



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	209623
Inspection date	30 August 2006
Inspector	Olwen Pulker
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 1993. She lives with her two adult children in a residential area near Wolverhampton. There are local shops, a school and park within walking distance. The whole ground floor and a bedroom on the first floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding two children under five all day and a 15-year-old after school. A further six children between five and eight years attend part-time during the school holidays. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children. She attends the local childminders group. The family has a pet dog and two guinea pigs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, comfortable home where they are protected from infection through the implementation of effective hygiene procedures such as the exclusion of sick children and the provision of individual hand towels. Children learn to follow appropriate hygiene and care routines, for example washing their hands before meals, after using the toilet or playing outside.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. Good use is made of the garden for extended play opportunities as children engage in activities to help develop their physical skills, for example as they use the various play equipment, ride on wheeled toys, dig in the sandpit or play in the ball pit. They regularly visit the local play park where they enjoy climbing, sliding and rocking on the fixed equipment. They are encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle as they walk to and from the local school and take the dog for his morning walk. Children are able to rest or be active according to their needs.

The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents and the children's choices when providing nutritious meals and snacks that appeal to the children and meet their dietary needs. She uses fresh ingredients, including vegetables, to prepare cooked meals. Children have a choice of various fruit, cream cheese and crackers or yoghurt at snack time. Sweets and chocolate are given as occasional treats.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have access to the necessary facilities to ensure that they are able to eat and rest comfortably. The environment is welcoming and space is appropriately organised so that children can play safely. They independently select activities from a wide range of good quality, well-maintained toys and equipment. The childminder carefully monitors and supervises children's choice of toys to make sure that they are safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Children's safety is appropriately promoted through the childminder's ability to implement necessary precautions both inside and outside the home. Most risks have been identified and minimised to allow children the freedom to move around the property in safety. All the required fire safety equipment is available but the fire blanket is not immediately accessible for use. Fire drill records show only one entry for this year and therefore not all children have had sufficient opportunities to develop an understanding of how to keep themselves safe in the event of a fire.

Children's welfare is protected through the childminder's knowledge of child protection issues, training has been accessed to ensure she has a secure understanding of the procedure to follow if she has concerns about any of the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and secure in the childminder's care. Young children approach her readily and are given plenty of reassurance as they enjoy close physical contact. The childminder interacts positively with the children in their daily routines and play giving consistent support and help when requested. Children become confident communicators; they are well supported by the childminder who enjoys listening and talking to them as she encourages them to recall and share past events. For example, a child enjoys playing with the safari animals whilst telling the childminder about seeing some of the same animals in the wildlife park he visited the previous week.

Children are developing independence and self-esteem by selecting their activities and helping with household chores such as folding laundry, washing their toys and watering the plants in the garden. They enjoy visits to the supermarket where they help select groceries and count fruit and vegetables into bags. They develop a sense of caring and respect for animals as they help feed and clean out the guinea pigs. Children form positive relationships as they learn to share and play cooperatively together. They extend their social skills further by attending the childminders group and visiting the homes of the childminder's friends where they meet and play with other children. Weekly visits to the local library give young children the opportunity to enjoy taking part in music sessions as well as looking at a wide selection of books.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the childminder's home. Their individual needs and interests are catered for resulting in the children having a sense of belonging. They learn about their local community as they go shopping locally or take the bus into town. They observe and begin to learn about the natural world on their daily walks in the woods or around the duck pond. Children are encouraged to choose from the range of toys regardless of gender, however, they have limited access to resources and activities that encourage their understanding of others and promote a positive view of the wider world.

Children behave well. They understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age appropriate methods the childminder uses to manage behaviour. As a result children understand what is expected of them, so they know they have to take turns with the toys and good table manners are encouraged at snack times.

Children benefit from the strong relationships between parents and the childminder. They maintain a good level of communication to provide continuity and consistency to meet the needs of the children. Daily diaries and verbal feedback ensure parents know what their children have been doing whilst in the childminder's care and are aware of any issues. In the past the childminder has worked closely with parents and other agencies to effectively support children with specific needs.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are at home within the relaxed environment. They are confident to make choices about their own activities and develop their own play and learning with effective support from the childminder to help them feel secure. Adult to child ratios are good ensuring that children spend individual time with the childminder to promote their learning and sense of belonging. Their safety is promoted well as the childminder maintains a good level of supervision at all times.

The childminder has attended some short course training to keep abreast of current childcare issues and good practice guidelines. This allows children to be cared for in an environment which is interesting and stimulating. Required documentation and procedures which contribute to children's health, safety and well-being are in place and maintained appropriately. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to improve her knowledge of child protection issues and to gain written permission from parents before administering medication to children. She has attended child protection training to update her knowledge in this area and to ensure that children in her care are protected from harm. Records show that parents have provided written consent for the childminder to administer medication. This also promotes children's welfare.

The childminder was also asked to ensure that children are not left unsupervised with the dog. Parents are informed that there is a dog in the household when they make initial enquires about her childminding service. The childminder states that the parents of the children currently attending the setting are happy with the arrangements in place and she is alert to the dangers involved. Children are taught not to tease the dog and to respect animals in general. She maintains a good level of supervision to keep children safe from harm.

Complaints since the last inspection

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

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):

- improve fire safety precautions by ensuring that the fire blanket is immediately accessible and practise the emergency evacuation procedures regularly to ensure children can be evacuated safely and older children develop an understanding of safety procedures
- extend the range of resources reflecting diversity and introduce activities to help children learn about the wider world.

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