



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 142662
Inspection date 22 November 2005
Inspector Brenda Joan Flewitt

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 registered in 1998. She lives with her husband and three children aged 11, 9 and 7 years, in Yeovil, Somerset. The ground floor, which includes a sitting room, a kitchen and a toilet, is used for childminding. Sleeping facilities are provided on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time, and is currently minding two children under 5 years on a part-time basis.

The family has a dog and a cat, to which the children have supervised access.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and of a local childminding support group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder promotes the children's healthy lifestyle well. She cares for the children in a warm and welcoming family home, which is clean and tidy. She teaches them good procedures and how to look after their personal hygiene independently. She does this through discussion and by setting examples. The children wash their hands before eating, for example, and after using the toilet. They can easily access the first floor toilet facilities.

The childminder's clear procedures protect the children from the spread of infection. The childminder supplies the children with individual towels, in which they may dry their hands. She also ensures that the parents know that they should not send their children to the setting if they are ill.

The children have constant access to drinks. The childminder regularly offers water to babies between feeds and makes sure that individual cups are within reach for the older children. She teaches them about healthy eating through discussion, as they choose what to eat from the food provided by parents. The childminder discusses the children's individual dietary requirements and routines with the parents, whose wishes she respects.

The children respond well to a semi-structured routine that includes a good balance of physical activity, quiet times and opportunities for rest and sleep, according to their individual needs. They enjoy fresh air and exercise on a daily basis. They help to walk the dog, for example, or visit the play park, where they can swing, slide and climb. The childminder encourages and supports babies to develop their physical skills. She holds a baby upright, for example, as it enjoys standing and bouncing on her lap.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder cares for the children in a safe and secure property, which is maintained well and where hazards and risks are identified and minimised. She has taken measures to prevent accidents by placing safety covers into sockets, by storing hazardous substances safely and by placing cushions over the hearth to allow babies to sit and play safely.

The equipment that the children use is maintained well to keep them safe while sleeping, eating and travelling. The toys and resources that the children play with are

also kept in good condition. The childminder protects the children from unauthorised visitors through a good security system. Furthermore, the children cannot leave the premises unsupervised.

The childminder has clear procedures in place to keep the children safe during outings. She uses appropriate car seats, for example, visits child-orientated venues and takes first aid equipment with her. She teaches the children about safety by having discussions with them and by involving them in procedures. When crossing a road, for example, she encourages a pre-school child to look and listen for traffic, and then to wait for the green light.

The childminder's sound understanding of child protection issues and of the Area Child Protection Committee procedures contributes towards the children's safety and welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are happy, settled and secure. They form positive relationships with the childminder and, from an early age, confidently tell her about their needs, knowing that she will respond in a friendly manner. When a baby has had enough of sitting, for example, it draws the childminder's attention by making discontent noises. The childminder responds by talking to it in a friendly way.

The childminder involves the children in a suitable range of activities that promote learning. These include playing with miniature world toys imaginatively, constructing objects, listening to music, reading books, watching TV, cooking, painting and drawing. Although there is a satisfactory range of playing equipment, which is appropriate for the children's age and stage of development, spontaneous choices cannot be made as the full range of equipment is not always available. The childminder does not always involve the younger children in activities where they can use their senses to explore and investigate.

Children enjoy a good variety of visits outside the home, where they explore the local environment, meet other people and have opportunities to use a wider range of equipment. They regularly visit a toddler group in order to play with other children and to gain trust in other adults. The children, therefore, develop a positive attitude towards society.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder respects the children and treats them as individuals. She gets to know each child well by interacting positively with them, by supporting them during activities, and by communicating effectively with the parents. Playing equipment reflecting positive images, as well as discussion, help the children to develop awareness of a diverse society.

The children behave well and respond positively to the childminder's clear expectations, praise and encouragement. She involves the children in everyday responsibility tasks, which make them feel important and valued. She allows a pre-school child, for example, to wash up and help with the shopping.

The children benefit from the childminder's good relationships with parents and from the effective communication she has with them. This includes giving parents written information about the setting, informing them of the policies and procedures and exchanging feedback on a daily basis. The childminder, therefore, provides an effective system to ensure that the children's individual needs are met and that any additional needs are addressed.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The appropriate organisation of the premises and the resources, as well as the day's structure, help the children to be active in a safe environment, to eat and rest as they require and to enjoy outdoor activities. However, the storage system for play equipment sometimes limits the children's spontaneous choice. The children become confident with other familiar adults through regularly visiting the toddler group. In the event of the childminder being unavailable due to sickness or holidays, the children will therefore settle more easily with an alternative childminder, whom they already know.

Records and documentation are organised well and are up-to-date. The childminder uses policies and procedures effectively in order to promote the children's welfare, care and development.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection recommended that the childminder updates her information regarding child protection issues.

The childminder now refers to the local authority booklet, which includes Area Child Protection Committee procedures and contact numbers. This contributes towards the children's safety and welfare.

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 on request. The 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):

- develop the range of activities for younger children, for example by using the Birth to three framework
- improve the storage arrangements for play equipment and resources, so that children can make spontaneous choices from a full range.

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