



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	261004
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Esther Gray
<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 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 2001. She lives with her partner and two children aged seven and two years old. They live in a house in the Rednall area of Birmingham. The house is within walking distance of shops, parks and schools. The living room is used for childminding and children have access to the upstairs bathroom. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding two children aged over eight and two children aged over five years, before and after school and one aged under five during the day. The family have a pet dog and one rabbit.

The childminder is able to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's welfare is promoted because positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures taken when children are ill so that health needs are met. The childminder ensures that the routine includes a process for children to automatically wash their hands before snacks and meals and after toileting. She maintains an appropriate first aid qualification and is aware of, and shares, details of exclusion times with parents and carers. This means children who are sick or injured are effectively and appropriately cared for. Children can explain the importance of good hygiene because they are encouraged to begin to take the responsibility of meeting their own health needs. As a result, children are learning about their personal hygiene and how to keep healthy so that their health needs are met.

Children enjoy some regular opportunities to experience physical activity and develop their skills. Although there are no planned activities or discussions with children to explain why fresh air and exercise is so important to their health, they access a range of activities, such as ball games, sand and water play, as well as benefiting from the daily walk home from school in the fresh air.

Children learn about the importance of healthy eating and they have a balanced diet. They are offered fresh fruit juice and wholemeal bread, yogurt and pieces of fruit for snack at the end of the school day. Sometimes sweets are offered as a treat on a Friday. This helps them to make a choice between those foods which are healthy and those which are not and provokes discussion on how to make good choices. Children are helped to enjoy food and understand why some foods are healthy and others are not by being engaged in some planned activities such as food tasting. Children explore different tastes and textures. They also help with the preparation of meals and snacks. Mealtimes are relaxed, social occasions when children and adults sit together around the table to enjoy their food and each other's company.

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

The provision is good.

Children are safe and are generally well cared for in premises that are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. The childminder is in the process of refurbishing the house and choosing colours for re-decoration. Areas used by children are kept clean and tidy and the childminder ensures that the environment gives children good access to a suitable range of facilities that mostly promote children's development. Children always use a wide range of equipment that is suitable and safe. This is because the childminder provides furniture, equipment and toys which are appropriate for their purpose. Children's work is valued and displayed on the wall in the sitting room, which is welcoming.

Children's safety is well promoted because the childminder takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings. The childminder ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents. She demonstrates a good awareness of health and safety and all reasonable steps are taken to minimise risks to children. For example, she carries out visual risk assessments

on a daily basis, taking account of the age and ability of the children present. She has discussed plants and wildlife in the garden with children. This is carried out both as part of the interesting activities children enjoy and to enable them to begin to minimise risk themselves, and learn about possible hazards around them. As a result, children are learning to keep themselves safe. They begin to understand about safety issues both within the setting, outside and during planned and spontaneous activities. They learn about fire safety, rehearsing the emergency evacuation procedure regularly with the provider and practise safe procedures when crossing roads, coming home from school. Children are suitably protected from harm because the childminder has a sound understanding of her role in child protection. She is able to put appropriate procedures into practice which are shared with parents and carers.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled because younger children visit two or three times before they stay full time. They develop a good rapport with the childminder who has a very relaxed, calm manner with children. They are building positive relationships because they learn to play with both younger and older children, with babies in the family and older children as they come home from school. Younger children are developing in confidence, independence and are developing their self-esteem. All children have their individual needs met. There are consistent boundaries and good adult support which helps children to develop appropriate social skills.

Children are involved in a broad range of activities and spontaneous events, which support their development and overall learning, however, these activities are not planned to promote children's development or to share with parents in advance. Nevertheless, children have a good balance of activities, for example, younger children enjoy activities such as playdough, shops, playing with small cars and with the dressing up box as part of good imaginative role play. They also join in with activities organised for older children as part of after school care. For example, children enjoy making bird seed cake. Linked to the season, the childminder talks to them about why they need to make the seed cake and what the ingredients are. She prepares the task with inviting posters and encourages children to identify birds. Children describe the soft lard, pulling faces as they find words to describe the 'slippery', 'soft', 'warm', 'squeegee' mixture; whilst totally absorbed in what is a very interesting activity. This is a very well presented activity which ensures all age groups can make the most of their time at the setting and enjoy the fun.

