

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 255739
Inspection date 01 November 2007
Inspector Elaine Margaret Hayward

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 was registered in 1997. She lives with an adult child in Halesowen. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding with access to an upstairs bedroom for sleeping babies and the family bathroom. 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 six children under five years and two children over five years who all attend part-time. She takes and collects children to and from nearby schools and nurseries. The childminder makes use of local facilities such as toddler groups, parks, open spaces, ball parks and shops. The family have five pet rabbits.

The childminder holds appropriate early years qualifications and is a member of both the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and the local childminding support group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health and well-being is extremely well promoted. They benefit from a clean and homely environment where they learn about the importance of good personal hygiene. There are very well-planned daily routines in place and children's independence is encouraged in the bathroom, with aids such as steps in place for their use. Children are clearly aware about how to avoid the spreading of germs as they wash their hands after toileting and before eating, drying them with paper towels and disposing of the towels in the frequently emptied bin. Children's welfare is further effectively promoted through clear exclusion periods for children who have infections. These guidelines are shared with parents. The childminder acts in the children's best interests if they are ill, by comforting the children and contacting parents. She has very clear procedures to ensure that any accidents, or medication needs are fully recorded and shared with parents.

Children develop excellent awareness of how to keep healthy as they benefit from being active. They enjoy the fresh air each day, with walks and a wide variety of outdoor play activities in the garden, making full use of nearby parks, gardens and open fields where they can play games, or learn to appreciate nature around them. They can let off steam indoors in inclement weather as they enjoy ball parks and other local indoor facilities.

Children enjoy a wide range of healthy and nutritious meals which are freshly cooked and include a good variety of vegetables and fruit. Much of the produce is organic. Children and parents are involved in menu choices. Children learn about healthy eating in fun ways. They are encouraged to try different foods, such as through 'tasting sessions'. Children's faces clearly depict their views! They love to grow their own strawberries, herbs, tomatoes and 'Silly Spaghetti'. They love to go out to farms to 'pick your own'. Children's understanding and independence is further encouraged with young children encouraged to feed themselves independently using a wide range of appropriate cutlery and crockery. Children love to shop with the childminder to choose and purchase their own individual cups. They know it is important to drink regularly.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy a really lovely, warm, welcoming and safe environment which is totally child-centred. Walls are covered with photographs of the children's activities which record visits to numerous recently visited venues. Children know their creative achievements are valued as they see them on display, and notice boards show the 'helper of the week' and the 'star of the day'.

Children's safety is given very high priority. Strict attention is given to fully recorded risk assessments which are regularly reviewed, where risks are clearly identified and minimised. Ongoing vigilance enables children to move around safely, freely and independently. There are strategically placed gates and closed doors to prevent access as required, and clear collection routines. There are thorough contingency plans in case of emergency. Children learn about safety through everyday situations, clear routines and gentle reminders. They learn to walk along the inside of the pavement and how to cross the road safely. They know why it is important to be strapped into their car seats which are taken for checks by the childminder to ensure

correct fitting. Children choose from an extensive range of stimulating toys and resources which are safe and age-appropriate.

Children are very well protected by a childminder with very clear and robust understanding in all areas of child protection. She has attended training, know the indicators of abuse, and the appropriate actions to take. She has professional reference guides and telephone numbers to hand should they be required, sharing her guidelines with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from the childminder's vast experience and enthusiasm. They have an absolutely lovely time with the childminder who encourages them to learn and develop through a very wide variety of carefully planned, different experiences which are stimulating, interesting and fun, developing their curiosity, creativity and imagination. Children can be seen totally absorbed in creating a masterpiece, carefully scrunching tissue paper, concentrating hard to ensure it sticks. They love trips out to the botanical gardens, garden centres, zoos and farms, despite 'the smells'! They enjoy picking fruit and vegetables on a farm, helping choose new toys in shops, and making 'Norman' the scarecrow who sits in the garden. They love to help with 'household' routines, taking pride in washing their toys to keep them clean and bright.

The childminder knows each child extremely well. She knows children's likes, dislikes and routines, and her days allow for spontaneity and flexibility to accommodate individual children's needs and interests. She knows the children who love to be creative and understands the needs of children who attend after a morning at nursery or a day at school. Children's development and self-esteem are significantly enhanced by the quality of the interactions with the childminder.

Young children and babies benefit from the childminder's good knowledge and understanding of their needs. She plans activities in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and ensures there is a good mix of active and quiet times, acknowledging children's individual sleep routines. Children relish their time with the childminder, with smiles and cuddles all round.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are treated with equal concern and are highly valued and respected as individuals. The childminder goes to great lengths to ensure that the individual needs of all the children in her care are met, such as by ensuring left-handed children have suitable scissors. She talks to children and involves them in things to help them become aware of themselves as part of a family group and provides a wide range of resources that help children consider and recognise the diversity of the wider community. Children see images displayed around the walls of people from around the world. They talk about, examine and play with puzzles, small toys and dolls, and dress up in costumes, all promoting their understanding of different cultures, diversity and disabilities. Children with English as an additional language see their culture and language valued as children enjoy books written in different languages. They try foods from around the world and celebrate festivals, becoming very involved in celebrating Halloween and Diwali for example. Children learn about their neighbourhood as they make use of local facilities. They fill recycling boxes and meet the 'bin men'. They are very aware of litter they see when out.

Children are confident, have good self-esteem and make close relationships with the childminder and each other. There is praise and gentle teasing. Children's behaviour is excellent due to the clear boundaries and guidelines set by the childminder which are agreed with children and parents. Children care for each other and happily share as they follow the example of the childminder. Children can be seen helping each other as they complete jigsaw puzzles together. They listen to what each other has to say. Older children can be seen patiently playing with young babies. Smiles can be seen in abundance as they relate to each other. Children benefit from the childminder's sensitivity and understanding of disabilities.

A close, informal relationship with parents contributes to children's well-being. The childminder obtains excellent information about children before they start. In return, parents receive full written information about the childminder's aims and practices through copies of her policies and procedures. Parents share in what their children have been doing and are kept informed through full daily discussions. The childminder also provides full, informative individual diaries for parents of young children. She gives parents annual 'reports', linking in, where appropriate, with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Parents' views are further respected and acknowledged through frequent questionnaires, asking how she can improve her care and practice and how she can help parents further. The excellent partnership and exchanges of information ensure continuity between home and setting, which enables children to settle extremely well, and to feel totally at home and at ease.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is extremely well supported by the way the childminder organises her home, time and daily routine. Children benefit from the care of a childminder who is highly motivated and committed to the children in her care. She ensures that the needs and welfare of the children is her first priority. As a result, children feel fully at home and at ease within the child-friendly environment.

The childminder demonstrates excellent awareness of requirements and responsibilities. She maintains comprehensive written policies and procedures. These are regularly reviewed and updated, and are shared with parents. Children benefit from her commitment to improving her knowledge and practice by gaining qualifications and accessing ongoing training. She liaises with other childminders to discuss issues and to provide a support system. The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure that children are familiar with the emergency evacuation plan. The childminder now ensures that practises are held each month in order to safeguard the children. She records full details including details of the children present. As a result, children learn about fire safety and their safety has improved.

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