



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY320709
Inspection date	12 October 2006
Inspector	Jane Muriel Laraman

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 2006 and lives with her partner and young daughter in Bridgnorth, Shropshire. She works with another registered childminder, who is her mother and only minds from her mother's house, which is also in Bridgnorth. The co-childminder's home is a detached house and she lives there with her husband. The whole of the house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed outside play area.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under the age of eight years at any one time. When working with her co-childminder she is registered to care for six children under eight. She currently has three children on roll, two of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder has overall responsibility for childminding practice. Her co-childminder works in a supportive role.

The childminder walks or drives to the local school to take and collect children and occasionally attends local carer and toddler groups. She takes the children to the local library, nearby parks,

leisure facilities and on countryside walks. Her co-childminder also walks with children to and from school when required.

The co-childminder has two cats as pets.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Both childminder and co-childminder are members of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a very clean, warm and well-maintained home environment. All areas used by the children are cleaned thoroughly by the co-childminder prior to their arrival. The childminder then ensures that the cleanliness of the premises is maintained during the day and she uses anti-bacterial sprays to clean all work surfaces and nappy changing mats. Children are protected from the risk of infection or illness through the implementation of excellent hygiene procedures and precautions. For example, children are suitably protected from infectious diseases because the childminder has regard to current health and infection control guidelines and excludes children from the provision if they are ill. Parents are made aware of this precaution through written contracts. Children are taught effectively by the childminder and learn about the importance of good hygiene and personal care through daily routines. For example, they wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. The childminder is a good role model for the children and when she routinely washes her hands she talks to them about why she is doing so. Children then begin to understand that washing hands makes them clean and gets rid of germs which may make them ill.

Good quality documentation is maintained regarding the administration of medication and recording of accidents. Medications are stored safely and administered appropriately with all the required records in place. Both the childminder and her co-childminder have a current first aid qualification and a well-stocked first aid box is available to ensure children's well-being is safeguarded in the event of accidents.

Children develop positive attitudes to exercise as they benefit from good opportunities to participate in physical activities which include regular walks and visits to the park, where they can use large play apparatus suitable for their individual ages and stages of development. In the back garden, children can enjoy activities and resources including ride-on toys, throwing and catching balls, using a paddling pool for water play, bouncing on the trampoline and exploring the properties of sand in the sandpit.

Children enjoy nutritious snacks and meals which help to maintain their good health. The childminder usually provides all the children's food and drink, but parents can opt to provide packed meals if they prefer to. The childminder ensures that all these food items are stored appropriately and re-heated to the correct temperature if necessary. The daily menu is well-planned, healthy and appetising as the childminder has a good knowledge of nutrition. She uses fresh meat, fish, pasta and a variety of fruit and vegetables. Children are suitably

hydrated as drinks are readily available for them to independently access throughout the day. Mealtimes are sociable occasions with the children, childminder and co-childminder enjoying a shared meal and conversations around the dining table. Younger children are encouraged to feed themselves and table manners are taught from an early age. Children's individual dietary needs are well understood as the childminder and parents work well together to ensure that special requirements are met and that children are provided with tempting alternative food when required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to play in a home that is well-maintained and offers good space and a welcoming environment for them. Most safety risks have been identified and minimised and there are many suitable safety precautions in place. For example, the radiators are thermostatically controlled, electrical sockets are protected, smoke alarms and fire blankets are appropriately positioned, cleaning materials and medicines are inaccessible to children and safety gates are in place to prevent children from accessing the stairs. However, not all risks have been minimised and children's safety is not fully safeguarded. The front door is not kept locked and there is potential for children to leave the premises unsupervised if the childminder or co-childminder are momentarily distracted. Although an emergency evacuation procedure has been considered, it has not been practised with the children to ensure that they are familiar with the need to leave the premises promptly in an emergency.

