



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	223874
Inspection date	18 January 2007
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 1994 and lives with her husband and teenage son in a semi-detached house in Bridgnorth, Shropshire. She works with a part-time assistant, who is her mother. The ground floor rooms are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed outside play area.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight years at any one time. There are currently seven children on roll, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and attends local carer and toddler groups on a regular basis. She also takes the children to the shops, local library, nearby parks, leisure facilities and on countryside walks.

The family do not have any pets.

The childminder is able to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and the Shropshire Childminding Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is very well promoted because the childminder follows effective hygiene procedures and routines, which meet their physical, healthcare and nutritional needs. They are cared for in a very clean, warm and well-maintained home environment. The high quality level of support and guidance provided by the childminder helps children to gain an excellent understanding of hygiene issues and as a result, they become increasingly independent in their personal care. The childminder consistently teaches them why they should observe sound hygiene practice. Children learn to use the toilet properly, wash their hands on their own and they also readily access tissues to wipe their noses when they need to. The childminder sets the children a good example, as they see her routinely washing her hands before preparing meals and after changing nappies.

Children are protected from the risk of cross infection as the childminder does not admit them to the provision with any infections and this is discussed with parents. Good quality documentation is maintained regarding the administration of medication and recording of accidents, and a well stocked first aid box is available to ensure children's well-being is safeguarded in the event of accidents.

Children develop very positive attitudes to exercise as they benefit from a wealth of opportunities to engage in physical activities. These include daily walks, music and movement and visits to local parks. The garden provides an attractive and challenging area where children can explore, test and develop physical control of their bodies and muscles with a good range of outdoor activities and resources.

Parents currently provide their children's meals and snacks, which are stored appropriately. Pre-prepared meals are re-heated, if necessary, to the correct temperature before being served to the children. Children are suitably hydrated as drinks are readily available for them to independently access throughout the day. They learn about healthy eating during snack and mealtimes, when discussions are held about the types of food they eat, what makes them grow and what keeps them healthy. The childminder works in partnership with parents over children's food intake and keeps them informed about what their children have eaten during their time with her. Younger children are encouraged to feed themselves and they begin to learn about table manners as they enjoy the social experience of sharing mealtimes and conversations with the childminder and older children around a table.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are very well cared for in premises that are safe, stimulating and secure. The childminder has provided a designated playroom for the children and they have the opportunity to use a

very good range of play resources that successfully promote their development. Toys and equipment are age-appropriate, kept clean and well-maintained. Children are able to freely select most of the toys and resources for themselves, which allows them to direct their own play, develop independence and make decisions about how they spend their time.

The childminder identifies and minimises risks for children in her home. For example, there are stair gates and electrical socket covers in place. In the playroom, potential hazards such as toys with small parts are kept securely to prevent younger children's access to them. The childminder has completed a written fire risk assessment and evacuation plan and all fire safety precautions are in place. She ensures that children develop a good understanding of how they would keep themselves safe in the event of a fire because they practise the evacuation procedure regularly. A high priority is given to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe when outside of the home environment. For instance, children learn the rules for road safety as part of their daily routine whilst walking to and from school or into the town.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and sensitively promoted by the childminder, who has a very good knowledge of the types and symptoms of abuse. She has a thorough understanding of her responsibilities and the procedures to follow in relation to child protection issues and has a written policy in place, which is shared with parents. The childminder has recently updated her knowledge through completing child protection training in relation to current guidelines.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and settled in the childminders care as she places their enjoyment and achievement at the centre of the service she provides. A close and caring relationship with the childminder increases each child's sense of trust and helps them develop a strong sense of self-worth. Children make excellent progress because the childminder recognises their individual needs and uniqueness. She has an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development and is experienced in caring for children. A childcare approach based upon the 'Birth to three matters' framework is used in order to provide stimulating developmental opportunities for younger children. Older children are given opportunities to make free choices about the types of activities they want to take part in. The childminder also takes time to find out what interests each child and builds on this information to plan and provide a variety of activities and opportunities to ensure their preferences are met and they make excellent developmental progress in all areas of learning.

Through receiving excellent levels of support, sensitive care and attention from the childminder, children develop confidence and self-esteem. The childminder ensures that each child's routines, likes, dislikes, comforters and so on are fully discussed with parents prior to the child's first attendance. This ensures continuity of care and helps children to settle securely in the childminder's home.

Children eagerly engage in meaningful activities and play opportunities which enhance their individual learning and skills. Their curiosity is captivated and nurtured by the childminder as they excitedly participate in planned activities. They demonstrate high levels of concentration and are confident enough to develop their own games and ideas.

Children enjoy independent access to an extensive range of age-appropriate toys and equipment that promotes their early learning and development. For example, books, puzzles, craft materials, construction toys, small world play and imaginative role play resources. They benefit from the childminders enthusiasm and sensitive interaction in their play. The childminder encourages conversation and develops children's communication skills when she asks them questions to encourage and extend their thinking.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are very secure and happy in the care of the childminder. Their individual needs are identified through thorough discussion with parents and time is sensitively given to help children settle into the setting. The childminder knows them very well and ensures that they feel valued for who they are. As a result, children develop a strong sense of belonging and their self-esteem is nurtured. Equipment is easily accessible to all the children and they are provided with resources reflecting positive images of different cultures and beliefs to help develop their understanding of diversity.

The opportunity to care for children with learning difficulties or disabilities would be viewed positively and the childminder would use her experience in childcare to work with their parents and other professionals to ensure children would receive appropriate care.

Children behave very well and show respect because the childminder provides them with an excellent role model and has a calm and consistent approach to managing behaviour. She speaks to children politely and encourages them to have good manners. 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 ages and stage of development and manages behaviour in accordance with their understanding. Children's achievements are praised and rewarded, which promotes their good behaviour, confidence and self-esteem.

Parents are given good information about the childminding service provided and the childminder ensures that they are kept well informed about all relevant policies and procedures. The childminder talks to parents frequently to ensure she remains fully informed regarding their child's needs and she shares their child's achievements and progress with them. This helps the children settle well and become confident with the childminder because she is aware of their likes, dislikes and changing daily routines.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is an experienced childcare practitioner and children are nurtured and appropriately challenged in the homely, well-organised and stimulating environment. As a result they develop their emotional, intellectual, physical and social skills very well. They become confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. The required ratios are consistently maintained and children frequently receive excellent one-to-one adult support which promotes their care and welfare and ensures their needs are met effectively.

Documentation that contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and regularly reviewed. However, written consent to take photographs of children is not in place to confirm that parents' wishes are being observed.

Parents are kept informed about the care and attention that their children receive because the childminder talks to them regularly about their child's activities, provides them with some written information and shows them her policies, procedures and other useful information. This contributes to the continuity of children's care so that they feel secure. Confidentiality is effectively maintained and children's records are stored securely.

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 ensure that her assistant's CRB clearance was readily available for inspection. The childminder now has the assistant's consent to keep her CRB disclosure form with the documentation she has available for parents to see. This means that parents are fully aware that the appropriate vetting checks have been completed in order to safeguard their children.

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 1 April 2004 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:

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):

- obtain written permission from parents for taking photographs of their children.

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