



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	223737
Inspection date	19 September 2006
Inspector	Dianne Andrews
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 1995. She lives in a farm house with her husband and five children aged 16, 14, 12, 9 and a baby aged 4 months. They live in a village between the towns of Oswestry and Shrewsbury. The whole of the house is used when providing a care service. There is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The family has pet rabbits.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is a member of the Shropshire Childminding Network. She is also a link childminder for newly registered carers. She is registered to provide care for up to 11 children under 8 years when working with an assistant or co-minder. The childminder has overall responsibility for childminding practice. Her co-minder works in a supportive role. Between them they are currently minding 11 children under 8 years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about good hygiene practice through well-planned daily routines. They wash their hands before meals or after handling the pets. They benefit from the good systems in place to ensure they have appropriate care when they are ill or have an accident. The childminder knows the children well and ensures that information about any allergies is complete and up to date. Written policies and procedures are implemented and shared with parents to provide consistency when recording accidents and the administration of medication.

Children enjoy physical play every day, for example they play in the enclosed yard on wheeled toys and use the vast amount of garden space on a supervised basis to enjoy activities such as running around as they fly kites, which they have made themselves. These types of opportunities encourage children to be active.

Children learn to make healthy choices as they share an excellent range of fruits at snack times. They are encouraged to try new tastes and textures as they make a fruit salad together with banana, pineapple, grapes, kiwi, orange and apple. The childminder provides a nutritious range of meals, some of which include vegetables that the children have helped to grow.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and move around the premises freely and independently. They access the bright and welcoming playroom, choosing toys and activities for themselves and developing their own play. There is a wide range of play materials, which are of a good quality and well maintained. They are very appropriate for children's age and stage of development, providing well for their play preferences and needs.

The risk to children of accidental injury is minimised because the childminder and her co-minder supervise their play and have taken necessary steps to reduce most hazards. For instance, the childminder takes responsibility for undertaking visual risk assessments on the premises to prepare the indoor area for the children's arrival. However, children's safety is compromised in the outdoor area where a broken down pipe has left behind a sharp piece of metal protruding from the wall and there are also broken window panes in the storage shed used for the toys. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through discussions about farm safety and the regular practising of the emergency evacuation plan. Detailed emergency details are readily available to ensure that the childminder and her assistants can meet children's needs quickly and effectively.

Children are effectively safeguarded because the childminder clearly understands her role in child protection and is fully aware of the procedures to follow should a concern arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder plans a broad range of interesting and challenging activities based on children's interests and their stages of development. For instance, they learn about the cycle of food as they plant vegetables in small pots and care for them as they grow. They prepare the ground for the larger plants using compost and when the vegetables are fully grown they help prepare them and enjoy eating them for their lunch. They learn about re-cycling as they take the waste materials to the compost bin to start the process again. The children respond well, seek out the childminder's company, chat about their play and have clear expectations that she will listen and respond positively. They confidently explore their environment, they find out their favourite toys and happily ask the childminder or the older children to help them as they set up their chosen games. Their developing language skills are encouraged well as the childminder responds to their gestures and words.

Children's development is monitored and encouraged through the use of effective observation and assessment techniques. They are helped to enjoy stimulating practical activities, through which they learn new skills, make connections with other experiences and talk and listen. For example, during the preparation of the fruit for snack time children use control skills as they cut up the fruit and discuss numbers and texture, supported well by their carer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children play comfortably in each other's company, learning to take one another's needs into account as they share, take turns and be kind to one another. The childminder has developed effective behaviour management practices to suit the developmental stage of children attending. She offers appropriate support and praise to promote positive behaviour and build their self-esteem and enjoyment.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. The childminder helps them to learn about the society in which they live through her own positive attitudes and through the introduction of interesting themes, which include Christian festivals and those of other cultures, such as Chinese New Year. During Indian day they dress up and try foods from the country.

Parents are provided regular verbal feedback the childminder shares her observations of how children are progressing and developing, this helps to involve parents in their children's learning and to forge a strong link between home and the care provision. Children's disabilities or learning difficulties are recognised and met sensitively. Their individual needs are discussed with parents in detail, but specific care arrangements are not recorded in detail to ensure that the childminder and her co-minder meet their needs accurately and consistently.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from regular routines with times for rest and play, and enjoy very effective support and care from the childminder. She organises her home to provide a warm and

comfortable child-friendly environment where children take part in a range of activities to support their care, learning and play. This, and her commitment to professional development through attendance at training opportunities, ensures that children in her care continue to thrive.

The childminder takes overall responsibility for maintaining appropriate records. Most necessary documentation is in place to promote children's health, safety and welfare. Files and records are well-ordered and easily accessible, so that, for example, emergency details can be accessed. The childminder works closely and effectively with another registered childminder who is successful in her role to engage and interact with children as they play and learn. The childminder ensures that all adults looking after children are suitable to do so. Records are kept appropriately and are shared with parents so they know what to expect. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to address several safety issues in the home. The banister has had another balustrade fitted into it, the mirrors in the bedrooms have been covered with safety film and the surface of the playroom wall has been re-plastered. All have been made safe to minimise the risk of accidental injury to children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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 children are protected from hazards in the outdoor area
- ensure that information regarding children's specific needs is effectively recorded and updated to enable the childminder and her co-minders to meet their needs accurately and consistently.

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