

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	268488
Inspection date	21 October 2007
Inspector	Paula Hunt
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder registered in 1999. She lives with her husband, adult step-daughter and daughter aged 12 years in Baddersley Ensor, near Atherstone in Warwickshire. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends local toddler and community groups on a regular basis and takes children to the local park.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding eight children aged under eight years and four children aged over eight years, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder holds a relevant childcare qualification, has gained the 'Quality First' quality assurance certificate and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very warm, clean and well-maintained home. They are actively learning about the importance of good hygiene practices and personal care through effective well-established daily routines. For example, they understand that germs are prevented from spreading by washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children have separate hand towels which helps prevent the spread of infection. They are further protected from the spread of infection because the childminder does not provide care if children are unwell. The childminder has a well-stocked first aid box readily available and robust procedures in place to record any accidents that may occur and any medication administered to children. This ensures that children are always well cared for.

Children have excellent opportunities to be involved in physical activity and enjoy being taken for walks to the local parks and to the toddler group as well as playing in the well-equipped garden. They have excellent opportunities to experience active play both indoors and outside to promote their well-being. Children gain maximum personal independence, for example, in toileting and dressing. Toddlers are given enthusiastic encouragement to learn to walk and are gaining control over their bodies through effective support to manipulate a commendable range of attractive toys. They have good opportunities to rest and sleep according to their needs and the childminder is very aware of individual routines and sleeping patterns and ensures they are adhered to.

Children understand the benefit of a healthy diet and are well nourished. The childminder provides an excellent variety of nutritious breakfasts, lunches and snacks after school for some children. She also respects parents' wishes to provide packed food for their children but she takes opportunities to discuss suitable diets within the daily routine to ensure that children develop an awareness of nutritious foods. Children enjoy a range of fresh fruit and vegetables and know they help to keep them healthy. They are offered frequent drinks throughout the day to ensure they remain hydrated whilst babies are fed according to their individual routines. Children have their health and dietary needs well met as the childminder works well in partnership with parents to ensure that information relating to individual requirements is effectively shared.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are safe in the child-orientated home. The premises are well maintained and provide an excellent environment for children. Children easily and safely access an excellent selection of high quality toys and equipment that are stored at their level. For example, toys are stored in plastic boxes, in bookcases and on low-level units. This gives children choices in their play and encourages independence skills. Resources are age appropriate, challenging for the children's stages of development. Children's safety is given a high priority and the childminder is proactive in identifying potential hazards and takes all the required steps to minimise any potential danger to children. For example, hazardous substances are stored out of children's reach and exposed electric sockets are fitted with covers.

Children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe and they understand the reasons for agreed codes of behaviour. For example, on outings they discuss road safety and what they need to do to keep themselves safe on the roads. They are encouraged to explore

and take small risks within the controlled environment of the childminder's home and garden under her close supervision. For example, they regularly practise how to respond in an emergency and know to tidy away toys on the floor in case they trip and injure themselves.

Children are well protected because the childminder has a sound understanding and knowledge about safeguarding children. She has a clearly written policy in place and is clear about the signs and symptoms of abuse. She understands where to obtain support and advice should she have any concerns about a child in her care. Existing injuries of children are recorded and shared with parents. The childminder is also aware of the procedure if an allegation is made against her or a member of her family.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children of all ages enjoy and achieve within this well-managed and exceptionally child-centred environment. They have excellent opportunities for learning through play and are involved in a wide range of carefully organised activities that match their developmental needs and stimulate them to explore further. They are familiar with the daily routine that is well structured to accommodate care needs, school runs and times to be active and enjoy outside play. The childminder has a very good understanding of how children learn and she uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework to meet children's individual needs. Activities are adapted to ensure that all children can participate and confidently make decisions about their activities. For example, they become engrossed in role play as they dress themselves up and imitate making the dinner with pretend food. They make eggs on toast and pretend to eat this with a knife and fork.

Children's creativity is actively promoted as they take part in regular arts and crafts activities. For example, children have free access to paint and paper as they print with great enthusiasm, sea creatures such as dolphins and octopuses when compiling pictures to put in a calendar as a gift for their parents. Children's mathematical skills are constantly increasing as the childminder uses every opportunity to count and compare shapes and size. The childminder takes a keen interest in what the children do and say. She has an excellent knowledge of their individual needs and skilfully plans a balanced range of adult and child-led activities. This exceptionally successful programme builds upon children's current skills and knowledge to promote all-round development. Children are highly interested and fully engaged in their play. They are sensitively challenged to extend their thinking, for example, about similarities or numbers of objects remaining. They develop excellent early language skills to eagerly join in conversation, to become highly involved in storybooks and to explore many new words. Younger children enthusiastically imitate animal sounds as they look at the pictures of the different farm animals.

Children settle well in the childminder's home. They very much enjoy each other's company and make positive relationships with the childminder and her family. This gives them high self-esteem and helps them to feel secure. Their work and photographs are displayed, helping them to feel valued and at home. Children learn social skills and meet and play with different children and adults as they visit toddler groups. This broadens children's range of experiences and social development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle quickly and gain excellent self-esteem as they are cared for as individuals. The childminder shows genuine warmth and affection towards those in her care, offering them cuddles and reassurance as required. Resources that reflect the diversity within the community are easily accessible and used effectively to help children understand the world around them. Although the childminder has not cared for any children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, she demonstrates a good awareness and understanding about how she would support and care for them.

Children are extremely well behaved and clear boundaries both inside and outside the home are understood by them. House rules are devised with the children. Positive language is consistently used by the childminder to encourage good behaviour. The childminder has a clear understanding regarding different strategies to use according to the age and level of understanding of the children in her care. She has verbal agreements with parents to ensure consistency between home and the childminder. Incidents are recorded and shared with parents when required.

Children's individual needs are very well met as a result of the excellent partnership developed between parents and the childminder. The childminder spends time getting to know parents' wishes and provides a wealth of information about her provision so that children settle quickly in her care. Continuity of care for children is ensured through highly effective verbal, written and photographic methods, to exchange information about children's care and development. The childminder has devised a questionnaire for parents to help her improve the care she is providing.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by the exceptional quality of her professional support for them as individuals. They are comfortable and settle well in the childminder's home. The childminder organises the available space effectively to enable children to initiate their own play. Children move around the space confidently and independently. They receive personal encouragement to settle and develop as she is well qualified, open to new ideas and continually updates her knowledge and skills through attending training. She also regularly self-evaluates her practice ensuring that she is continually assessing and improving her professional role as a childminder and has also recently gained the childminding quality assurance award. She manages part-time attendance patterns extremely well to ensure that all children receive high levels of adult attention. She makes very good use of outings, for example, to farms, community groups and parks to offer children a wide range of excellent first hand learning opportunities.

Detailed policies, procedures and all legally required documentation are clear, regularly reviewed and confidentially stored. This has a positive impact on children's safety and well-being. A wealth of detailed documentation that contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is actively used by the childminder. For example, parents receive detailed information about her service in the form of a prospectus and registers provide a clear, accurate record of children's attendance. All records, such as the long and short-term planning, are frequently reviewed as part of an effective system to note and assess children's progress and plan for their individual development. The childminder is fully committed to providing inclusive care and learning so that every child matters. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection children's health has improved as the childminder has extended her knowledge of notifiable diseases through seeking information from the internet and is clear whom to report to. Parents are actively made aware of who to contact if they wish to make a complaint because the childminder has developed a comprehensive written policy that is shared with them on their initial visit. She also displays the regulator's poster in her notice board.

Complaints since the last inspection

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 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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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