Children's social, emotional, physical and intellectual development is promoted by the importance the childminder places on listening to and valuing what children say. She, talks to them, has realistic expectations of what they can achieve, although she does not make any written records of observations and assessment. She has not engaged in developing outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters'. This framework underpins the care of younger children to ensure they develop to their full potential. She does, however, share the days events with parents, taking account of parental preferences with regard to opportunities offered to children to complete homework, or carry out any research in books, or on the internet with the childminder.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Suitable arrangements are made to ensure all children are included. There are sufficient resources and activities to help children learn about a diverse society through their play. The childminder has used the internet to find information and a list of celebrations from a variety of cultures to ensure she can weave these festivals into the topics and activities the children enjoy. All children are valued as individuals which actively promotes inclusion. Children are becoming aware of their own needs and respect the needs of others, mainly as they recognise the needs of younger children or recognise that there are similarities and differences in the local community. The lack of planning for the activities provides a disproportionate balance of activities promoting race, culture and religion. This means that topics of disability, age and gender are generally overlooked. Children, however, make choices and decisions about their care and play activities which develops their self confidence, self-esteem and helps them develop a sense of belonging. The childminder ensures that there is no bias in her practice in relation to gender race or disability. All children are treated with equal concern.

Although there are no written behaviour strategies to share with parents the childminder and parents communicate effectively to promote good behaviour with children in a consistent manner. Children behave very well in proportion to their level of understanding and maturity because the childminder creates an environment that encourages children to respect boundaries and begin to control their own behaviour. They behave well as they learn to consider others and what is expected of them. They learn to share with younger children and make allowances for their safety within the home.

The exchange of information between parents, carers and the childminder is acceptable, however, it could be improved to ensure parents are kept fully aware of informal procedures, information about children's activities, routines and menus. The childminder takes time to get to know children and parents well. Right from the start, she finds out about their likes and dislikes, what they can and cannot do, and young children's individual routines and this is an ongoing process. She encourages a flexible settling in process to ensure children are happy and comfortable in the setting and develop a sense of trust in the adults that care for them. Children's individual needs are satisfactorily met because the childminder works closely with parents and carers, talking to them each day to develop positive partnerships. As a result, children feel comfortable and settled because they see parents and childminder acting together and giving consistent messages.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are protected from harm as the childminder is aware of the importance of ensuring that all unvetted visitors are suitable and are not left unattended with children in the setting or whilst on outings. They are well cared for in a setting where the childminder is committed to continue to update her skills and knowledge by attending training, having a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. Although her own children are very young which inhibits her ability to readily attend longer training events the childminder has

identified some shorter courses which will ensure she keeps up-to-date with current best practice in child care.

Children benefit from good organisation of the setting. It ensures that children's health and safety and well-being are met. The childminder makes best use of the time, space and resources, to ensure children have a stimulating day and are cared for very well. She ensures that she has the resources prepared in advance. She achieves this despite not having a formal routine or timetable prepared to share with children and parents. Children are aware that the activity they were looking forward to on their last visit would be prepared for them when they arrive from school. Children are well supported in their appreciation of routines to ensure hygiene, meal times and activity times follow on smoothly, which ensure good behaviour as the children are kept meaningfully occupied throughout their stay. The child protection procedure is in place and shared with parents in line with local authority guidelines, and records are available and retained for inspection. They are well organised and kept confidential. The childminder is aware of the need to keep Ofsted informed of any significant changes or events which affect the childminding practice, including the arrival of another child in the family. Overall children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure children are aware of the procedures for emergency evacuation, ensure that accurate records of children's hours of attendance are maintained and ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

The childminder and children have made a painting to represent outbreak of fire. This is used to consider where ignition sources are most likely to be and they rehearse the evacuation procedure on a regular basis. The outcome of the rehearsal is not recorded, however, the events are shared with parents and carers verbally. The record of children's daily hours of attendance are now accurately recorded to reflect the actual times of arrival and departure. As a result, children's safety and well-being is fully safeguarded.

The childminder has begun to research other cultures and religions such as Chinese New year and has engaged with members of the local community, whose cultural background originates from India, to obtain information about sweets and foods that they enjoy. She is also looking at how other cultural groups celebrate their festivals and keep faith. She recently celebrated Ramadan with the children having a curry night and using art and craft to enable the children to make elephants and slippers. This promotes children's understanding of different cultural festivals. As a result, children have a developing awareness of diversity in the local community.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

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.

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 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):

- extend the range of planned activities and experiences for children, appropriate for their stages of development and based on their individual needs
- improve information to parents, for example, further develop the information portfolio to include such things as menus, agreed behaviour strategies, exclusion times for communicable diseases and children's experiences.

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)