



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250164
Inspection date	17 July 2006
Inspector	Esther Gray
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 was registered in 1994. She lives with her husband and one adult son and one son aged 15 in the Solihull Lodge area of Solihull. 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 six children at any one time and is currently minding three children over five before and after school and during the school holidays.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She sometimes attends the local parent and toddler group. The family has a pet dog. The childminder is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminders Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The children are very well protected from becoming ill. The childminder promotes the children's health by recognising and reducing possible risks. She takes excellent steps to prevent the spread of infection by keeping the premises clean. She has a hygiene policy and sickness policy which is shared with parents. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures taken when children are ill so that health needs are met. The childminder demonstrates a very good, clear understanding of how children's good health is promoted. She has systems in place to gather information from parents regarding medical needs, dietary requirements and allergies. The children learn about their personal hygiene through their normal daily routines. For example, through discussions about washing hands before a cooking activity and after petting the dog. Each child has their own towel and they independently access good hand washing facilities on the ground floor.

The children enjoy first-rate opportunities to experience physical activity and develop their skills. Regular opportunities are provided for all children to have physical play in the fresh air, in the garden. They access a range of activities in the garden, such as, speed ball, throwing and catching with bean bags and use of hula hoops which enable the children to develop their confidence on a suitable range of equipment that provides challenge. The children walk regularly with the childminder to school and to the local park, where swings, slides and 'Funimals' provide children with more challenge in physical play. Exercise programmes seen on television prompt exercise indoors, in the house. The children like to sing and dance, which makes the exercise fun.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of food nutrition. Snacks are provided according to the dietary requirements of the children and they are often involved in helping to prepare their own meals by, for example, preparing a jelly in the morning before going to school to come home and check to see if it has set for their after school snack, with fruit. Other snacks provided include, cheese, yogurts and cereal bars. The children are helped to enjoy good food and understand why some foods are healthy and others are not. They make trips to the supermarket and purchase the foods which are better for their health. They are talking about what is good food for the body with the childminder. As a result, the children are encouraged to learn about a healthy diet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are safe and are very well cared for in premises that are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. This is because the childminder ensures that the environment gives children good access to a satisfactory range of facilities that mostly promote children's development. Outdoor space is secure, safe and well maintained. For example, there is a padlock on the gate and the fence is secure all around. The childminding premises are well organised and comfortable so children can enjoy a range of activities around the home and in the garden, supplemented by outings. Toys and equipment are ready to hand so children can make choices and help

themselves. Further resources stored are provided on request. The childminder is very aware of safety standards and kite marks, thinking about such risks as the eyes on teddy bears and making sure they cannot be pulled out by a younger child.

Children learn about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe. They learn about fire safety; they know the procedure for evacuation in an emergency and the provider regularly practises this with them. They begin to understand about safety issues both within the setting and outside and during planned and spontaneous activities. For example, they can explain the evacuation procedure, what to do to keep themselves safe whilst walking home from school and thinking about floors which may be slippery, if they are wet, in the kitchen.

The children are protected because the childminder can identify the indicators of abuse. She has attended a course on child protection. The childminder has good up-to-date knowledge of procedures to be followed if concerns are raised about the safety of a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are confident, independent and are developing their self-esteem. They ask questions and respond to new challenges by questioning and using their own initiative. All children have their individual needs met. They are developing a good range of knowledge and skills because the childminder provides activities and play opportunities that help children achieve in all areas. The childminder encourages the children to develop their own ideas through child-initiated play. For example the children moved their chairs and tables into a shady spot in the garden for their snack and then continued in their drawing activity. They later brought the activity indoors to show the childminder and were encouraged to make improvements or consider how they might solve problems. There are no plans made to develop children's play or to extend the range of planned activities and experiences for children, appropriate for their stages of development and based on their individual needs. The children are, however, well supported in any activity of their own choosing.

The children begin to distinguish right from wrong and form positive relationships. There are consistent boundaries and adult support which helps the children to develop appropriate skills. They are comfortable with the childminder, who has clear boundaries and expectations. She affords children respect and gains respect in return. They have easy access to resources which can be rotated and requested from the storage area in the garage. As a result, the children are happy and settled.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children are developing a good understanding of their surroundings and the wider society because the childminder builds on the topics discussed in school and introduces the children to different people in their local neighbourhood and to the wider multicultural society. The childminder understands that some children may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She has thought carefully about how she might care for them. She is aware of the condition

known as 'Attention Deficient Hyperactivity Disorder'. She is able to make links with the school to provide a continuity of care for the children.

The children make positive relationships and they behave well. They are involved in what is going on around them and gain self confidence and good self-esteem. A well written behaviour policy is shared with parents. There are clear expectations from an experienced childminder. The consistent behaviour modelled by the childminder gives the children a sense of security. They know what to expect, demonstrate courtesy and promote friendliness. The childminder praises desirable behaviour and intervenes when there is a problem to encourage the children to resolve differences. The children are encouraged to share and take turns. The children behave well as they learn to consider others and what is expected of them.

The children's needs are met through good partnership with parents. There are flexible settling in procedures to ensure children are happy and comfortable in the setting and develop a sense of trust in the childminder. The childminder also supports parents who cannot attend events and dates in their child's school diary. She has supported parents with photographs of events at school to share. A friendly, informal relationship with parents contributes to children's well-being and helps them understand the childminder's aims and practices. Daily conversation with parents and written policies help parents to know how their children are cared for. This means that children are fully included and their care is consistent when at the childminder's setting and at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children benefit from a good, effective organisation of the setting. It ensures that children's health and safety and well-being are met. The childminder is actively engaged with the children and ensures that all ancillary tasks are organised outside of the time when children are cared for. The home is clean and well prepared for when the children arrive back at the house from the walk from school. They are all clear about the need to take off their shoes, go through to wash their hands and settle to a drink and snack and take up their chosen activities. The children may wish to finish an activity which was started during the breakfast period or begin a new activity. Currently the childminder has two older children attending who like to write and make things with art and craft. They also like to dance and exercise to a video if it is raining. With this age group the childminder facilitates the play only intervening to support and encourage rather than lead. This develops the children's self-esteem, and independence and also allows them to follow their own interests. There are no formal plans made or themes followed to develop the children's play.

The childminder ensures that the needs and welfare of the children in her care is her first priority by ensuring that all adults who come into regular contact with the children are suitably vetted. The children are protected from harm because the childminder is aware of the importance of ensuring that all unvetted visitors are suitable and are not left unattended with children in the setting or whilst on outings.

The childminder keeps good records about the children in her care, including detailed information on the children's needs. Parents are kept informed verbally on a daily basis. Information is

exchanged about children's needs and progress. All significant information is recorded, demonstrating to parents that the children are being well cared for and are settled and happy. Overall the needs of all the children attending are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure children have access to a full range of play equipment, including sufficient resources that reflect equal opportunities and diversity. She was also required to ensure the children are protected from hazards within the home.

The children who attend are able to give an account of the range of resources available to them and independently access many resources. They can access the full range on request. The resources most popular with the children attending are made accessible to them and younger children are supported in gaining access to some stored resources, which promotes independence in the children. The resources have been supplemented with toys which also reflect the wider cultural environment with multicultural dolls. The resources include books and other toys which enable the childminder to develop the children's understanding of the diversity in the society in which they live. The childminder carries out a six-monthly review of all areas of the property which are used by children. A check list has been developed to ensure children are protected from any identified hazards within the home and in the garden. As a result, all risks to children are suitably minimised by the childminder.

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 complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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):

- further develop and extend the range of planned activities and experiences for children, appropriate for their stages of development and based on their individual needs.

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