Children use suitable toys and equipment which are appropriate to their age and stage of development and conform to safety standards. The childminder carries out regular checks on items of equipment to ensure they remain suitable for the children to use safely. Older children are able to independently access their play equipment as it is stored within their reach. Babies and toddlers make choices from a variety of stimulating resources laid out attractively for them. The childminder discretely supervises the children's use of equipment and toys to ensure they are used safely. She has a good understanding of how to achieve a balance between allowing children the freedom to be independent whilst setting safe limits.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect. The childminder has a good understanding of her child protection responsibilities as she has attended relevant training. She is aware of the types and signs of abuse and has familiarised herself with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. As a result she is fully aware of the procedures to follow should a concern arise and she has made parents aware of her responsibilities in relation to child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder has an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development and is experienced in working with and caring for children. She uses a childcare approach based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework in order to provide stimulating developmental

opportunities for younger children and she also demonstrates a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning.

Children receive an excellent level of support from the childminder and they make good developmental progress because she recognises their individuality and meets their emotional needs very well. She is ably assisted by her co-childminder in nurturing close, caring relationships with the children and this increases their sense of trust and self-worth. As a result children are very happy, relaxed and contented in the care of either childminder.

The childminder is skilled at planning a broad range of stimulating and challenging activities based on children's interests and their stages of development. The children respond well to the childminder's enthusiasm and motivation and they benefit from her sensitive involvement and interaction in their play. Although they are eager to participate in planned activities, they are also confident and have freedom to develop their own ideas and games, knowing that they will be encouraged by the childminder.

Children's play is further supported through using a good range of interesting toys, including lots of good quality technology toys such as a telephone, pop-up toys and musical toys. Babies and younger children are very adept at manipulating the technology toys and, as they enjoy using these toys, they learn as they play, developing confidence, skills and imagination. Older children can self-select many of the resources, which are stored in low-level storage units to encourage them to become independent in selecting activities and tidying up. They enjoy using creative materials, solving puzzles and they learn rules as they play more complex board games.

The childminder occasionally takes children to local carer and toddler groups and they are able to develop their social skills and enjoy a wider range of toys when they attend. They also have the opportunity to run around and enjoy playing on larger equipment at local play parks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's self-esteem is promoted well as they are respected and made very welcome in the home. Their needs are sensitively met, with their individual likes and dislikes taken fully into account. The childminder has professional experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She understands the principles involved in partnership working with parents and health and social care professionals from external agencies. There is a strong commitment from the childminder to ensure all children are included and she works collaboratively with her co-childminder to support children's varying needs. As a result, children develop confidence and trust and enjoy secure relationships with their carers and each other.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them is skilfully promoted through provision of diverse multicultural resources, well-planned, purposeful activities and discussion topics. For example, the childminder discusses issues surrounding disability and the children then use small world play people to explore their ideas and feelings towards disability.

Children's behaviour is very good and is acknowledged as such through lots of positive praise and encouragement from both the childminder and her co-childminder. Both have high

expectations of good behaviour and consistent boundaries are set, which help to increase children's understanding of right and wrong. Children respond to gentle reminders to care for their environment, the resources and each other and are involved in creating simple house rules when asked. The childminder supports younger children in sharing and turn-taking and helps older children learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own actions.

A good working partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being in the setting. Parents' views about their child's needs and interests are actively sought before the child starts at the setting. The childminder then continues to work closely and co-operatively with parents, sharing information verbally on a daily basis and giving detailed written information in a daily diary, which parents can also contribute to. Parents have access to information regarding how to make a complaint and so have the opportunity to highlight any concerns if they need to.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in friendly, homely surroundings and feel at ease and confident in the well-organised environment. The available play space is well laid out to ensure that children have the plenty of room to play. Through working with a co-childminder, the childminder has been able to plan her childminding service to ensure that children can receive high levels of individual attention.

The childminder is professionally qualified, experienced in childcare and committed to developing her knowledge and skills by attending further training. Children also benefit because the childminder uses her knowledge and understanding of child development to provide good quality and stimulating activities to effectively meet their needs. The daily programme is planned to include a variety of opportunities for the children both in and out of the home.

Documentation is appropriately organised, kept in a confidential manner but accessible to the childminder and her co-childminder. The information needed to protect children in an emergency situation is therefore readily available. Parents complete the necessary documentation to enable their children to be cared for appropriately and children's welfare is therefore safeguarded. The childminder has very few written policies and procedures to share with parents and considers this an area for development.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

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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):

- ensure that all hazards are minimised and that the emergency evacuation procedure is practised
- consider developing the existing policies and procedures to improve the written information available about the childminding service.

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