



Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 142128 |
| Inspection date | 01 November 2005 |
| Inspector | Mary Daniel |
| 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 satisfactory. 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 1994. She lives with one of her two adult children in a mid-terrace house situated in Ilminster. Minded children have use of all downstairs rooms and an upstairs bedroom for sleeping. There is an enclosed garden at the back of the house available for physical play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children and currently there are four children on roll. Overnight care is not included within the registration. The family have a cockatiel, which is kept caged, in the kitchen.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's awareness of hygiene is appropriately encouraged through the general daily routines. For example, they regularly wash their hands after going to the toilet, although at times, some need a gentle reminder to do so. Children use separate towels to dry their hands, and toys are cleaned and wiped after spillages. Outdoor shoes are not worn in the carpeted play area. These procedures help to prevent the spread of infection.

Children's dietary needs are respected. They are provided with regular drinks. For example, they enjoy a cup of hot chocolate in the morning. A child asks for the juice that he likes and reminds the childminder they need to buy some more milkshake mix. Children are provided with snacks of fruit and yoghurts. This helps them learn about foods that are healthy and nourishing.

Children talk excitedly about the soft play centre they visit. They go to a local park to play football or have a picnic, and they can run and use the slide in the garden. This gives children some opportunities to use up their energy. Overall, children's health is managed appropriately through the childminder's understanding of their individual needs. She liaises well with parents on any particular medical needs, but some required health records are not completed. As a consequence, some aspects of children's health are compromised.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean, tidy and comfortable home where they have sufficient space to play safely. Overall, suitable safety pre-cautions have been implemented, although procedures for any emergency evacuation are not as well planned. Children are encouraged in their own understanding of possible dangers. For example, on outings younger children know to hold onto the pushchair or childminder's hand as they walk along the road. Children's well-being is supported as the childminder knows their particular needs, but child protection issues are not given careful consideration.

Children play with a variety of clean and colourful toys. Older children confidently ask for a favourite game or puzzle. Babies have a wide choice of activity and textured toys. They sleep in a comfortable cot. Toys are alternated to give variety, but some are not well organised to encourage children's interest, such as the box of books. As a consequence, children's choice in play and learning is not sufficiently promoted in all areas.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children interact happily with their peers. For example, two children eagerly play a game of hide and seek. They laugh as they find each other and then settle to do a jig-saw puzzle. They play together on the play station and help each other build a wooden train. The childminder gives friendly encouragement, which supports children in forming relationships with their friends.

A baby explores the 'feely' activity toys with interest. She watches as the ball rolls down the toddler marble run. She is content and enjoys the company of her older friends. The childminder sits with her to play and reinforces the happy sounds that she makes. Babies are encouraged in their development through use of a variety of cause and effect toys. However, there is little offered to broaden their play experiences, which would stimulate and challenge their play.

Children are cared for well. They respond happily to the childminder and go easily to her for cuddles. The childminder knows the children's individual characters well and they laugh easily with her. Consequently, children are comfortable and at ease within the home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled in the home and have good relationships with the childminder. They use good manners and generally share well. For example, an older child goes naturally to help his younger friend to complete a puzzle. Children understand and respond positively to the childminders clear expectations for their behaviour. She helps them in their understanding of right and wrong through the positive direction offered. As a result, they behave well and play happily together.

Children are valued and welcomed within the home. Their needs, likes and dislikes are recognised and catered for well overall. For example, reassurance is given to a baby when visitors are present. Children learn to respect the needs of others. However, there are limited opportunities and play resources which reflect positive images of other ways of living. As a consequence children's awareness of their wider world is not sufficiently promoted through their play.

Children benefit from the secure and friendly relationships the childminder forms with their parents. Regular liaison is maintained and their involvement is encouraged. For example, parents form a contract with the childminder, and which together they review. This helps to maintain consistency in children's care. However, some required parental consents are not fully completed to support all aspects of children's welfare.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's welfare is satisfactorily managed through the general routines established. The childminder knows the children's individual needs well and this helps them feel

secure and settled. Overall, most required records and documentation are in place and shared with parents. This contributes to the continuity in care for children. However, children's health records are not fully detailed, which compromises their safety in an emergency. The childminder is making arrangements to update her first aid certificate, but does not often attend other child care training courses.

Overall, space and resources are sufficiently organised to provide comfortable play areas for children. For example, younger children can happily crawl and explore play resources in the living room, while their older friends play a table top game together in the kitchen. Children have opportunities to play indoors and out, and their routines are followed to allow them to rest and sleep comfortably. This helps children feel at ease within the home and they move around confidently.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection recommendations were set relating to the organisation and provision of play resources and required documentation to support children's welfare. The childminder now takes clearly recorded details of parents contact numbers with her on any outings. This helps in continuity of care for children. However, she has not obtained the required written parental consents for any medication administered to children, or for any necessary emergency medical treatment they may need. Consequently, children's well-being is compromised.

Children can now access a range of play resources, which gives them some independence in their play. However, some resources, such as books, are not well organised to encourage children's interest or used effectively to challenge them in their play and learning. The childminder has obtained some resources that reflect positive images of other ways of living, but these are limited in choice, and overall, are not used effectively to promote children's awareness of the differences within their world.

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 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 satisfactory. 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 play opportunities for children, for example, by using the Birth to Three Matters framework
- ensure written permission from parents is obtained for administering any medication and for any necessary emergency medical treatment
- develop awareness of how to promote children's understanding of the differences within their world through the provision of suitable play resources and activities.

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