



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142180
Inspection date	30 June 2006
Inspector	Joyce Bowler
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 has been registered since 1991. She lives with her husband and two adult children in Frome, Somerset. The lounge, dining room, kitchen, and upstairs bathroom are used for childminding. One upstairs bedroom is used for sleeping children. There is a fully enclosed rear garden with a patio and lawn.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is currently minding eight children on a part time basis.

The childminder takes children to a variety of local toddler groups. The family have a dog and one rabbit.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from care which promotes a healthy lifestyle. They have healthy and nutritious snacks which include fresh and dried fruit and biscuits according to the children's appetites, dietary needs and requirements. The childminder is aware that after school or a long walk children may be more hungry and balances the foods offered to include carbohydrates for energy. Children have choices which include frozen fruit lollies in hot weather as well as frequent drinks from their own cups and beakers. Parents provide lunch boxes.

Children's health is protected as the dog is inoculated and wormed regularly. The rabbit is a new acquisition which the children have looked at but not handled. The dog's water and food dish is in the kitchen and children learn not to touch this.

Children's cleanliness and hygiene is protected by the use of wet wipes and soap and water to wash their hands. The childminder washes her hands before and after changing nappies and after helping children to use the toilet or potty. Children who are able to use the toilet are escorted upstairs and learn to wash their hands afterwards. Younger children are progressing well in their toilet training as they have easy access to potties in the house and garden. Children's hygiene is promoted as the childminder changes the sand and water for outdoor use regularly.

Children's accidents and medication needs are recorded accurately and shared with parents. Children's health is promoted as parents give prior consent for the childminder to seek emergency advice or treatment. Children's minor injuries continue to be treated appropriately as the childminder holds a valid first aid qualification.

Children are provided with a variety of good opportunities during each week to develop their physical skills. They benefit from a good range of toys, equipment and activities which foster manual dexterity and encourage growing confidence and ability in using their whole body. Children enjoy going for walks, visiting parks and making use of the large back garden.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are protected on outings as the childminder ensures that she carries all emergency contact details with her. Children are protected in the garden as back gates are bolted and the area is checked before use by the childminder. Children cannot touch the rabbit as the hutch is high enough to prevent fingers being nibbled.

The childminder's home is clean and the space is well organised for effective play and room to spread games out safely. Her own children have grown up but she still keeps a good range of resources available in the dining room. Children have safe access to toys, books and puzzles which are stored within reach.

Children are protected as fire safety equipment is in place. She has an annual gas safety check for the central heating system.

Children's welfare is safeguarded via the childminder's good knowledge of child protection procedures. She has training and is experienced in keeping appropriate records and making relevant observations as part of her additional role as a part time family support worker.

Children are able to play safely in the childminder's home and garden as most risks are appraised and reduced by the childminder. However, safety is compromised as the childminder has not devised an emergency evacuation procedure or practised it with the children. Some hazardous materials in the home are within reach of the children in the bathroom and sitting room which compromises safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from the childminder's belief in providing an environment where the emphasis is on child led play. There are plentiful opportunities to learn, enjoy and to achieve in a homely and welcoming setting. A 'home from home' ethos means that children learn while taking part in domestic activities, such as going shopping and hanging out the washing, as well as from playing with toys and attending toddler groups. They are learning to count, to recognise shape and colour and to enrich their vocabulary with lots of conversation. Children remember previous activities, such as when they looked at themselves in the mirror and use this to talk about current play and to revisit things that they have learned. The children looked in the television screen and were able to talk about it with the childminder and each other remembering words such as 'reflection' and 'shadow'.

The childminder has an excellent knowledge of what is available locally and makes good use of what would be of interest and value to the children. For example, they attend singing sessions, various toddler groups, play schemes, the library and the toy library. Children have enjoyed watching the construction work in progress across the road. This has tied in well with one child's current love for 'Bob the Builder' and all allied toys, play and television programmes. Children have access to television when the childminder feels it is appropriate and of worth.

Her child led and flexible approach means that every day is different and children's interests govern what they will do on a day to day basis. For example, a trip to the town might be changed if they meet friends when walking through the park and decide to stay and play there. There is a strong sense of cooperation fostered between the children which is also reflected in the childminder's approach to behaviour management.

Children benefit from the childminder's friendly and enthusiastic approach. This positive outlook has rubbed off on the children. They are confident, happy and sociable. They are learning to converse well with adults and their peers alike and demonstrate a talent for playing well together and on their own. Children have access to a good variety of toys and games which enable them to explore different play situations. These are supplemented by extra resources from the toy library.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy in the care of the childminder due to her good settling in procedures and comprehensive knowledge of each child. Children benefit from the childminder's effective partnerships with parents and carers. The childminder gains knowledge of the children in written form held on contracts and in individual records and via daily feedback in order to offer appropriate care. The childminder will supply written information for parents if requested but usually relies on the well established exchange of verbal feedback at drop off and collection times. Children benefit from strong links between home and the childminder's and the good relationships which develop. The childminder is happy to become part of each child's extended family.

The individual needs of children are met as they have access to toys and equipment which are relevant to their interests, ages and stages of development. No children with learning difficulties or disabilities attend currently, however, the childminder is confident to discuss children's needs with parents. The childminder's knowledge and varied relevant experience in counselling, child protection work and youth work demonstrates that she has the skills to observe and liaise appropriately with relevant agencies and professionals.

Children's behaviour is very good. They are learning to play well together and demonstrate a growing respect for each other in cooperative play. They know when to say 'please', 'thank you' and 'sorry'. If minor squabbles arise, for example, when learning to share, they benefit from the childminder's sensitive approach to managing behaviour. They receive cuddles and encouragement according to their stage of development and 'time out' to think about their actions. Children having 'time out' are not excluded from the others or humiliated.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for which she provides.

She demonstrates good record keeping practice and maintains all documentation required to support the good level of care in her home. Children benefit from the well organised homely environment where daily routines enhance their experiences.

The childminder demonstrates her suitability as she has obtained police check clearance for her daughter. A check for her adult son, who has recently returned to live at home, is in progress. She has extensive experience of working with children in a variety of roles which she uses effectively to inform and improve her childminding practice. In her role as a school governor she has been able to access training in diversity and risk assessment which is of value to her childminding. Her close links with the NCH, a charitable organisation which operates nationally, enable her to access up to date child care news, ideas and strategies. For example, she has studied and practised the Solihull training approach to resolving challenging behaviour.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to address two issues relating to vetting of adults in the household and documentation. She has ensured that her daughter now has a CRB check. Her son's check is being processed currently as part of his appointment to a new post. The childminder has a policy about the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious and shares this with parents as part of the initial setting up of the contract.

Both recommendations have been addressed successfully and now promote children's safety in her care.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see and 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):

- devise and practice an emergency escape plan
- ensure that all hazardous materials are inaccessible to minded children.

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