



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY236665
Inspection date	06 October 2006
Inspector	Patricia Webb
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 2002. She lives with her husband and two children aged four years and 10 years in the Penn area of Wolverhampton. There are local shops, a park, library and pre-school group within walking distance. Most of the ground floor and a bedroom and bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding. Minded children do not use the rear lounge. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time. There are currently 14 children on roll whose ages range from three years to 10 years. The childminder is also registered to offer overnight care for one child. The childminder provides before and after school care during term times.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and holds the Certificate in Childminding Practice.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children follow effective routines in their personal care that promote their good health. They are reminded by the childminder about hand washing and use suitable requisites such as paper towels to reduce the risk of the spread of infection. The childminder gives careful attention to attending to any accidents and holds a current first aid certificate. All records for accidents and the administration of medication are completed accurately and parents consent and signatures obtained to ensure they have been fully informed. The childminder has a policy regarding the administration of paediatric pain killing medication and contacts parents by telephone to obtain permission to give to a child if necessary, for example, if they should have a temperature or be fractious through teething. There is currently no record kept of that contact with parents and this hinders children's welfare.

Children enjoy snacks and meals with the childminder who ensures that dietary needs are followed closely. She knows individual children's preferences and offers a healthy and nutritious range of meals. Snacks consist of fresh fruit and vegetables and children discuss their favourite fruits as they tuck in to plums and mandarins, knowing they need to take care with stones and peel. They enjoy the social interaction that takes place as the childminder encourages them to sit round the table. Drinks are readily available and children have choices from water, milk and juice, knowing that some squash is better for their teeth as it is sugar-free.

Children are learning about the effect that exercise has on their bodies, removing jumpers after the walk back from school as they get hot. They make obstacle courses in the back garden and use a range of equipment and wheeled toys to negotiate paths and show skill in stopping and starting. Manipulative skills develop as they use tools, handle small pieces of puzzles and construction with dexterity and persevere with the tiny pieces for their Hama bead patterns.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children arrive in the warm, welcoming family-orientated home where they settle quickly. Space is used effectively allowing opportunity for active play, imaginative play and relaxation without encroaching on each other. The home is clean, well maintained and child-friendly and they are familiar with the routines. The garden is used frequently to offer active play and is safe, secure and fully enclosed.

Children excitedly access a wide range of good quality resources that are safe, clean and appropriate to the ages and stages of development of the children attending. Whilst a large selection is freely available, the childminder rotates equipment from a store kept in the garage to maintain children's interest and respond to their requests for certain resources such as the dressing up box. The use of large plastic storage boxes with lids and the childminder's routines of checking resources each time ensures that children enjoy their activities to the full.

Safety is a high priority for the childminder. She carries out daily visual risk assessments round her home to ensure that any hazards are identified and addressed to minimise risks to children. Whilst there is a large trampoline in the garden, the childminder takes steps to prevent minded children using this as she understands that their safety and welfare are her responsibility. The older children understand why this is the procedure as they become aware of their own safety. They discuss road safety particularly when walking to and from school and older children show high levels of responsibility as they remind younger children about holding hands. All children participate in regular drills for evacuation of the premises and have also met with the registered childminder who offers reciprocal cover should an emergency occur. This contributes to reducing the possibility of children being upset or anxious at such times. Detailed written procedures for evacuation are posted at each of the exits from the home ensuring that all persons are aware, both children and any adults in the home.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted as the childminder has a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Relevant information for contacting relevant agencies is readily available and the childminder is fully aware of the procedures to be followed should she have any concerns. Parents are made aware of this duty of care being an integral part of her practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely settled and content in the childminder's care despite some of them having only recently started attending her service. They are familiar with the relaxed and flexible routines that allow for a balance of active play and relaxation as the childminder understands how children need to chill out after the rigours of the school day.

Children call to her asking her to join their games such as 'Operation' and much giggling takes place as they collapse with laughter when the buzzer sounds and makes the childminder jump. She is very skilled at managing a wide age range of children effectively, offering high levels of support to each child as the routines change. For example, when older children become engrossed in their board game, she takes time to interact with the younger children in their well-developed role play activity. Opportunities to extend children's learning and enjoyment are used as effective questioning extends thinking, language and communication development and confidence. Older children develop their mathematical skills as they are encouraged to count up their winnings amassed during the board game and younger children discuss early numeracy when looking at books and having stories.

