



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	223368
Inspection date	08 September 2006
Inspector	Josephine Mary Hammick
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 2000. She lives with her husband, adult daughter and two children aged six years and eight years. They live in a house on the outskirts of a market town in Herefordshire. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding with the bathroom and one bedroom on the first floor. There is a large, secure rear garden. The childminder takes children to local schools and groups, and cares for children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The childminder is registered to care for four at any one time and currently has eight children on roll who attend on a full-time and part-time basis.

The family have a dog and a hamster.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a warm and welcoming home. They learn about the importance of good hygiene and personal care through the daily routine and have a developing understanding of why they must wash their hands after playing outside, before meals and after using the toilet. However, cloths used for wiping surfaces are not changed regularly. Good quality documentation is maintained regarding the administration of medication and recording of accidents. A well stocked first aid box is available to ensure that children's well-being is safeguarded in case of an accident.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that contribute to their good health. They make good use of the enclosed garden and have a range of resources to help them improve and develop new physical skills, for example, having fun on the trampoline. They benefit from regular visits to the park where they extend their physical skills by playing on larger apparatus suitable for their age and stage of development.

Children bring their own packed lunch and the childminder provides snacks and drinks. Drinks are offered regularly throughout the day, for example, sugar-free squash, milk and water. Snack and meal times are sociable occasions. The children enjoy their snacks sitting at the table, chatting and laughing amongst themselves and with the childminder. Foods offered mid-morning are nutritious and sufficient in quantity. Examples are fresh fruit and vegetables, dried fruit and crackers which the children butter themselves.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a caring and safe environment. The home is secure and provides children with sufficient space to play, rest and eat. Children are safe within their environment because potential risks have been identified and appropriate safety measures are put in place, including socket covers and netting around the trampoline. The garden is secure, safe and suitable for the children to use.

The children have access to a developing and suitable range of age appropriate toys and resources. They are stimulated and challenged by what is available to them. The toys and resources are in good condition and they are kept clean and hygienic for the children to use. The children learn how to keep themselves safe through everyday activities and gentle reminders from the childminder. For example, sitting sensibly in their car seats and two on the trampoline at a time are highlighted to the children together with their understanding of road safety when they go out for a walk.

Children are well protected because the childminder has a clear understanding of child protection procedures and is fully aware of her role and responsibility to protect children in her care. Parents are made aware of these procedures so that they know what action she will take if she has any concerns about their children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are provided with a range of activities and resources that are age appropriate and promote all areas of learning and development. They have fun and are stimulated by the activities and resources available to them. For example, at snack time the conversation is animated as the children make faces from the vegetable sticks provided for them, they show interest in each others' efforts, tease each other and joke with the childminder. The children are happy, settled and comfortable in their environment and confidently seek the support of the childminder for comfort and reassurance. They benefit from the childminder's caring approach to their care and her interaction and involvement in their activities.

Younger children are supported in their play which allows them to take part in activities and games at their own level of development. Older children are developing increasing independence. They are able to access resources themselves, use their initiative and make independent choices about their play and activities. They are confident to try to do things for themselves and also ask for help. For example, the children are confident to practise new skills as they use the printer on the computer and find new child appropriate websites. The childminder supervises their activities, but enables them to try things out for themselves.

Children's individual needs, likes and dislikes are well catered for because the childminder has taken the time to get to know the children in her care. The childminder knows and understands children's individual needs and preferences over such things as favourite toys and games. As a result, children develop close relationships and a sense of trust.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and are happy and settled in the childminder's care. The children's individual needs are well met because the childminder has a clear understanding of the care they require. The childminder seeks additional advice and support in order to meet the requirements of children with special needs. Children have opportunities to gain a positive view of the wider world and to increase their understanding of other cultures because the childminder has resources available and plans activities to promote knowledge and interest.

The children are well behaved and play harmoniously with each other. A sensitive and consistent approach to behaviour management ensures children know what is expected of them, while praise and constant support gives them confidence to try new things and helps them develop self-esteem.

The childminder and parents have formed good working relationships. Daily exchanges of information ensure parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and the service provided. Children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children benefit from being cared for in a well organised environment. They are able to move freely between well spread out activities and confidently move between the indoor and outdoor areas as part of their play. The children have good access to their playthings and are able to freely select from a suitable and age appropriate range of resources. The home is well equipped and child-friendly, while the daily routine is flexible to meet the individual needs of children.

All of the required documentation which contributes to the children's health, safety and well-being is in place. Records are well maintained, effectively organised and carefully stored.

Overall the needs of all the children attending are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure that space and resources meet children's needs effectively and that the care of children over eight does not adversely affect the care provided for children under eight. Since then the childminder has accessed training and acquired resources to provide for all ages and stages of developmental need. Activities are provided that are age and stage appropriate. The children can now access activities from well stored and labelled equipment appropriate to their age and preference. The premises have been de-cluttered allowing enough space for the children to spread out and play freely and safely whilst being supervised at all times.

The childminder was also asked to take positive steps to promote the good health of children and ensure effective measures are taken to prevent the spread of infection. The childminder has accessed infection control training and has taken steps to improve standards of hygiene and infection control within the home. She has redecorated throughout, shampooed carpets, instigated the use of paper towels and established effective routines for children's personal care. Lunchbox items and food for snacks are refrigerated appropriately. A space has been cleared and fenced off to the side of the house for the dog. Children benefit from adequate hygiene procedures safeguarding their overall health.

The childminder was also asked to take positive steps to promote children's safety on the premises, both indoors and outdoors, and on outings. Since then, she has accessed training and now carries out regular risk assessments that are recorded, evaluated and kept on file. The whole house and garden has been de-cluttered, furniture covers cleaned and repaired, the garden pond fenced off and trampoline enclosed by safety netting. Building materials are now stored elsewhere and are inaccessible to minded children who benefit from a clear and safe playing environment.

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 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 cleaning cloths are changed regularly to prevent the spread of infection.

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