



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY263754
Inspection date	20 November 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 outstanding. 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 2003. She lives with her husband and three children aged sixteen, fourteen and eight years in the Fallings Park area of Wolverhampton. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding with toilet facilities on the first floor. There is a garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years of age. There are currently nine children on roll whose ages range from seven months to seven years some of whom attend on a part-time basis. She works alongside her husband who is also a registered childminder.

The family has a pet cat.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and member of the approved childminding network within Wolverhampton.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health and well-being are extremely positively promoted. They understand why they are encouraged to wash their hands because the childminder takes time to explain about germs possibly upsetting their tummies and making them feel ill. The risk of the spread of infection is significantly reduced because each child has their own flannel and towel all of which are carefully stored on hooks placed apart to prevent cross contamination. Excellent routines are implemented to manage nappy changing with care taken to follow universal procedures for the reduction of infection. Accidents are attended to carefully with a strong emphasis on reassuring and comforting the child whilst carrying out first aid as required. The arrangements for recording accidents and the administration of medication are extremely well implemented with full explanations given to parents to ensure they understand why consents and full information is required to enable the childminder to attend to their children's needs effectively. The policy for caring for children who are ill fully informs parents about many of the childhood diseases giving details about the signs and symptoms and the various infectious periods for each illness. This contributes significantly to children's health needs being very effectively met.

Although most of the children's parents supply their main meal or bottle feeds, the childminder is very aware of promoting healthy eating and encourages discussion about having a nutritious and varied diet. Having attended relevant food hygiene courses, care is taken to ensure that foods are stored appropriately to reduce the risk of spoilage. Children enjoy sitting at the low level table in the playroom to have their meals and snacks as they chat about what mummy has put in their sandwiches and which flavour of fromage frais is their favourite. They tuck in to fresh fruit on a daily basis and have drinks offered throughout the day to ensure they remain healthy and well-nourished. This is supported by the use of posters and displays in the playroom to demonstrate what foods are good to eat. Babies enjoy a restful and relaxing time for having bottle feeds and are being introduced to first solids with the childminder showing a keen insight into encouraging them to try new tastes and textures.

Children have many excellent opportunities to be active and regular outdoor trips are carefully planned. Older children use the garden trampoline and enjoy testing their skills on the large multi-gym equipment. Challenge is offered through regular visits to the local park and some commercial play venues to promote large muscle development. Photographs document the children's increasing prowess and confidence as they have climbed the low but sturdy tree in the garden under very close supervision. Great care and thought is given to providing a range of equipment and resources that encourage children to develop their small muscles and hand and eye co-ordination. They use tools, paintbrushes and small construction pieces with ever increasing skill and dexterity. A keen understanding of child development and knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework results in the childminder providing a varied and exciting programme of activity designed to promote overall physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely welcoming, child-focused environment where they have ample dedicated space to play indoors and outside. The home is very clean and well maintained. They enter the playroom knowing that this is their space and access their activities with increasing independence. There are posters, children's art and craft and photographs displayed at low level and used to offer interest and inform parents about the ethos of the service. The children are welcomed into a family-orientated home where they are seen as very important little people who settle easily and engage in varied activities with enthusiasm and confidence.

An extensive range of resources and equipment is available with the childminder having given much thought and consideration to how and where this would be used by the children. This ensures that children access resources which are safe, clean and very suitable for their ages and stages of development. Most of the resources are stored very effectively to promote independence as children can easily reach and make choices about their activities.

Children's overall safety is a very high priority for the childminder. Daily thorough risk assessments are conducted to reduce the risks of hazards to children and detailed records are kept to demonstrate this level of commitment. Thorough procedures are implemented when preparing to take children on outings and all the required consents are obtained from parents with excellent levels of information given to explain the routines and the objective of the outings. Children become aware of their own safety as they discuss crossing the road safely when on outings and older children know the expectations regarding the use of suitable restraints when travelling in the car. This information is also available for parents so that they can be assured that every precaution is taken to keep their children safe.

Children's welfare is very positively fostered because the childminder is very clear about her roles and responsibilities regarding child protection. Having attended a number of relevant courses she is very aware of possible signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and also the correct procedures to follow should she have any concerns. This duty of care is shared with parents by means of an excellent written statement about child protection and demonstrates her commitment to acting in the best interest of the children in her care at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely settled and content in the childminder's care. They enter the premises each day, able to immediately engage in purposeful activity that is well planned and prepared to excite, enthral and inform them. The childminder plans the routines and topics followed using the 'Birth to three matters' framework with elements of the Foundation Stage to provide a service where all children are encouraged to develop to their full potential. Extensive planning is in place using the colour-coded format from 'Birth to three' to link it with the skills and competencies outlined in the framework. This is displayed on the wall and explained to parents to inform them of what and how their children learn effectively through experience and opportunity.

Children enjoy stimulating practical activities. They go for walks to shops and local parks and larger trips are extremely well planned to ensure that the learning objective is clear and suitable for the differing ages and abilities of the children. For example, during a recent topic on transport, children visited the city of Birmingham using various modes of transport such as the bus, the train and the tram. Photographs were taken during the trip with children looking at many other vehicles. Children point out the bemused look on the face of the driver of a skip lorry as they posed for the picture. The childminder evaluates such activities to identify how they can be extended and expanded upon. For example, in assessing how well children coped with presenting tickets to the collectors on the various forms of transport, the childminder is now planning activities to develop young children's concept of money and its value.

