



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	223373
Inspection date	20 November 2006
Inspector	Deborah Ball

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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children aged 12 and 10 years, in the village of Ivington, North Herefordshire. The whole of the property is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding 10 children on a part time basis. The childminder walks to the local school and nursery to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group. The family has two dogs.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and homely environment where they learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned daily routines and learning from example. The children are encouraged to wash their hands regularly after messy play, before eating and after using the toilet. Babies' hands are washed at appropriate times with baby wipes which develops their early understanding of good hygiene practice. Good quality documentation is maintained regarding the administration of medication and recording of accidents. A well stocked first aid box is available to ensure children's well-being is safeguarded in the event of accidents. Children are suitably protected from infectious diseases because the childminder has regard to current health and hygiene guidelines and excludes children from the provision if they are ill. Information regarding infection control and the advised minimum exclusion periods is readily shared with parents.

The children enjoy a wide range of outdoor activities which contribute to their good health. The garden provides an attractive area where children can explore, test and develop physical control with a wide range of outdoor activities and resources. The children enjoy digging in the sand pit, climbing on the climbing frame and playing on ride-on toys. They benefit from going on local walks in the fresh air to collect the older children from nursery and school. Visits to the local parks and playgrounds further improve children's physical skills as they develop their large muscle skills on apparatus suitable for their individual ages and stages of development. Younger children join in readily because the childminder has a good understanding of their developmental needs and provides activities that encourage them to acquire new skills.

Children are well nourished. Parents provide pre-prepared meals for their children, which the childminder stores appropriately in the fridge before use. These meals are warmed in the microwave and are heat tested before being offered to the children. The childminder provides snacks for the children, including fresh fruits that they can try and explore the taste and texture of. The children are well hydrated, drinks are readily available and younger children are regularly reminded to have a drink. The childminder works in partnership with parents over the children's individual likes and dislikes and keeps the parents well informed about the quantity of food that their child has eaten each day. Younger children are encouraged to practise feeding themselves to develop their social and self-care skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe because the environment is safe, secure and child-friendly. The childminder assesses potential risks to children and puts good procedures and practices in place to minimise these at all times. Appropriate safety equipment is used according to the age and needs of the children attending including the use of socket covers and safety gates. The children's awareness of safety issues is continuously developed through every day activities within the home and during outings, for example, use of road safety awareness and highlighting hazards such as water. All required fire safety precautions are in place and children understand

what to do in the event of a fire as emergency evacuation procedures are regularly practised, taking into account patterns in children's attendance.

Children are interested and challenged by the resources available to them. They are able to freely choose from a wide range of toys, which promote all areas of their learning and development. Positive steps are taken to ensure that toys and resources are suitable for the ages of children being cared for and are regularly cleaned to ensure that they are hygienic for the children.

Children are well protected because the childminder has a clear understanding of the child protection procedures and is fully aware of her role and responsibility to protect the children in her care. The childminder is aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and has a professional reference guide to help her act correctly when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children enjoy a balanced and varied 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. The children enjoy arts and crafts, cooking activities and imaginative role play. Babies and younger children enjoy a wealth of sensory play, such as exploring cereals, jelly, wet and dry sand and objects of different textures. Older children are developing increasing independence. They are able to access resources for themselves, use their initiative and make independent choices about their play and activities. The activities are adapted to meet individual development stages to ensure that all children are able to participate at their own level. The childminder is attentive to children's individual needs and tailors the daily routine to ensure that their needs are well met.

The children benefit from the childminder's enthusiasm, involvement and interaction in their play. She encourages conversation and asks the children questions to encourage their thinking and extend their knowledge. Young children are very vocal and are actively listened to. The children benefit from the childminder's full attention when they communicate. She gets down to the child's level, listens carefully and responds to them, whilst maintaining eye contact when involved in conversation. The children have formed very good relationships with their peers and are happy and eager to play with each other and share their toys. They are comfortable and content in the childminder's care and confidently seek her for support, comfort and cuddles. Children learn about the local community as they visit places of interest such as the zoo, farm parks and countryside centres as well as routine outings to the local toddler groups.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected and valued as individuals, their needs are met and their individual likes and dislikes are well catered for. The children have the opportunity to learn about the needs of others and are encouraged to acknowledge differences in an open and honest environment.

They have access to a developing range of resources which promote a positive view of the wider world but have more limited opportunities to take part in activities that develop their awareness of diversity. The opportunity to care for a child with learning difficulties or disabilities would be viewed positively and the childminder would use her training and experience, gained in her previous role in a local toddler group, to work with the parents and other professionals to ensure the child received appropriate care. Children have a strong sense of belonging and their self-esteem is enhanced by the value placed on their creative work which is displayed within the home.

Children behave well and their good behaviour is promoted through meaningful praise and positive role modelling by the childminder. From an early age, children are given explanations about their behaviour and they begin to learn right from wrong. The childminder takes into account children's age and stage of development and manages behaviour in accordance with their understanding. Children's achievements are valued and rewarded, which promotes their confidence and self-esteem.

The childminder has established good partnerships with parents and carers, which contributes significantly to children's care, well-being and feelings of security within the provision. The childminder exchanges written and verbal information about their children with them on a daily basis, so that she can be aware of children's changing needs. The childminder is able to respond appropriately to any concerns raised by parents and they are able to discuss the provision and all aspects of their child's care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's good organisation and commitment to providing a warm, caring and stimulating environment. The daily routine is organised to meet the needs of individual children and the environment is carefully planned to allow children plenty of space to play and rest. The children are confident to initiate their own play and learning experiences and benefit from resources that are readily available to them.

The childminder is 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.

All of the required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and effectively maintained. Records are suitably organised and are regularly reviewed. They are only accessed by the childminder to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. Children's records are well detailed which ensures that the childminder is aware of children's individual needs, likes and dislikes and allows her to offer appropriate care to the children. Overall, 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 provide a range of activities and resources that promote images of disability and to review procedures for allowing children to go on accompanied walks with the dogs.

The childminder has taken positive steps to develop the children's appreciation of the wider world by ensuring children have access to a broad range of resources that promote positive images of disability. The children's safety and welfare is now further safeguarded as the childminder has reviewed the procedures for allowing children to go on accompanied walks with the dogs and no longer walks the dogs with minded children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 good. 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

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop activities that promote children's understanding of our diverse society.

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