



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224474
Inspection date	12 March 2007
Inspector	Sharon Dickinson
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 1974. She lives with her husband in Stoke-on-Trent. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding eight children at various times before and after school, four of whom are under eight-years-old. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, well organised home. Daily routines support children's understanding of good personal hygiene such as hand washing before preparing food and eating meals. Good hygiene practices are consistently implemented, for example, children are provided with individual hand towels which help prevent the spread of infection. The childminder holds a recognised first aid qualification and a fully stocked first aid box is available enabling her to promptly deal with any incident. Appropriate records are in place for accidents and medication ensuring information is effectively passed on to parents. However, children's health and safety is compromised due to unclear wording of parental consents for the administration of medication.

Healthy snacks are provided after school which children eagerly help to prepare. Children's awareness of healthy eating is extended through discussion and activities such as making a collage of healthy foods, which is proudly displayed. Mealtimes are social occasions where children are able to relax and discuss their school day. The childminder sits with children at mealtimes providing a good role model, gently reminding them to use their manners.

Children benefit from regular access to fresh air and exercise. They walk to and from school and attend trips such as to the local park and library. Children enjoy free access to the garden and supervised access to field area at the rear of the property where they enjoy a variety of activities such as, football, using the paddling pool and having sack races.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

A warm, child-orientated home helps children and parents feel welcome. Children's art work is displayed and a selection of photographs of children enjoying a variety of activities helps promote a sense of belonging. The premises are safe and secure. A wide variety of age-appropriate toys, resources and well thought out activities provide a fun and stimulating environment. Toys are accessible to children and they are encouraged to make choices and decisions about their play. Resources are well maintained ensuring children's safety and maximising their enjoyment of tasks.

The childminder has attended risk assessment training and has a secure awareness of safety issues. Thorough risk assessments are completed on a regular basis identifying any action required to provide a safe environment, ensuring children's safety is maintained at all times. Children also learn about how to keep themselves safe, for example, they attended a local road safety awareness course and access fire safety information provided by a local fire officer. Regular fire evacuations are practised and evaluated ensuring everyone is aware of appropriate procedures. The childminder effectively supervises children. Windows off the dining area enable her to monitor the safety of older children playing outdoors whilst engaging in children's play inside, allowing children to freely access all areas as they choose.

The childminder is fully aware of her role and responsibility in relation to the protection of children. She has attended child protection training and has devised and implemented clear procedures to report any concerns about children's welfare. This ensures children's safety is paramount.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. They relate very well to the childminder and confidently express their thoughts and needs. The childminder engages with all children at an age-appropriate level giving them space and freedom to make decisions about their play and routine. For example, older children choose to continue their game of football in the garden rather than interrupt their play for snack which was offered at a later time. The routine includes times to be active and quiet, a sofa is available for children who wish to relax. An interesting range of first hand experiences are planned and implemented by the childminder, such as crafts and food tasting in celebration of Chinese New Year. Younger children choose and enjoy playing a 'Space Race' board game. The childminder effectively supports their play by helping them take turns, reading the questions and further extending their learning by talking about planets.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder is knowledgeable about children's individual needs and preferences and is flexible in her practice to ensure these are met at all times. A good range of resources and practical activities develop children's understanding of other cultures, religions and disabilities. For example, children describe the feel of a selection of textured materials helping them to develop their senses and discover how blind people may experience the world. Effective systems are in place to support children with learning and physical disabilities. All children are valued and included within the setting.

Clear boundaries and expectations promote good behaviour. Positive behaviour management strategies are in place and are shared with children and parents. The childminder skilfully handles conflict over a football by talking to the children about how footballers share and pass the ball to their team mates; consequently children share the ball and enjoy the rest of the game.

A comprehensive welcome pack including written policies is provided for parents' perusal. Good communication systems keep parents informed about their child's day and achievements. The childminder ensures consistency between home and school by passing on relevant information, ensuring children's welfare is promoted. Parents are very positive about the care their children receive at the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder regularly reviews her practice through self evaluation identifying areas for improvement. She has worked hard to produce and implement written policies and procedures

which are shared with parents. She is committed to her professional development and has recently attended various training courses which help promote the care and welfare of all children attending. The childminder has flexible arrangements in place for the care of children but always ensures ratios are maintained, promoting children's safety. A record of children's attendance is accurately maintained and suitable contingency arrangements are in place in the event of an emergency. All required documentation is in place for the safe management of the provision. Records are regularly reviewed ensuring information is up-to-date to enable appropriate care to be given and suitable contact details obtained. Information kept on children is stored securely to protect confidentiality. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

All recommendations made at the last inspection have been met. The childminder was asked to familiarise herself with the latest child protection guidance. She has since attended child protection training and devised and implemented a child protection policy which refers to up-to-date guidance. She was also asked provide a smoke alarm on the first floor. The childminder arranged for a home safety visit by a local fire officer who checked the premises and installed an additional smoke alarm in the play area used by children.

The childminder agreed to improve the accuracy of children's attendance records and ensure the contact details of the regulator are available to parents. The daily register now indicates accurate times of arrival and departure and parents are made aware of how to contact the regulator via the complaints procedure and a poster displayed in the kitchen.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the 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 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):

- clarify wording of written parental consents for the administration of medication.

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