day to ensure they do not get thirsty. Children bring their own packed lunches. However the childminder will provide a balanced, home cooked tea if required, such as pasta with yogurt and fresh fruit.

Children are cared for within a very clean and well-maintained family home where the childminder has good systems in place to prevent the spread of infection. For example, hand washing routines, disinfecting surfaces and the high chair, cleaning toys regularly, having an hygienic nappy changing routine and a clear policy for the exclusion of sick children. Children learn about managing good personal hygiene well through washing their own hands and faces regularly using individually labelled face and hand towels.

Children's health, medical and dietary needs are met effectively by the childminder who keeps written records from parents regarding the care required. She provides them with written details of any accidents, incidents and medication administered for consistency of care. However, parents do not sign medication records to confirm acknowledgement of any medication administered. This does not further promote consistency of children's health care. The childminder holds an appropriate first aid certificate and kit to support her in caring for children in the event of an accident.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well-cared for within a warm and welcoming family home which is well-maintained throughout. As a result children play freely and safely between the different rooms under the childminders close supervision. Children are kept safe and secure by the childminder who has good systems in place to protect them. For example, cupboard and draw locks, sharp objects hung out of reach, safety gates, a

safe toilet door lock, some socket covers, door and window locks, garage and gate locks and secure garden fencing. However, there are two unprotected sockets on the first floor landing which older children have access to. This is, therefore a potential hazard to some children. Children learn about safety and looking after themselves well through road safety on walks, not running indoors and practising the fire drill. They also learn from the childminder's guidance, such as lifting up long dressing up clothes when walking around so as not to trip up.

Children enjoy a good range of play provision which they access freely and independently from toy boxes on the floor and open shelves in the dedicated play room. Children do not have access to anything that is unsafe or inappropriate for them to use. As a result children move around the rooms, choosing toys freely for themselves. The needs of younger children are supported well through use of appropriate furniture and equipment.

Children are well-protected by the childminder who has effective systems in place to safeguard their welfare. For example, close supervision, details of named adults authorised to collect children and an emergency procedure with named and registered childminders to help care for the children. In addition she has an appropriate understanding of child protection issues and procedures to support her in keeping children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of play provision and activities to support their learning and development in all areas. For example, constructional sets of all ages and many different puzzles, games, activity centres, threading activities and electronic toys. Children use their imaginations well with dressing up accessories, role play resources, dolls and many small world sets. In addition children enjoy story and reference books and join in many different creative activities each day. Children also enjoy many trips to local facilities and join in group activities, such as 'Learn For Play' session and toddlers groups each week. This all provides children with different learning environments to support their development and keep them active and interested.

Children are happy and settled within the childminder's care and focus well on their play. They choose freely for themselves and seek out the childminder for support, comfort and to show off their work. They communicate well through clear speech, pointing and shouting out. They show their enjoyment through laughter and smiles. This demonstrates children's good sense of well-being and developing independence.

Children's learning and development is promoted well by the childminder through close interaction in their play. She gives lots of encouragement and praise to promote their self-confidence and asks lots of questions to encourage children to think and make decisions. The childminder uses her observations to provide children with realistic challenges to promote their next stage of learning. For example, re-enforcing new words, encouraging children to count further and recognising new colours. She

uses her basic knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework to support her in promoting children's learning and development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for equally and fairly by the childminder who has good systems in place to meet their individual needs. For example, records for parents, daily communication and a good knowledge of child development to support her in promoting their learning and development well. She uses her good organisational skills to ensure all children are included equally, for example, simultaneously managing a painting activity and bubble blowing to meet the demands of two different age groups. The childminder is aware of the need to ensure she has the appropriate knowledge, skills and resources to integrate and care for children with any additional needs. Children learn about diversity through the range of play provision which reflects different cultures and through meeting many different people within the local town community.

Children are cared for within a positive environment where they behave well and show a good sense of belonging. For example, they find favourite toys for themselves, play well together, share and they listen well to the childminder's instruction. They are developing a good understanding of what is expected of them through the childminder's guidance and good practice. For example, reminding children to say thank you, talking calmly and providing lots of encouragement and praise. She keeps a written list of house rules for older children who need reminding.

The childminder has established good working relationships with parents to the benefit of all children. Children are cared for consistently and according to parent's wishes in all areas. For example, parents complete child record forms, contracts and consent for all areas of care. They are shown the childminder's files which details her certificates, personal profile, policies and procedures, letters of reference and a photograph album which reflects the range of activities children are provided. However, the complaints procedure does not accurately inform parents of the required procedure should they wish to raise a concern. Parents are kept suitably informed by the childminder through discussion each day regarding their routines, activities and well-being. The childminder updates all records regularly with parents. This all ensures children are, and continue to be, cared for consistently and according to parents wishes in all areas.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well-cared for by the childminder who holds a child care qualification and attends appropriate courses, such as first aid, child protection, 'A healthy Child' and 'Experienced Childminding' workshops. This all supports her in updating her knowledge and skills to meet children's needs efficiently. The childminder ensures any other adults who have regular contact with children are suitable to do so. This

ensures children's welfare is not compromised.

Children's care is enhanced by the childminder's good organisational skills which promote a safe and secure environment and interesting, well-structured days. The childminder uses her time well to provide a balance of free play and organised activities, active and quiet play and to meet each child's own daily routine. The provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

The childminder keeps all documentation relating to children secure to maintain confidentiality, but to allow her to easily access information at all times. Children's records are updated every six months to support her in continuing to meet their needs efficiently and according to parent's wishes. Some documentation, however, requires updating to promote continuity of care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to make sure that electric sockets in areas accessible to children do not pose a risk. She also agreed to make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint. Also to improve the recording system for when children are present, so that each child's individual attendance is clearly identified.

The childminder has installed safety covers in all unused electric sockets, with the exception of two on the first floor landing. This does not ensure all sockets do not pose a risk to children. She provides parents with a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint as well as a complaint record form. However, this needs some additional information regarding the required procedure. The childminder records all children's attendance to show which children are present at any time.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received 1 complaint, relating to Standard : Suitable Person and Standard 6: Safety. The complaint related to an accident involving a minded child and the numbers of children in attendance. We carried out an investigation on 24 August 2004. An action was raised to ensure Ofsted is informed of any serious accidents to a child whilst in the care of the childminder. A recommendation was raised that the childminder should improve the recording system for when children are present. We found no evidence that the provider was not complying with the national standards. The provider remains qualified for registration. The complaint was not recorded in the complaints record.

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 parents sign medication records to confirm acknowledgement of any medication administered
- ensure plug sockets on the first floor landing do not compromise children's safety

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