During lunch time the childminder uses routine activities to discuss early number recognition and colour, shape and texture. A child counts the number of sandwiches and says how they have been cut into squares and not triangles today. This level of knowledge and extensive planning helps children make very good progress in their development and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are highly valued and respected by the childminder. She goes to a great deal of effort to ensure that the individual needs of all the children in her care are met. This sometimes involves her in conducting research into different cultures and beliefs, discussing familiar phrases in other languages and ensuring that resources promote positive images of the diversity of society. For example she has obtained information about dyslexia and diabetes in preparation should she be asked to care for children with such specific needs. Children also discuss the wider world around them as they talk about having gone to different countries on holiday and have the opportunity to taste various fruits from around the world such as mangos and papaya. Babies and younger children have superb arrangements in place to meet their individual routines and care needs. Time is taken to hold in-depth discussions with parents to ensure that sleep times and comforting arrangements are followed as closely to their home routines as possible. The childminder uses resources very effectively to help settle children such as taking them into another room she calls the 'baby room' where she can sit comfortably and use the fish swimming in the tank to help relax and calm fractious or tired children before settling off to sleep.

Much thought has gone into how the playroom is set out to encourage children of all abilities to have easy access to many of the resources and activities. Low level displays and posters ensure that babies and young toddlers can view them easily. One poster on the playroom door is well-patted by babies as they crawl to look at the many babies photographed from around the world. Topics are conducted with a clear understanding of how children develop an awareness of the world around them and their local community. The childminder uses everyday occurrences to develop their understanding of their community as, for instance, she draws a child's attention to the rag and bone man coming down the street and explains exactly what that means. They visit local toddler groups and frequently meet up with another registered childminder to combine some more organised activities meeting different children of differing ages and abilities in a warm and friendly environment. The childminder is acutely aware of working closely with

parents, carers and any other agencies to deliver specific programmes in a consistent and professional manner.

The childminder has high expectations of children's behaviour whilst being acutely aware of their ages and the differing levels of maturity and understanding. This results in each child receiving praise and encouragement pertinent to their individual achievements and efforts. For example, a two-year-old child is thanked for showing consideration when he willingly tidies up some smaller construction pieces when the baby wakes and is placed on a play-mat on the floor. Children are kind, considerate and well-mannered. They respond to instruction and direction delivered by the childminder who understands that showing by example is the most effective way of achieving desirable behaviour from them. Their efforts and achievements are shared with parents and other adults to develop their self esteem and ensure they are aware of why they have received praise.

Children benefit greatly from the extremely professional approach the childminder has developed to working in partnership with parents and carers. Parents are encouraged to visit the childminder and her family to ensure that her ethos is in keeping with what level of care and learning they wish for their child. They receive detailed information about the service through comprehensive policies and procedures that have been drawn up to ensure that expectations are clear. Extremely informative personal records of each child's development, progress and learning are collated over time and presented to parents. These provide a pictorial record of the activities children engage in and the developmental milestones they have made supported with photographs and examples of their art work. For example, one such record begins with a very small painted handprint at the front when the child first started as a young baby. Over two or three years this has now progressed into a scrapbook outlining the child's development ending with a much larger handprint demonstrating the progress and developmental growth the child had made. Daily journals are also completed for parents to inform and encourage a two-way exchange of information regarding their routines and ever changing needs particularly for babies and very young children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children make rapid progress in their development and learning as a result of the childminder's enthusiasm and commitment to providing stimulating and inspiring experiences and opportunities whilst in her care. She earnestly attends relevant training to continually update and expand her knowledge and skills. This enhances the service she provides as she utilises the new-found knowledge practically in her routines and activities. For example, she has embraced the 'Birth to three matters' framework and uses it most effectively to plan each child's progress and enjoyment. All this information is documented for parents to become aware of exactly how their children develop in her care.

Great use is made of the premises to offer ample space and active play opportunities for the children. She has developed an extremely well organised playroom which appeals to the children. They have access to a wealth of exciting learning opportunities as they use the main playroom for active and messy play, moving confidently, as they wish, to the other room for quieter activity such as having a story or relaxing in preparation for sleeping.

The childminder keeps an excellent standard of records on the children in her care. This includes detailed information on their individual needs, development and significant milestones. All the legally required documentation is in place and accurately recorded, demonstrating to parents that the children are being provided with stimulating routines and activities in a safe, secure and family-focused environment.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has addressed the recommendations most effectively to improve the quality of care offered to children and their families.

Children are very closely supervised to prevent them entering the kitchen unless it is necessary to access the outdoor play facilities. Great care has been taken to fit child-proof locks to low level cupboards and a safety gate is erected in the door way to restrict access.

All the required documentation regarding transporting children in the childminder's car are in place including full business cover for the car insurance. The safety and welfare of the children in this aspect of the service is reinforced as all necessary parental consents are maintained and available for inspection.

Extreme care is taken when setting up arrangements with parents regarding the administration of medication. They receive information explaining why certain consents and clear directions are required for the safe and efficient attention to their children's health.

The smoke detectors in the home are now wired into the mains electricity system negating the need for batteries to be replaced. This ensures children's safety is promoted should there be an emergency.

The fencing around the garden is now in good repair and provides a safe and secure play area where children can engage in activity with confidence. Risks of unauthorised entry or exit are significantly reduced as a result of the childminder's commitment to identifying and addressing such hazards swiftly and effectively.

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