



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY284637
Inspection date	05 September 2006
Inspector	Carol Johnson
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 2004. She lives with her partner, mother and child aged three years in Coventry. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding purposes. The garden is not currently available for outside play.

The childminder works with an assistant and is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She is currently minding three children who attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also cares for older children who attend before and after school. The family has a cat.

The childminder attends local community groups and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is protected because the childminder takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection. Her home is clean and tidy and through discussion she demonstrates a suitable knowledge of good hygiene procedures. Children are learning about the importance of good hygiene practices through well-established daily routines. They know that they must wash their hands before meals and after visiting the toilet or messy play. Older children are beginning to take responsibility for their personal care and liquid soap and individual hand towels are available. The childminder takes effective measures to ensure children's health and welfare. Regular communication with parents ensures that children's medical information is accurately exchanged and she asks parents to not send children who are clearly unwell and could pose a potential health risk to others. The childminder maintains well-stocked and easily accessible first aid supplies.

Children's dietary needs are well met. Children that attend during the day bring a packed lunch from home. The childminder liaises with parents and carers about the content of lunch boxes to ensure that all minded children receive similar food along with a balanced and nutritious diet. Consequently, food is in line with parents' wishes and children's preferences. The childminder offers a healthy mid-morning and after school snack, for example, fruit, breadsticks, cheese strings and raisins. Children are not at risk of dehydration as drinks are freely available. Children are learning about the benefits of a healthy diet through everyday activities and discussions with the childminder.

Children have access to lots of activities that help to keep them healthy and develop their physical skills and confidence. They enjoy regular walks in the local environment and regularly visit soft play centres and local community groups. Children visit the local park where there is plenty of space to run around and play ball games. Indoors, children dance and join in with action songs. They also take part in activities that help to develop their fine muscles and hand to eye co-ordination. For example, they play with construction toys, jigsaw puzzles and draw and paint.

Children are able to eat and rest or sleep according to their needs because the childminder talks to their parents about home routines and she gets to know children's individual requirements. Daily routines are organised to reflect those needs and generally follow a regular pattern. Consequently, children are able to predict what is likely to happen throughout the day and they receive consistency of care.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming family home where the childminder has appropriately assessed and minimised the potential risks to the children in her care. Children have sufficient space to meet their needs and extensive safety and security precautions are in place. For example, a fireguard protects children from the fire and hearth, unused electric plug

sockets are covered, low-level glass is covered with safety film and a safety gate prevents children's unsupervised access to the kitchen. Children are only released into the care of known individuals and exterior doors are kept locked, with the keys accessible at all times. Children are well protected whilst on outings. Road safety is discussed and practised whilst out and about in the local environment and the childminder's car is appropriately maintained.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe by following rules and safe practices. House rules are clearly explained to prevent accidents within the home, for example, putting away toys after use so that they do not become broken or a tripping hazard to others. The childminder ensures the safety of toys and equipment by carrying out regular safety checks and ensuring that resources are safely used and stored. Children are effectively protected from the dangers of fire as they regularly practise what they would do if they needed to evacuate the premises in an emergency situation. Young children are learning about fire safety issues in ways that suit their level of understanding, for example, through role play and sharing books and stories. Fire safety equipment is available and appliances are regularly maintained.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder has a working knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and she is aware of local child protection referral procedures. She is aware that her first priority is the welfare of the children in her care and is confident of her ability to put appropriate procedures into practice if necessary. Children are not left unsupervised with persons who have not been vetted, for example, workmen or visitors.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. They are given access to a wide variety of activities that help them to develop in all areas of learning. The childminder plans her daily routine and sessions include a good mixture of both planned and spontaneous play. For example, children are given plenty of opportunities to take part in role play, join in with craft activities and share books and stories. Children's social skills are increased through regular outings to local community groups, for example, 'Rhyme Time' and 'Fizzy Kids' where they mix with other adults and children. Children are learning through everyday play and routines. They learn about shapes through craft activities and walks in the environment and good manners and respect is taught through the good example set by the childminder.

Resources are plentiful and of good quality. A range of resources, including construction toys, role play items, puzzles and interactive toys, are accessibly stored in the childminder's lounge. Low-level shelving and a labelled storage unit helps children to identify where toys are kept and encourages them to make independent choices about their play. Also, the childminder accesses the local library and toy loan schemes to supplement her existing resources. Consequently, children are able to play with a variety of toys and the childminder is able to maintain their interest and extend their learning.

Children have a good relationship with the childminder and are at ease to go to her for comfort, reassurance and support. They happily play both with and alongside each other and are interested in their play and the range of activities offered. The childminder helps children to develop their independence through giving them time and support to practise such skills as

putting on coats and shoes and attending to their own personal care. This is helped by the provision of resources such as a portable step in the bathroom. She helps to increase children's confidence and self-esteem by offering frequent praise and motivation.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and treated as individuals because the childminder treats them equally and takes time to find out about their individual requirements. These needs are then taken into consideration to ensure that care and experiences are appropriate. Although the childminder has limited experience of providing care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities she has a positive attitude towards doing so, if asked. She is aware of children's developmental stages and would happily liaise with parents and outside agencies to ensure that all children receive appropriate care.

Children have access to a wide variety of resources which help them to appreciate and learn about diversity. For example, they can choose from a variety of books, small world figures, puzzles and role play items. Children are learning about the wider community through everyday activities and experiences. They talk about issues raised in children's television programmes and share a range of books and stories. The childminder plans activities around festival celebrations and discusses current events with older children.

Children behave well because the childminder effectively uses a range of positive strategies to manage their behaviour. For example, she uses distraction, explanation and encourages children to share and show respect for others. Methods are agreed with parents to ensure consistency. Children receive guidance with regards to house rules and good behaviour and effort is rewarded. The childminder offers frequent praise and operates a system where children earn points, recorded on a chart, for such as helping to tidy away toys or enjoying success with potty training. These points lead to a small treat, for example, a book or a toy. Consequently, children feel good about themselves and they are encouraged to co-operate and achieve.

Children benefit from the good relationship that exists between their parents and the childminder. Some parents have provided the childminder with references, whilst others have completed a questionnaire about her service. Parents comment on the childminder's warm and caring manner with their children. They find her reliable, approachable and friendly. The childminder and parents chat on a daily basis and exchange important information to ensure consistency of care for children. Children's work is displayed around the home and children's drawings and pictures are regularly sent home. The childminder has created a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that she shares with parents and all are given a copy of her prospectus at the start of the minding arrangement. However, the childminder does not have all the relevant information regarding changes in complaints procedures and current information shared with parents about how to complain does not include the Ofsted telephone number.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Parents and children benefit from the childminder's professional attitude which is reflected in the level of care and service she provides. Children's welfare is positively supported because the childminder ensures that children receive a good level of attention and supervision and daily routines reflect children's needs and parental requirements. The childminder offers a flexible service to meet the needs of families and has clear contingency arrangements in place to provide cover in case of an emergency or sickness. Children have sufficient space for their needs and enjoy easy access to a wide range of developmentally appropriate resources and activities.

Ofsted training requirements are met and the childminder keeps abreast of childcare issues through research on the internet, reading publications and regularly meeting up with other childcare professionals. Documentation that is necessary to ensure the safe and effective management of the setting is well organised and maintained. Confidentiality for children and their parents is respected and personal information is kept secure. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At her last inspection the childminder was asked to complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children. This has been done and therefore, satisfactory improvements have been made to children's welfare.

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):

- update complaints information to include the changes in regulations of October 2005 and the Ofsted contact number.

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