Great delight is had by all as some of the children deliver an impromptu performance of the recent Harvest festival they attended at school. They sing with gusto and involve the adults in some of the actions, ensuring that the adults perform them properly! Dressing up is favourite activity and the whole group of children relish delving into the box and coming up with exciting and familiar personas. The 'pirate' rescues the 'princess' who didn't really need rescuing because she was waiting for the 'soldier' to perform that duty.

The childminder is very astute in using play opportunities to promote discussion and address some anxieties in the children. For example, she understands that a child transferring her

concerns about 'monsters' to her doll is a way of her coping with such emotions. The childminder supports the child in her play to reassure and confirm what the child is telling her doll, that there are no such thing as monsters.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued and respected as very important people. They are confident, chatty and demonstrate well-developed self-esteem supported by the childminder who understands how important this is to a child's well-being. Claps and cheers ring out as the younger children finish their 'mini concert' and bristle with pride at their achievements. Behaviour is very good, being based strongly in positive reinforcement for their efforts. They show care and concern for others, take turns and share in a very relaxed and fun-filled atmosphere. This is evident when a child explains to her parent how one of the other children helped her to change out of her dressing up outfit. The childminder takes time to consider their feelings as, for example, she reduces the possibility of them being anxious during the inspection by having prepared them for the visit.

Individual needs are discussed with parents and carefully adhered to. Children become aware of the diversity of their local community and the wide world around them as they celebrate various festivals and engage in activities that raise their awareness and understanding of differing lifestyles. For example, a child playing with the dressing up clothes is also able to apply a bindhi to her forehead and shows knowledge of it being 'a mark to show you're special'. She takes great delight in telling the childminder that she was able to share that information with her teacher at school. This level of knowledge and awareness comes about as a result of the childminder's commitment to providing resources that reflect positive images of society. This is slightly marred as resources regarding disability are limited.

Whilst there are no children attending at present with learning difficulties and disabilities, the childminder demonstrates a positive attitude to working closely with parents and other agencies who may be involved in a child's care. She understands the need to discuss specific needs with parents in order to assess her ability in meeting individual needs effectively. This is reflected in her policy detailing her commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity for all the children in her care.

A warm and caring relationship with parents and carers benefits the children by developing a mutual sense of trust and confidence in the childminder and her service. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that parents are fully aware of the ethos of her practice and that any concerns about the care of their children can be discussed in confidence. Daily verbal feedback is given to ensure that parents are informed of activities and welfare of their children and that any concerns are addressed at an early stage.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy their time spent with the childminder. This is due to her commitment to providing positive experiences for the children and enjoying the role she plays in their development. Effective practice is supported by a keen awareness of her roles and responsibilities and the comprehensive set of policies and procedures she has compiled, demonstrating her knowledge, enthusiasm and understanding of the regulatory processes.

She is keen to expand her knowledge and expertise in many areas of child care and attends regular training to support this. She holds a Certificate in Childminding Practice and is currently undertaking an NVQ level 3 course in child care and education. At times she works jointly in the home of another registered childminder and they have developed similar policies to promote consistency of routines and practice.

Children are happy, settled and secure in her care. They know the routines well and are confident in her response to their requests and needs. Detailed records are in place to ensure the smooth running of the service and promote the welfare and well-being of the children.

All the legally required documentation is carefully maintained and confidentiality is acknowledged at all times.

Overall, the needs of the children attending are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to provide a range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

This improvement has been embraced by the childminder who ensures that her service offers equality for all. A wealth of resources is available for the children who have free access to make choices about their play and activities. A positive attitude coupled with an effective equal opportunities policy contribute to the positive experiences children have in her care. Parents are fully informed of this commitment and ethos and the childminder and her husband offer positive role models for the 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:

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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):

- maintain a record of the contact made with parents before administering non-prescription medication
- extend the range of resources promoting positive images of disability.

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