

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	259939
<b>Inspection date</b>	09 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Patricia Dawes
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sassi's Scallywags childminding service registered in 2004. The childminder lives with her husband and three children aged 11, 10 and seven years in Wolverhampton, West Midlands. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house and first floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding two children under five on a part-time basis. The childminder works with an assistant. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group. The family has three rabbits and two lovebirds.

The childminder is a member of the local authority childminding network.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from being cared for in a clean and well-maintained environment. Excellent steps are taken to ensure that children's health is well promoted. For example, the dining table is thoroughly cleaned after each use, children have individual named cups and beakers for their drinks and toys are regularly cleaned. This means that the risk of cross infection is minimised. All of the required health documents are in place such as accident and medication documents. The childminder shares precise, well-written policies and procedures with parents including information to advise them of minimum exclusion times. There is a well-stocked, easily accessible first aid box and the childminder holds a valid first aid certificate, ensuring that she is able to respond to accidents appropriately should they occur. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene from an early age. Younger children automatically know to wipe their hands with baby wipes prior to meals and snacks or after using the toilet. Individual towels, which are regularly changed, are also available. This helps to ensure that the risk of cross infection is minimised.

Children are well nourished, enjoying freshly prepared fresh fruit and vegetables at snack time. Fresh drinking water is readily available and younger children are prompted frequently to have a drink to ensure that they are well hydrated. Details of child's individual dietary needs and their preferences are discussed with parents and recorded. Parents provide children with packed lunches and the childminder checks and maintains a written record of fridge temperatures to ensure they are stored appropriately. The childminder has attended a recent healthy eating course and has an excellent understanding of nutrition; she talks to children about the benefits of eating a healthy diet using the pictures and posters displayed in her kitchen. Children are also encouraged to create their own posters of 'good' and 'bad' foods. They also learn about foods from the wider world as from other countries during tasting sessions. Mealtimes are relaxed, social occasions when the children and the childminder sit together around the table to enjoy their food and each other's company.

Children have excellent opportunities to experience the fresh air. They are encouraged to access outdoor play daily playing with the hula-hoop, attempting the fabricated assault course in the garden or splashing in puddles during rainy weather. They also use the garden for picnics in the shade, messy art activities, planting flowers and bulbs and playing with outdoor play equipments such as a slide, trikes, cars and bikes. They make visits to parks, playgroups and soft play facilities to ensure they get plenty of exercise and fresh air. Children are able to rest or sleep according to their needs and daily routines. Young children can sleep comfortably, without disturbance, carefully monitored the childminder. This promotes children's well-being.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment. They play in rooms that are clean, bright and cheerful with many displays of posters, photographs and children's work. The layout of the premises allows children free movement, space to play, be active, rest and sleep. The childminder makes visual risk assessments throughout the day and conducts monthly written risk assessments covering all areas inside and outside her home. She has thought about and written exceptional safety procedures for children to follow for most emergencies, such as water leaks, floods, power cuts, gas leaks, intruders and emergencies

in the car. These are readily shared with parents demonstrating the childminder's commitment to promoting children's safety.

Children of all ages independently select activities from an extensive range of high quality toys and equipment that are stored in toy boxes on the floor. These support enjoyable activities that stimulate and appropriately challenge and meet the needs of the children being cared for. Further toys and books are borrowed from the local book and toy library to ensure that children continue to be motivated in their play. The childminder regularly cleans all toys and equipment to ensure that they are hygienic. She checks for safety each time they are used. This means children are able to play with an excellent range which is safe and suitable for their age and stage of development because the childminder creates a very safe, stimulating environment.

Children practise emergency evacuation procedures regularly which develop their understanding of the action that they should take in the event of a fire. A written fire evacuation plan is displayed for parents and visitors and the childminder regularly tests smoke alarms. Children learn the importance of road safety as they hold hands with the childminder onto the pushchair when out walking. They use pedestrian crossings to cross over the road, waiting for the green man and practising the 'stop, look and listen' technique. The childminder tells them related stories about road safety and the importance of not speaking to strangers to help support their understanding. Children benefit from gentle reminders throughout the day of how to keep themselves safe within the home. They are reminded to clear toys out of walkways to ensure that they do not hurt their feet as they move around their play area.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded as the childminder has an excellent knowledge and understanding of the known signs and symptoms of child abuse and of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures. The childminder has accessed a child protection training course to update her knowledge. She provides parents with a written policy which details the action that she would take in the event of a concern about a child in her care.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy, confident and thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and her assistant. They benefit from their enthusiasm, involvement and interaction in their play. They both encourage conversation, consistently questioning to encourage children's thinking, extend their knowledge and encourage their early language skills. Children's emotional and social development is promoted well. They receive support, comfort and cuddles as they eagerly chat about their home life and different family events. They form very good relationships with their peers and are happy and eager to play with or alongside each other. They are comfortable and content in the childminder's home and have regular opportunities to socialise with other children through attending the local toddler groups and through contact with the minded children of other local childminders.

