

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	257239
Inspection date	13 February 2008
Inspector	Esther Gray
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 1999. She lives with her husband and one child aged 10 in Stourbridge, West Midlands. The whole of the 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 three children under eight years. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local children's centre group. The family have no pets. She is a member of the National Childminders Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy some opportunities to experience physical activity outdoors in the fresh air. There are regular trips to the local park where children can enjoy swings, slide, playing football and feeding the ducks. The childminder has engaged with parents in supporting children's independence skills as they get used to having their meals from a lunch box, which is prepared

by parents. They are well supported as they learn to open items in the box independently and choose the healthy options from the box. They have some opportunities to learn about healthy eating in discussion with the childminder at snack and lunch times. Children have become 'fruit freaks' as they discover the benefits of tasting a variety of fruit, however, there is a heavy reliance on parents supplying healthy choices in the food provided and no planned activities which promote healthy eating. Although children enjoy some cookery activities, these activities do not focus on the nutritional content of the ingredients. Children have access to their drink at all times which prevents them becoming dehydrated. As a result, children are appropriately nourished. They have some opportunities to learn about healthy eating and benefit from fresh air and exercise.

Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures taken when children are injured or ill so that health needs are met. Sufficient information is gathered to ensure details about any allergies or specific medical needs are met. Parents are informed of the importance of not bringing children who are infectious or ill to the setting to prevent cross-infection. They are suitable recording systems to inform parents of any illness or injury and suitable procedures for recording the administration of medicines. Accidents and pre-existing injuries are recorded, however, the childminder has not obtained written permission to obtain emergency medical treatment for children. Consequently, although the childminder has undertaken training in paediatric first aid, their health and well-being is not fully safeguarded.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well protected from harm because the childminder has a good understanding of her role in child protection. She is able to put appropriate procedures into practice. She has undertaken child protection training and her willingness to take up further training programmes offered, allows her to keep up-to-date with current procedures outlined by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Children are secure and well supervised. They are not allowed to answer the door or leave the premises unescorted. Suitable door locks prevent unauthorised entry.

The provider ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents and minimise identified risks to children. The childminder is very safety conscious and she checks the home before children arrive. Safety equipment is effectively used and includes a fixed fire guard and smoke detectors. Children learn about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about fire safety, rehearsing the emergency evacuation procedure regularly with the provider. They learn about ignition sources and take an active role in considering where a fire might start and how they can safely get out of the house. Younger children are able to investigate and explore their surroundings safely. They use a good range of equipment that is suitable and safe. As a result, they are well protected from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident, independent and are developing their self-esteem. Routines revolve around the children's needs. For example, time is allowed for rest, sleep, intimate care needs or times for meals and visits to pre-schools, nurseries or school. Children are encouraged in their conversation and language development and develop their social skills. The childminder takes great care to ensure that activities which are provided for older children do not put

younger children at risk and that each group of children can gain access to a variety of interesting activities during their stay. As a result, children are happy and settled in their play and are gaining in self-confidence.

Children are provided with a good range of activities and play opportunities that help children achieve. The childminder provides enough materials for all the children and allows them to find, use and return materials independently. They can mix resources to create their own imaginative play. She encourages different types of play which includes dressing up, painting or drawing and other creative play. However, although the childminder gains useful information from parents and carers about children's interests she has not used this information to plan a range of purposeful activities to promote their development and learning further. Play is child-initiated and spontaneous. Consequently, children's progress, learning and development is not effectively promoted.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Good arrangements are made to ensure all children are included. Although some activities are provided to help children learn about a diverse society through their play, they are spontaneous opportunities, which arise out of everyday situations and are not planned. Children may follow on from topics being covered at school, such as Chinese New Year. The childminder takes up the discussion with children when talking about different cultures or religions. For example, they discuss how different cultures and religions are represented in the school curriculum. There are natural opportunities in the calendar or daily routine which allow the childminder to talk about similarities and differences in food choices made by different cultural groups. For example, they discuss how Chinese people manage chopsticks with rice. All children are supported well to access all areas of the provision and this includes taking good account of their age and ability. All children are valued as individuals which actively promotes inclusion.

Children are becoming aware of their own needs and respect the needs of others. The childminder praises good behaviour and gives good explanations to children to correct unacceptable behaviour. She has undertaken behaviour management training to support her in developing good strategies to promote good social skills with children. These strategies are agreed with parents and there is good verbal communication with parents at the end of every day to discuss how each day has been enjoyed by children. The childminder gives an account to parents, for instance, of how much food younger children eat or how children have been whilst in her care. However, there is no information available to show parents what type of activities they can expect their children to be engaged in or outings they may make. There is no information to support parents as to what is best practice in supplying food for the lunch box or other materials children may need, or information about children's achievements, although some art work is sent home. Nevertheless, children can be confident as they see childminder, parents and carers working together to provide consistent messages to children about expectations of behaviour and care agreements.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Some policies and procedures have been developed and regularly updated to protect children and are shared with parents. Records are available and retained for inspection. They are kept confidential. Children are protected from harm as the childminder is aware of the importance

of ensuring that all unvetted visitors are suitable and are not left unattended with children in the setting or whilst on outings. She discourages visits from family and friends, who have not been checked, from visiting whilst she is caring for children. Children are warned about speaking to strangers when they are out and about. Consequently, children are suitably safeguarded.

Children are well cared for in a setting where the childminder is committed to continue to update her skills and knowledge by attending training, having a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. She has identified courses she would like to attend to further her knowledge of child care. Good use is made of the local facilities. The childminder and children meet other local childminders and children in the area which benefits children as they develop social skills and enjoy group activities. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop knowledge and understanding of child protection issues, develop resources reflecting positive images of disability and keep a written record, signed by parents, of all medicines given to children.

Since the last inspection the childminder has undertaken training in child protection and is due to attend further training shortly. She has developed a recording system to ensure all prescribed medicines, which are administered to children, are appropriately recorded and parents supply written permission to administer the medicine. They acknowledge the entry on the record. As a result, children's health and well-being is safeguarded.

The childminder has obtained some resources to support her in promoting a positive image to children of similarities and differences in the people of the community. This includes those with disability and those of other cultures, race or religion. She takes opportunities as they arise to talk to children about people of the wider community and develops their appreciation of diversity, consideration and respect for others.

Complaints since the last inspection

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.

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 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 parental permission is requested, at the time of the placement, to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future
- extend the range of planned activities and experiences for children, appropriate for their stages of development and based on their individual needs
- improve information to parents about children's experiences and achievements.

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