



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 142607
Inspection date 17 January 2006
Inspector Paul Martin Kitchen

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 1987. She lives with her husband and three children aged 8, 15, and 18 years in a house in Bruton, Somerset. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five all day and two children over five before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. They attend the local parent/toddler group. The childminder supports

children with special educational needs. The family have one pet rabbit.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because the childminder ensures that children are taken out every day for fresh air and exercise. They enjoy walking or are carried in a push-chair to visit the park or library, and to take and collect children from school. Children understand simple good health and hygiene practices. They are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet to prevent cross-infection. In addition each child has their own colour-coded hand-drying towel which they recognise and use. Children are protected as the childminder has an effectual sick child policy, shared with parents, that excludes children for a specific period. This protects all children from infections in the setting. Nappies are changed following recognised health and hygiene practice, for example the childminder washes her hands before and after the changing, and hygienically cleanses the equipment. Children rest or sleep according to their needs and parents' routines. The childminder is beginning to use the Birth to three matters framework effectively.

Parents provide children with their own lunch boxes for the main meal of the day. Children are provided and benefit from healthy and nutritious snacks such as cheese, raisins, crackers, ham, fruit, salad and pita bread. Children learn that poor foods will prevent their bodies growing and may cause spots. Fresh drinking water is constantly available in children's own drinking vessels situated near their play area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment which has been designed to be child-friendly. It is warm, welcoming and spacious; and all areas are safe, secure and suitable. Children are able to select from a good range of toys and equipment which meet safety standards and hygiene. There are musical instruments, dolls, play house, books, trains, and toys reflecting disability and older people. Toys are easily accessible for children, being at ground level where children can select from boxes. There is a good range of toys and equipment for outside play.

Children benefit from a safe and secure environment in which safety hazards have been reduced to a minimum. There are safety gates, lockable kitchen cupboards, stair gates, and socket covers. Outside children are kept safe with effectual fencing to keep them away from the terraced garden. On walks children are kept safe from harm with reins and harnesses. Children learn road safety and the dangers of traffic when walking with the childminder and other children. Children are kept safe from fire hazards as the childminder has an effective fire escape plan which has been practised regularly. Smoke alarms are checked frequently.

Children are protected as the childminder has a good understanding of child

protection issues and can follow procedures should she have concerns. Parents have been informed in writing of this legal duty in the child protection policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a broad range of play and learning activities which contributes to their overall development. For example they visit the park and library, enjoy cooking, play in the garden, play music with dance and song, and play in the outside play house. Older children, after school, enjoy the computer, Play-station, painting and drawing.

Children are happy, confident and settled in the childminder's welcoming home. They form good relationships with each other and others through regular attendance at local parent/toddler groups. Children are well supported emotionally by the childminder, as she clearly constantly reassures them during their play. Children develop independence as they choose activities and in their personal care as they visit the toilet and dress themselves. Children regularly have opportunities for craft, messy play and music, and a wider range of activities which they attend with the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated equally according to their needs. The childminder maintains close liaison with parents to ensure those needs are under constant review. Children benefit from a broad range of resources which reflect a diverse society. These include, for example, dolls, and books. The childminder has a positive attitude to special needs and has some experience of caring for children who are disabled. She says if necessary she would work closely with parents to identify additional needs and seek advice from other agencies.

Children enjoy an environment which encourages positive reinforcement of their good behaviour. On the rare occasions when children argue, for example about the ownership of a toy, the childminder intervenes with skilled diversion or distraction. Occasionally the childminder has to use a brief form of time out, which is always successful. The childminder works in partnership with parents, where there is a free flow of information which ensures parents are kept well informed. Although the childminder deals with complaints effectively, she has not read the revision to the National Standards including the complaints policy and procedures. There is an excellent range of written parent testimonials on file, available to new parents who are seeking care for their child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well protected in that all three adults in the house are cleared through

the criminal records process and all persons are suitable. Visitors to the house who are not cleared do not have unsupervised contact with minded children. Children benefit from good adult/child ratios which enables them to receive individual attention in their play. The childminder comprehensively organises space and resources well to allow children to feel welcome, move freely and choose their own activities from the stored toys. The daily routine is structured so that children feel secure, but flexible enough to allow their individual needs to be met: for example maintaining sleeping patterns in line with parents' wishes.

Most of the required documents, records and policies are in place for the safe management of the provision and for the care, welfare and learning of children. Records are retained for the required period. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to extend the resources which reflect positive images of race, culture and religion; make a part of the garden inaccessible to children; become familiar with the child protection procedures; and extend disability resources. Additional resources have been purchased which reflect diversity; the garden fenced off; and child protection procedures studied.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- develop and maintain a complaints policy with regard to the revision of the National Standards

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