



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY257896
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 August 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Rachel Ruth Britten
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 was registered in 2003. She lives with her husband and two daughters aged seven and three in a residential area on the outskirts of Crewe. She is currently minding a total of eight children, one of whom attends full time and the rest part time. There were three children present on the day of inspection. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, with one bedroom available upstairs for sleeping if necessary. There is a large, fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder generally uses her car to take and collect children, but often walks to local parks.

The family have one cat.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's physical health is good because the childminder routinely follows environmental health and hygiene procedures. For example, she keeps all play spaces and surfaces very clean and tidy by using antibacterial sprays and by regularly vacuuming. She routinely ensures that children learn to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. She is careful to instigate and support this with praise and assistance at the same time as children are potty training. Children are taught not to bite their hands and nails because they can contract worms. They also have their own individual covered drinking cups with them all the time and are not allowed to pick up and eat any food that they drop onto the floor.

Children enjoy plenty of fresh air and exercise and go outside to play each day. They dance along to their favourite music and regularly go to parks and local shops. They play in the garden every day where they have picnics and use a good variety of climbing and large play equipment. This helps them to develop strong and healthy bodies. Children can rest and sleep according to their needs because the childminder can accommodate individual sleep patterns. She discusses with parents when children are difficult sleepers at nights and helps them to adjust routines so that children are able to sleep sufficiently both in the day and at night.

Children are well protected from becoming ill because the childminder has devised good policies, consents and records to ensure this. Children do not attend if they are ill. The childminder also has written parental consent for any emergency treatment should this be needed, and she uses her first aid qualification and first aid kit to good effect. There are specific written parental consents ready for medications such as paracetamol, inhalers and teething gel, should particular children develop the need for these during a childminding day.

Children have a balanced diet and learn about healthy eating because the childminder talks about and encourages children to eat good food. She talks to them about what healthy food is and why we should eat it. Children have sugar-free juice, biscuits, bananas and apples for snacks on the day of inspection. The childminder has always got a full fruit bowl. She gives finger food at lunch time and a cooked meal in the evenings. A rule is successfully imposed where a maximum of two biscuits are allowed for snack and then fruit thereafter. Children understand this and move onto fruit quite happily.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, clean, secure and safe indoor environment. All exits are kept locked, but with accessible keys in case of emergency. The childminder is committed to safety through thorough supervision and ensures that children can only access toys and games which are safe for their age and stage of development. All areas are kept clean and clear of tripping hazards, so that small children can move about safely and freely. For example, children help to tidy away the farm set before getting out the dressing up clothes so that they do not trip over the wooden animals.

The accommodation promotes children's emotional well-being because it is spacious, warm, clean and welcoming. Children know where things are and where to put their coats and shoes. They go straight to the lounge or conservatory to play and can see their parents leaving through the large window at the front of the house. They can have messy play at the table in the kitchen or outside and all floors are laminated for easy cleaning, with some rugs for comfort when playing on the floor. The childminder provides security and a busy but settled routine, which includes her own children. She is warm and attentive, giving plenty of smiles, cuddles and conversation which adds to children's contentment and enjoyment.

Children use a very good range of suitable and safe equipment and toys because the childminder selects and organises all resources using her clear understanding of each child's needs and stage of development. She has a number of storage boxes containing suitable toys for the age range she is caring for and rotates these so that children find them varied and stimulating. She is careful to ensure that everything is safe for the least developed child to handle. For example, dressing up clothes, books and the farm set are all safe, suitable and interesting for the two to seven-year-old children present. Outside, resources such as the slides and swings vary in size and style so that they cater for the whole age range attending. In addition, the domestic toys in the play house, the sand pit and other push-along and ride-on toys are also suitable for use by the youngest child under careful supervision.

Children are safe as they move around the setting because safety equipment is in place. Safety gates are used across the kitchen and stairs, socket covers are in place and all dangerous items, such as cleaning materials, are out of reach. Children are carefully supervised and the childminder always employs safe practices. For example, she always uses safety straps on the chair inserts, in the car and when out using the double buggy. Nevertheless, ornaments are left out and children are successfully taught not to touch or play with these and nothing has been broken.

Written safety policies also support children's safety. For example, there are two written emergency plans, one for any emergency that happens to the childminder and one for an emergency with a child. These include contact details for the link emergency childminder and contact details for the childminder's husband. There is also a written fire escape plan. However, although the older ones know what to do, this has not been properly practised. This means that some children are not familiar with how to safely evacuate in the event of an emergency.

Children are protected well from abuse because the childminder has a good understanding of her role in child protection and is confident that she is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. She also knows what to do if an allegation of abuse is made against her. She displays her child abuse materials in her information and Standards portfolio, including a child protection policy. This ensures that parents are aware of her responsibilities in this area.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled and make positive relationships from an early age because the childminder actively encourages her own children to share and cooperate together with minded children. She plays on the floor and in the garden with them to facilitate this and is skilled at keeping pre-school and school-aged children motivated and interested. For example, she makes

available books, dolls, domestic role play props, dressing up clothes, music, painting and baking activities to keep them all busy during the school holidays.

