

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	209831
Inspection date	20 August 2007
Inspector	Jennie Lenton
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 has been registered since 1996. She lives with her husband and one adult child in Cheddleton, Staffordshire. All of the ground floor and the bathroom on the first floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed area available for outside play. The family has three dogs but they are not in the home while minded children are present.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years of age. She is qualified to level three CACHE. The childminder takes and collects children from the local school and pre-school. She attends the playgroup and toddler group on a regular basis. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from cross-infection as the childminder maintains her home to a good standard. Regular checks are undertaken to ensure toys and equipment are clean and safe to use. The childminder reduces the risk of cross-contamination through robust procedures. For

example, she uses disposable gloves for each nappy change. Children are also encouraged to develop sensible personal hygiene routines to further promote their health. The childminder reminds them to wash their hands after going to the toilet and before eating and ensures that younger children regularly use wipes to stay clean and comfortable. Children who are infectious or sick are excluded from care. This maintains the health of all. Any child who becomes ill at the setting is appropriately cared for and monitored while they await collection.

There are clear procedures in place for recording accidents. This helps to ensure children receive consistent care as their needs are accurately recorded and routinely shared with parents. The childminder also clearly records any medication that is given. She obtains written consent from parents prior to administration and provides parents with a verbal account of the care received. The written medication record is not always fully complete as parental signatures to acknowledge the dosages given are not consistently obtained. Where this occurs, children's welfare is potentially compromised.

Dietary needs are successfully met as the childminder collates information relating to children's individual requirements. As a result, children are provided with meals and snacks which take account of any allergies, preferences or religious requirements. The childminder works with parents to agree how to meet children's needs in accordance with their wishes. For example, providing some meals and preparing other food which parents send in from home. Children enjoy toast and cereal for breakfast and a cooked tea provided by the childminder. They bring their own lunches which the childminder stores appropriately. All children are kept hydrated as they are encouraged to drink regularly.

Children benefit from active play. They have daily access to the childminder's garden as well as frequent opportunities to walk as they are collected from local nurseries and schools. The childminder also takes children to play areas to use a range of challenging play equipment. During the holidays, children also enjoy visiting water parks and other attractions. This effectively helps their physical development and promotes a positive attitude towards exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel relaxed and comfortable in the warm and welcoming premises. This is because the childminder provides a safe and secure environment where children have lots of space to play and rest. There are displays of children's art work and the play equipment is organised so that it can be easily and safely accessed by children. This promotes children's independence and sense of belonging. All toys and equipment are of a good standard.

The childminder has a good awareness of hazards within the home and has sought to minimise these. For instance, using fireguards and stair-gates to restrict access. Children receive a high level of supervision to further reduce the potential for harm. This is successfully achieved as the childminder generally plays alongside the children. She is vigilant as she watches their play to ensure that they all remain safe. For example, ensuring that scraps off a foil tray used during a junk modelling activity are properly cleared away before younger children come to play in the same room.

Both inside and outside areas are secure. Children are effectively kept safe as the premises are suitably locked to prevent children leaving unaccompanied. They are also well protected outside the home. The childminder ensures children's well-being on outings by using suitable restraints

in the car or when walking. Children learn about keeping themselves safe as the childminder talks to them about road safety and staying together.

The childminder demonstrates understanding of child protection and is clear about her responsibilities. She has due regard for confidentiality and is aware of the procedure to pass concerns on to the correct authorities. Potentially, this safeguards a child from future harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. They have warm relationships with each other and with the childminder. They enjoy their time at the home as they independently access resources. Children receive lots of attention and are treated with respect as the childminder listens attentively to what they say. Through the childminder's skilful use of praise and encouragement, children's self-esteem is promoted. This helps all children to feel valued. As a result, they communicate confidently and chat about their designs as they make dragonflies and flowers out of craft materials. Children learn to share and take turns as they happily play together. Older children have fun as they dance with the younger ones, moving imaginatively to music.

The extensive resources provide a good level of challenge to all ages. Children have opportunities to bake, play imaginatively with role play and small world toys as well as access books, jigsaws and construction toys. The childminder also plans some activities. She includes regular outings to local parks and toddler groups as well as excursions to theme parks and other areas of interest, such as the local steam railway. This variety promotes children's creative, physical and intellectual development.

Children have plenty of opportunities to snuggle up with the childminder. This increases their sense of well-being. The childminder further promotes their welfare by ensuring that children benefit from routines which are consistent with their experiences at home. For example, sleeping and feeding in accordance with their individual needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder treats children with equal concern. Through effective supervision she ensures that they share resources and show consideration and respect to each other. This means that all children feel included and valued. As a result of her inclusive approach, children are learning to respect each other and value difference. The childminder provides a supportive environment for them to learn right and wrong. She uses encouragement and praise to help children develop good manners and play harmoniously. Her management of unwanted behaviour includes a range of safe techniques which are adapted to meet the age and maturity of the child. The management of behaviour is agreed with parents through the provision of a comprehensive policy. This ensures that children learn how to behave in a positive way that protects their self-esteem.

Children with learning difficulties or physical disabilities are welcomed. The childminder is clear about the need to work in partnership with parents to address concerns and help children progress towards their goals. All children benefit from the regular flow of information between the childminder and parents as their welfare and safety is regularly discussed. Parents indicate that they are extremely happy with the care their children receive. The childminder ensures she has all relevant parental consents and shares information with the parents about the child's

day. She also provides opportunities for parents to express their feelings about the provision. This enables any concerns or changes to be promptly attended to. For example, parents inform the childminder if their child is to be collected by another relative or friend. This ensures that children are appropriately safeguarded as they enter into another adult's care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is well qualified and has a good understanding of the National Standards. There is a commitment to further training and the childminder regularly accesses relevant courses. This impacts positively on the standards of care as new ideas and techniques are incorporated. The effective organisation of time and space means that children enjoy being at the childminder's home. They embrace the freedom to engage in favourite activities and benefit from the constant supervision which enhances their play and safeguards them from harm.

The childminder ensures that children are always cared for by appropriately vetted individuals. She makes sure that children are never left unsupervised and her forward thinking approach means that children's care is effectively prioritised. For instance, should an emergency arise, the childminder has arrangements with two other registered childminders to provide temporary care.

The childminder's sound policies and procedures also work in practice to protect children from harm. All documentation is of a good standard and all records are available for inspection. The childminder's daily register shows children's times of arrival and departure. These indicate that ratios are consistently maintained which ensures children receive high levels of supervision. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to develop knowledge of the new national guidance for child protection and ensure the fence post in the outside area is made safe or inaccessible to children. The childminder has collated details of the new Local Safeguarding Children Board and has an understanding of the procedures to follow should there be any child protection concerns. This ensures that any potential issues can be promptly and efficiently followed up. The childminder has also replaced the fencing in the outside area. As a result, children can play safely in the garden.

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 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):

- ensure that signatures are obtained from parents or carers to acknowledge when medication has been administered.

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