



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY310508
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 May 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Linda Dawe

<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 lives with her husband and two teenaged children in a detached house in the seaside town of Exmouth. Children are cared for in a designated playroom known as the Garden Room within the house. There are separate rooms available for children to sleep or rest. Children also have regular access to an enclosed garden and are also taken on regular outings to local parks for outdoor play.

The childminder was registered in 2005 to care for up to 6 children, but when working with another childminder, may care for a total of 11 children. Care is offered from

Monday to Thursday 08:00 to 19:00. The two childminder's generally work together on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. At present they are caring for 12 children between the ages of 12 months and five years old.

The childminder is a trained general and sick children's nurse; she holds a level two qualification in playwork and a Montessori Diploma. She is a member of the Devon Childminding Association, the National Childminding Association and the Devon Montessori Early Years Forum. The childminder's practice follows the Montessori philosophy.

The family have a pet cat that can be excluded from children if necessary.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a range of healthy snacks that include fresh fruit and rice cakes with drinks of water or milk that fully meet their dietary requirements. Children eat snacks and meals sitting at low tables using crockery and cutlery, which makes meal times a social occasion where children learn good social skills. The childminder has obtained her basic food hygiene certificate to give her the knowledge of how to store and re-heat packed lunches to prevent food poisoning. Children can freely access drinks at any time to keep them hydrated, particularly in hot weather.

Children have regular opportunities to exercise and get fresh air as they play in the childminder's garden or are taken out for walks or outings to local amenities such as Woodbury Common. Children are also given opportunity to rest or sleep according to their individual needs.

Children's good health is further promoted as a result of stringent medication procedures and by a sensible sick children's policy meaning that children who are ill do not attend. The childminder is pro-active in seeking up-to-date health information, for example, by using NHS Direct to make sure appropriate action is taken if children fall ill. All accidents, incidents and medication given is recorded to underpin good practice. Children learn about good hygiene practices as they are encouraged to wash their hands regularly. However, they share a communal towel which does not give stringent protection from cross-infection.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are free to play in a safe, secure and well-organised environment. Toys and equipment are appropriate for the age and developmental stage of the children playing with them and are of extremely high quality. They are also regularly cleaned and checked to make sure they are safe.

Children are kept safe in the car as they travel in car seats, or restraints, suitable for

their age and weight. Parents demonstrate the correct fitting of seats to ensure they guarantee maximum protection in the event of an accident. The childminder makes sure she has details of children's medical needs when out and a mobile phone is carried along with a first aid kit. Children are closely supervised at all times, both in and out of the home and sleeping babies are regularly checked. The childminder is aware of her responsibility to safeguard children's welfare and does this by recording any existing injuries or concerns she may have. This all adds to children's safety and well-being.

Children are made aware of potential hazards and shown how to use equipment safely, for example when using china jugs to pour their drinks. Smoke detectors are regularly checked to make sure children can be quickly alerted in the event of a fire and there is a clear emergency evacuation plan. A fire blanket is situated in the cupboard in the kitchen, however this would be difficult to access quickly in the event of an emergency.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children have access to outstanding play opportunities that are planned to meet their individual needs and help them to make progress across all areas of their development. The Birth to three matters framework is used effectively as a base to assess children's development and plan for their next stage. The exceptional detail that the childminder gives to planning and finding out about the children in her care results in them being given every opportunity to develop and make progress during their time with her. For example, the garden provides children with an excellent learning environment as they hunt enthusiastically for 'mini-beasts', and plant seeds to watch them grow. Children learn about texture and volume as they pour pebbles from container to container, concentrating hard on not spilling any and being delighted with the result.

Children are happy and settled and they separate from their parents extremely well. They freely choose from an excellent range of resources and activities laid out for them in an enticing way. The atmosphere is calm and relaxed as classical music is played gently in the background. Children are encouraged to make their own choices, promoting their independence, whilst also receiving lots of support and encouragement to complete their activity. As the childminder knows each child well, she is able to guide them towards activities and equipment that is appropriate for their individual needs.

Children develop a love of stories as they 'read' from a selection of high-quality books or enjoy story time snuggled up with the childminder. They grapple with puzzles and train tracks that are put out for them to make.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are carefully considered by the childminder. Their progress is regularly assessed and recorded to enable the childminder to plan for their future development. The childminder works extremely closely with parents and other professionals to make sure the children's needs are fully met. Parents are provided with a wealth of information about their children's care both in written form, such as newsletters and daily diaries or through informal discussions at the end of the day. Parents are also given ideas for activities to do at home with their children, for example, recipes for play dough or links to useful websites, to further extend children's learning.

Children with disabilities are extremely well supported. The childminder has been proactive in learning Makaton sign language to enable her to communicate with children with speech difficulties or communication problems. Even very young children pick up simple signs to help them make their needs known, such as asking for a drink. The room is rich in positive images of other cultures and races, and festivals such as Diwali are explored to give children an understanding of life in modern Britain. They are also given excellent opportunities to learn about their own place in the world as parents share information about special family events using their 'My Days Book'.

Children behave extremely well in the relaxed environment with the childminder providing an excellent role model and as a result of their being so much for them to do. Children are encouraged to be polite and considerate to one another, by saying please and thank you and by sharing toys.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the efficient way that this childminder organises her time and space. She works closely with her co-childminder to make sure that children's needs are fully met. The play area is extremely well laid out to provide children with a rich learning environment that is also safe. Children can also sleep safely upstairs in a quiet separate area where they are regularly monitored.

The care and safety of the children is further enhanced by the childminder's approach to documentation. Relevant policies and procedures are in place to promote the welfare and care of the children that attend, such as consent forms and accident and medication records. A daily register is completed, however this does not clearly show when both childminders are working together which would provide evidence that child to adult ratios are met. Also the consent form to enable the childminder to seek emergency medical treatment or advice is not clear.

The childminder demonstrates a commitment to improving her knowledge and practice by attending regular training, for example, joining the local childminder network and by attending Montessori workshops and training sessions. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children that attend.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 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.

## **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 that the register clearly shows the times that each childminder is present and that written permission is sought from parents to enable the childminder to seek emergency medical treatment or advice, if necessary
- improve safety for children by making the fire blanket more easily accessible
- protect children from the risk of cross-infection by providing each child with his/her individual towel.

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