

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254970
Inspection date	18 April 2007
Inspector	Patricia Webb
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 satisfactory. 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 1988. She lives with her husband and adult daughter in Great Barr, Birmingham. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and currently has 13 children on roll some of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The family has two dogs, a cat and some fish.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health and well-being are promoted through familiar routines followed by the childminder. Children understand about the importance of washing their hands and use appealing

requisites such as character squirty soap to encourage this. They also recall how they must wash hands should they come into contact with the dogs. Their ongoing health is further promoted as the childminder is aware of taking care when they are outside in the sun, attending to minor accidents and maintaining records for the administration of medications. Whilst parents are informed about the childminder's commitment to acting in the child's best interests in the case of a medical emergency, they have not indicated their actual permission through signing. This has the potential to compromise the well-being of some children particularly where some parents may wish to make specific arrangements in such a situation.

Children are learning about healthy eating as they enjoy relaxed snack and meal times with the childminder. Most children bring their own packed lunches which are carefully stored by the childminder to reduce the risk of spoilage or contamination. Dietary requirements are discussed with parents to ensure that any specific needs are adhered to in order to keep children healthy. They engage in cookery sessions with the childminder as they discover how ingredients change as they are mixed and cooked.

Regular walks to and from school and visits to the local park help to keep children fit and healthy. The childminder is aware of ages and stages of child development and plans activities accordingly to enable young children to reach the next steps in their development. Children develop their manipulative skills as they handle play dough and use various tools and toys with increasing dexterity.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the homely and relaxing environment provided by the childminder. The home is clean, well-maintained and child focused. Children develop their independence as they easily access toilet facilities and use all areas of the ground floor with ease and familiarity. They have spaces designated for active play, quieter activities and utilise the outdoor play area regularly, enjoying the run of the home. A wide range of resources and equipment has been amassed to ensure children have a choice about their activities. Some older resources show signs of significant wear and tear, particularly some of the books used by younger children. This hinders children's enjoyment and the development of a sense of responsibility in caring for the books appropriately.

Children participate in regular fire drills as they gain an understanding about their own safety. They also discuss road safety when walking to and from school, know about holding hands and looking both ways before crossing. Whilst the childminder takes care to check the premises and minimise hazards to children some risks are evident. Cleaning sprays are within reach in the toilet and the rotary clothes line poses a risk to young children's safety as the lines dangle when the line is folded down and left in situ. Children are guided when close to the family's dogs and care is taken to reduce the contact in order to keep the children safe. Children are secure within the setting as the childminder is diligent in locking doors and gates to prevent unauthorised exit or entry.

The childminder has a clear knowledge of the child protection procedures ensuring that children's welfare is suitably safeguarded. Parents are informed of the childminder's duty of care in this aspect and have access to a copy of the procedures within the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children happily engage in self chosen activities as they play with confidence in the childminder's response to their requests. She participates in their play, following the lead of the children at times as they develop their imaginative and creative play. They know the routines well and are developing an awareness of responsibility as they assist in tidying away before getting different games and activities out. Lots of fun and laughter take place. For example, when they have play dough and use their rolling pins and cutters to make patterns they giggle as they mix the colours.

The childminder knows the children well and is able to respond to their interests and moods as they play. For example, a detailed discussion takes place when a young child excitedly chatters about his forthcoming birthday. The childminder takes time to develop early number awareness as she encourages him to count how old he is and how old some of the other children are. Younger children have opportunities to sleep and relax as necessary as time is taken to discuss routines with parents and carers. Regular visits are made to local toddler groups to encourage the development of social skills and to expand their play experiences. They also discover their local community through visits to shops, parks and the library.

Children are chatty and happily settle to their activities as they develop friendly relationships with other children and the childminder and her family. This contributes to children developing a sense of belonging within the home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are discussed with parents and carers in order to endeavour to keep routines similar to those at home. She builds warm and caring relationships with the children enabling them to feel secure and confident in her care. They learn about the differing needs of others as they participate in free play with a range of resources depicting positive images of the diversity of society including play with a doll's wheelchair.

Children's behaviour is managed appropriately according to their ages and stages of maturity and understanding. The childminder has high expectations of their behaviour and gently reminds them of the boundaries and the need to show good manners. She offers deserved praise, ensuring that they understand why they have been praised to develop their self-esteem. A change of her tone of voice is used to remind them when they have displayed unacceptable behaviour and many of the younger children respond well. The childminder is aware that more negotiation is sometimes needed when dealing with older children.

A friendly relationship is fostered with parents and carers to ensure that the needs of the children are identified and met. A suitable settling in procedure operates so that parents can be reassured that their child feels secure in the childminder's care. Information is exchanged daily as parents are informed of their child's routines and activities during their time with the childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises the home to provide a child-friendly environment in which children can take part in a range of activities to support their care, learning and play. The childminder has a clear understanding of her role and responsibility in ensuring children are sufficiently protected in her care. Appropriate checks have been carried out to ensure children are cared for by a suitably vetted person and children are never left alone with any person not vetted. The childminder holds a level two qualification in child care and education and has attended various relevant training courses to support her registration.

Most of the required documentation is in place to safeguard the welfare and care of the children and confidentiality is acknowledged at all times. The childminder has recently overhauled the paperwork to ensure that all information is collated and maintained. Past records have not always been available for inspection and this is now being addressed.

Overall the needs of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain a copy of the local authority child protection procedures and raise her awareness of the procedures to follow should an allegation be made

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to National Standard 1 (Suitable person), National Standard 2 (Organisation), National Standard 6 (Safety) and National Standard 11 (Behaviour). Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit on 3 January 2007 and found a breach of the conditions of registration. The provider was cautioned in respect of this matter and admitted to the breach. Ofsted issued a formal warning to the childminder and set six actions. Ofsted was satisfied that by meeting the actions set the provider remains qualified for registration.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- seek signed parental permission for emergency medical advice or treatment
- take steps to minimise hazards with particular regard to the rotary clothes line and the storage of cleaning chemicals
- ensure resources are maintained in a clean and suitable condition
- ensure that relevant key records are maintained for the prescribed timescales

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