Younger children's learning and development is particularly enhanced through the childminder's successful use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She uses the framework as a guide to children's stages of development and for activity ideas that help the children learn and progress. Activities are adapted to meet individual development stages. The childminder is attentive to children's individual needs and alters the daily routine to ensure that all needs are well met, often-leaving messy play activities until all the children are present. Children show a keen love of books, they self-select from a vast range that are easily accessible and confidently approach the childminder to read them a story. Their mathematical thinking is developed through everyday

activities, such as counting stairs, pairing socks, laying the table or adding up objects in books. They develop their early writing skills using flour in a tray or completing dot to dot books.

Children enjoy an excellent and meaningful range of activities and games that support, develop and extend all areas of their learning and development. They are eager to participate in planned activities but are also confident to develop their own games, knowing that they are well supported by the childminder. For example, children use a blanket over the table to create a fairytale castle fit for a princess. They enjoy arts and crafts such as using clay to make pots or decorating wooden clothes pegs to make dolls. They experience baking cooking cakes which they eagerly eat or on occasion take home to share with their families. The childminder maintains a written journal and records children's achievements on digital camera. These are downloaded onto a disc and children personalise them by adding a photograph or their own artwork on the front cover. Children are making very good progress in all areas of their development.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

All children are valued and respected as individuals due to the childminder's knowledge of their individual needs. Daily contact with parents ensures that children are cared for in line with their wishes promoting constancy in care. All children receive equal concern and activities are adapted to ensure that they are able to participate, regardless of their age or ability. This actively promotes inclusion. Children have excellent opportunities to gain positive views of the wider world and increase their understanding of other countries and cultures. They access a vast range of resources that develop their appreciation of diversity such as differing ability small world figures, ethnic dolls, festival books and puzzles. The childminder knows the children very well and provides activities related to their own culture and family background. Children take part in a meaningful range of activities such as arts and crafts activities which encourage them to appreciate and respect others' similarities and differences, such as looking at, comparing and discussing differences in body size, eye, hair, skin colour which lead on to painting self-portraits. Posters and children's artwork displayed around the care environment show positive images of people of different cultures and abilities.

Children benefit from the childminders' patience and sensitivity. She offers excellent levels of support ensuring all children are able to participate. She demonstrates a strong commitment to providing inclusive care and has past experience of caring for children with behavioural difficulties. She is proactive in accessing training, information and advice from external agencies and health professionals, using this information as a guide to help children make progress and achieve their full potential. Excellent communication systems with parents ensure that children's individual needs are recognised and appropriately met.

Children's behaviour is excellent. They are confident, happy and settled in their surroundings and with the childminder and their peers. They benefit from the childminder's care, praise and encouragement throughout the day, for example, as they help to tidy away and complete drawings and she supports them to say 'please' and 'thank you' at appropriate times. The childminder has an excellent understanding of effective behaviour management strategies, which are discussed at length with parents to encourage consistency of care. As a result, children are kind, considerate and thoughtful.

An excellent partnership with all parents contributes significantly to children's well-being. A detailed weekly diary maintained by the childminder supports the daily verbal exchanges of information to parents. This means that both the childminder and parents are fully aware of

children's needs, ensuring these are effectively met. Parents receive a well thought out policies and procedures pack that details the service provided by the childminder and the action that she would take. The childminder provides parents with a written complaints procedure. She also has a format to log complaints confidentially to ensure they are appropriately shared with parents. She made parents aware of the proposed Ofsted inspection and their extremely positive feedback is a reflection of their satisfaction. Comments from parents describe the childminder as a caring childminder who allows the children to make nice things and improves their manners. Parents are also encouraged to become involved in some activities such as the Christmas party.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder has a very strong commitment to improving her practice by keeping her knowledge up to date. She is pro-active in seeking on-going training to enable her to do this successfully. Children in her care are her first priority and she ensures all adults who come into regular contact with the children are suitably vetted including her husband who acts as her assistant. The childminder meets regularly with other local childminders as part of the local authority network. They share good practice and advice, which benefits the children in their care.

Children benefit from the childminder's increasing knowledge and confidence, as she plans purposeful, high quality activities for them to learn and enjoy. They feel at home and are relaxed in the exceptionally well-organised and stimulating environment. The daily routine is organised in line with their individual needs to ensure that they are able to play, rest and sleep as needed. As a result, they are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning.

Children's parents are provided with attractive and detailed written information, which include the range of policies and procedures and information about the service provided. The childminder has produced many well thought out policies and procedures to support her childminding service, and these work very well in practice. All records are stored confidentially, only accessed by the childminder. All of the required documentation is well maintained and regularly reviewed. This ensures it continues to meet requirements.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the childminder agreed to attend an appropriate first aid course, make the kitchen area accessible to children whilst cooking meals and improve hygiene procedures with regard to hand washing.

The childminder has attended an appropriate course and gained a qualification for first aid. She provides individual towels for children or baby wipes for children as they wash their hands. The kitchen is now safe for children to access for messy play because the childminder does not use the kitchen for cooking during childminding hours. All children enjoy a packed lunch, which parents provide. This means children's welfare and safety are now fully promoted.

## **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 outstanding. 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**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)