



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142385
Inspection date	09 January 2006
Inspector	Rachael Williams
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1986. She is registered to provide care for 6 children under 8 years old; of whom 3 may be under 5 and of these, 1 may be under 1 year old. At present the childminder has 10 children on roll. The registration does not include overnight care.

The childminder lives with her husband and youngest child in a modern, terraced house close to the centre of Wellington, Somerset. The town centre, park and local schools are within easy walking distance. Minded children have access to the ground floor which includes a kitchen/dining room, spacious lounge and toilet facilities. A bedroom upstairs is used to provide care for sleeping children. Children have access to a fully enclosed, split level garden.

The family care for a rabbit which is kept in the rear garden.

The childminder has a NVQ Level 3 qualification in childcare and education. She is accredited and receives funding for 1 child. The childminder organises a local toddler group which she attends twice a week. She provides support for the Wellington network of childminders.

The childminder receives support from the National Childminding Association and the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

A wide range of activities contribute to children's health. Children have regular fresh air experiences, such as walking to school and visits to the park. Children are developing control of their bodies as the childminder encourages children to be active daily. For example, children are provided with a range of equipment, such as ride on bikes to develop large muscle skills, and tents and tunnels to encourage spatial awareness.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care through effective routines encouraged by the childminder. For example, there are clear hand washing procedures where children use individual flannels to dry their hands. Younger children are protected through hygienic nappy changing arrangements, for instance the childminder wears disposable gloves to prevent cross-contamination of germs. Clear, written information is available to parents in order to protect children from infection and illness. Consent is gained to administer medication which is recorded appropriately. However, this is not countersigned by the parent to acknowledge that it has been administered.

Children's health is maintained through the provision of healthy snacks, such as fruit, which is prepared hygienically by the childminder. Drinks are readily available and frequently replenished to ensure children's ongoing health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from good levels of supervision. For example, children are well protected when visiting the local toddler group through the childminder's vigilance when walking with constant reminders of road safety, and her supervision to ensure they are not left alone with unvetted adults. Children's wellbeing is safeguarded through clear contingency arrangements in the event of an emergency. Emergency details are readily available and the children have met the childminder who would care for them if such an event arose. Parents are well-informed of collection arrangements to ensure children's safety. For example, written permission is requested if anyone different is collecting who is not mentioned on the children's registration document. This is supported by the implementation of a password system. Children's safety is maintained through the provision of a secure environment. For example, the front door remains locked during minding hours with the keys readily available in an emergency.

The homely environment is clean and well maintained. This enables children to move freely in a spacious environment which, on the whole, is void of hazards. However, access to the first floor is not prevented and poses a risk to crawling babies. A radiator at the foot of the stairs is very hot and compromises children's safety.

Children's wellbeing is maintained through the childminder's good knowledge of child protection issues which she frequently updates through attendance at relevant courses and reading appropriate literature. She has a good understanding of possible signs of child abuse or neglect and the appropriate procedure to follow to maintain children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and eager to participate in planned and self-chosen activities. Children are fully involved in decision-making and are confident to ask the childminder for toys and resources to support their play. Children engage in imaginative activities which promote their language skills well. For example, children take a trip to the zoo with the childminder who asks them about the animals that they see. Baby's babble is responded to well when the childminder is changing his nappy. However, this is not maintained throughout as activities chosen by the older children require the childminder's support and are not suitably adapted to incorporate him in the play. The childminder is beginning to extend her knowledge of the development and learning of under 3's through attendance at Birth to Three Matters training.

Children benefit from the varied outdoor activities, for instance, walking to the park to feed the ducks. Social skills are developed well through regular visits to the local toddler group. Children are confident within the comfortable environment and are able to access resources independently from a good range of age-appropriate toys. Suitable toys for the baby are made readily available in the lounge in easily accessible boxes, such as a tin and wooden stick which he enjoys banging together to create a variety of sounds.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The childminder plans a good range of experiences for the children. For example, the childminder supports a child when playing a sound game to encourage her to listen to the sounds and make connections with her own experiences. Mathematical skills are promoted well as the childminder encourages the child to count out 6 cards from a larger group and uses appropriate vocabulary, such as how many more cards do you need to make 6, to encourage early addition skills. Children behave well and are able to play co-operatively, for example, taking turns during the game. Planning is flexible and encourages children to make decisions about their play and to select resources from a good range of age and developmentally appropriate toys. For example, a 3 year old spontaneously requests a music tape so that she can dance and follow the actions. The child moves in a variety of ways to music and shows good spatial awareness when jumping.

Children are confident and happy within the setting which encourages good communication skills. Children speak clearly, for instance, when a 3 year old discusses her spotty Noddy socks. The childminder interacts well with the children and is fully involved with their self-chosen

activities. For example, a 3 year old goes on an imaginative journey to the zoo. This is well supported by the childminder as she asks appropriate questions to encourage them to think about what animals they can see and makes connections to real visits, such as Longleat.

A scrap book of children's achievements is kept to share with parents and to promote children's self-esteem. However, examples of their achievements are not annotated and thus do not clearly show a link with the child's progression towards the early learning goals. Some observations are noted in the evaluation section of the planning to influence future learning. Documentation, however, does not clearly show how each area of learning is sufficiently addressed to provide a balance of experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident, settled and happy within the homely environment. The childminder respects children's differences and has good knowledge of their needs through regular discussion with parents. Partnership with parents is good and professional relationships have been established. The childminder has clear documentation to ensure the parents are well-informed and to enable continuity in care. Parents receive clear, written information on their child's progress.

Respectful relationships have been established to ensure children's needs are met. Social skills are promoted well through regular visits to a local toddler group. Children behave well, playing co-operatively, and are clear on house rules and expectations. For example, children sit quietly whilst they have a snack and return their bowl to the kitchen when they have finished. Appropriate strategies, such as timeout and recording of behavioural incidents, are used to manage behaviour effectively. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment by an experienced and well-qualified childminder who offers support to other childminders in the area. The childminder is keen to update her knowledge through attendance at relevant courses, such as how children learn and understanding children's behaviour. Space and resources are used well to encourage children's independence within the setting. The local environment is used effectively to provide children with a wide variety of stimulating play opportunities, for instance, developing social skills when visiting the local toddler group.

The childminder has a detailed portfolio to keep parents well-informed which includes a range of well written and informative policies and procedures. For example, a flexible settling in procedure to ensure minding is a happy experience for children. Ratios are maintained and positively support children's care. However, the register is not completed daily to show accurate attendance.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection recommendations were made relating to health and organisation.

The childminder has obtained written permission from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice which is confidentially stored alongside children's records.

Toys and play equipment have been re-organised to ensure children have safe access to encourage their independence. A balance of experiences are available to older children through appropriate planned activities and free choice.

Complaints since the last inspection

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to OFSTED.

There have been no complaints made to OFSTED since April 2004.

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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):

- review safety arrangements to ensure crawling/toddling babies cannot access the first floor and reach potentially hot radiators
- further develop knowledge and understanding of how younger children develop through the use of a guidance, such as Birth to Three Matters, to ensure younger children receive a balance of experiences
- ensure daily register shows accurate times of attendance

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure documentation clearly shows how children are progressing towards the early learning goals through a balance of experiences that sufficiently address each of the six areas of learning

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