Children respond well and show enthusiasm and interest in what they do because the childminder is skilled and enthusiastic as she presents activity ideas. She also extends children's learning with questions. For example, she asks questions about our appearance and lifestyle as she reads a story about what it was like when grandma was young. She also supports children's learning by providing good opportunities for them to investigate and discover for themselves. For example, children explore how adding water to the sand pit makes it easier to make good sand castles. In this way, children are learning about how they can manipulate objects to make effects and about how the world around them works.

Children develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem because the childminder gives them choices and opportunities to be independent. For example, she accommodates their play ideas so that they can act out scenes from television series, can get out the dressing up clothes and can make music with the box of instruments. She makes sure that alternatives are offered if a child is unsure what they want to do. For example, she gets the cars out for a boy when he does not want to dress up. She also has a flexible timetable of crafts, outdoor activities and trips, so that children can play in different settings and learn to mix with other children. For example, they attend pre-schools, go to local parks, shops, farms, and places of interest to experience the wider world. Alongside these activities the childminder devotes her attention to each child and is loving and kind to each one, dividing her time fairly and carefully to make sure that each child is fully included. This ensures that children's enjoyment and achievements are good.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children show a clear sense of belonging and join in well because the childminder includes them appropriately in most aspects of domestic life. They have their snacks and meals together at the table and accompany everyone on trips to parks and places of mutual interest. Incorporated into these every day activities is the sense that all routines are learning experiences where children can learn how to care for one another and the world around them. This is achieved by the proactive approach of the childminder as she talks, questions and involves the children throughout the day. As a result, children are relaxed, usually take turns and play nicely together.

Children's individual needs are met well because children have been coming since they were small and some are friends of the childminder's own children at school and pre-school. The childminder is attentive and sensitive to each child and is careful to ensure that she talks to each one and helps them to feel special. For example, she gives cuddles and makes suggestions to ensure that every child is able to do something that interests them. Pre-school children do also get some one to one time with the childminder while other children are at school or nursery.

Children receive very good support to behave well because the childminder is vigilant, consistent and positive in her approach. She gives praise and encouragement and successfully prompts for good manners, helpfulness and kindness. For example, all children are praised when they

help with tidying away and supervising the youngest ones. They are told when they dance, balance, read, or remember well and they are always thanked when they do as they are asked straightaway. The childminder has clear boundaries, such as to stay downstairs, to share, not to bounce on furniture and to say please and thank you. As a result, children behave well and are beginning to be kind and aware of each other, responding well to reminders when they are needed.

Documentation does not currently support consistency of behaviour management because the childminder is unclear about the use of an incident record. This means that significant incidents of unwanted behaviour or physical intervention by the childminder are not documented. This has not adversely affected children thus far, but it hinders the formation of effective behaviour management strategies to deal with particular unwanted behaviours if clear records are not available to use in discussion with parents.

Children's needs are met well through good partnership with parents. The childminder is open and communicative with parents and spends time giving and receiving effective verbal feedback from them. They discuss and agree about how to consistently manage aspects of children's behaviour or matters, such as potty training. The establishment of new parental relationships is supported by an information portfolio which is shared with parents and includes policies and evidence of vetting, insurance and qualifications. These enable consistent care to be given. Parents confirm their high levels of appreciation through references. They particularly mention that safety, stimulation and learning through play are high on the childminder's agenda.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of all children and builds upon her knowledge and experience by keeping up with essential training and planning carefully for children's health, safety and protection. She has attended recent training to renew her first aid qualification and keeps up to date through discussions with other childminders. Vetting procedures have been undertaken by Ofsted and disclosures are available to be seen in the parent portfolio for both herself and her husband.

The childminder has a clear sense of purpose and direction and uses her time and resources well to support children's care, learning and play. She successfully provides for groups of up to six children of varying ages, managing the daily routine so that children have their individual needs met and are well stimulated. For example, children enjoy the exercise, fresh air and social opportunity of playing in the garden together, along with trips to parks and places of interest, such as the zoo.

Policies and procedures work very well in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. For example, a comprehensive welcome pack contains information about Ofsted, evidence of training, insurance and relevant information about the National Standards and matters such as child protection. There are also policies about some aspects of childminding, including child protection and equal opportunities. All necessary parental agreements, child details and consents and forms for medicine and accidents are kept confidentially and are reviewed regularly, including parental

consents for photos and proximity to the pet cat. All this information is well organised so that good care can be given. The daily attendance register is also completed as children actually arrive and depart, which means that it is always accurate and up to date to support children's safety in the event of an emergency.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

There were four recommendations made at the inspection in 2004. These have all been completed. The daily attendance register has been formatted into weekly sheets and is kept accurate and up to date. The toys and resources are now well organised and accessible, so that children can easily find, access and put away play materials. A purpose-designed medication consent and administration book has been purchased and is being correctly used so that parental consent and acknowledgement is given for all medication administered. Finally, the fireguard is attached safely to the wall and used when the gas flame effect fire is working. All these steps have improved children's safety, health and well-being in the setting.

### **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):

- ensure that the emergency evacuation procedure is practised
- ensure that proper differentiation is made between accident and incident records and that significant incidents of unwanted behaviour and/or physical intervention are recorded and the parents informed of any incident on the day.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)