

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY345084
Inspection date	31 May 2007
Inspector	Ann Winifred Harrison
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 2006. She lives with her children aged six and four in Stafford, Staffordshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children and is currently minding three children under five years and three children over five years on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a clean, well-organised home. They learn the importance of hygiene through daily routines and discussions with the childminder. They wash their hands before eating and after toileting and they know that germs may make them poorly. The effective documentation supports children's health needs. For example, medication and accident records.

However, the childminder has not obtained written permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for some children, which compromises their welfare. The sick child policy encourages parents to care for their child at home if they have an infectious illness and the childminder is aware of her responsibilities to report any communicable diseases. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and keeps herself up to date with current issues. The thorough cleaning routines ensure that children are protected from illness and infection.

Children have opportunities to learn about healthy eating through regular discussion with the childminder. She talks to them about the need for five portions of fruit and vegetables and they have 'five a day' table mats and stickers to promote their understanding of healthy eating. Their well-being is protected as the childminder adheres to any special dietary needs. Children enjoy a varied diet which includes, healthy sandwiches of cheese or ham and roast chicken and fresh vegetables. They make their own pizzas and try new fruit as they make fruit kebabs. The childminder works with parents, if they want to provide their own food, to ensure it is nutritious. They are well hydrated since the childminder offers them regular drinks throughout the day, and older children have drinks readily available.

Children enjoy fresh air and exercise. Each day they walk to and from school and they go on walks to the local shops. They visit the local park where they have opportunities to run, balance and climb on equipment to develop their physical skills. They have regular opportunities to enjoy outdoor play in the rear garden.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment and are closely supervised at all times. They can independently access a good range of stimulating toys and equipment which are well-maintained by the childminder. For example, construction, imaginative play equipment and art and craft materials. Effective organisation of resources enable children to move around freely, and access toys that are stored at their height so they can initiate their own play.

Children are protected against the dangers of fire since the childminder involves the children in regular emergency evacuation practises of the premises and maintains all her fire prevention equipment in good condition. For example, there is a smoke alarm on each floor of the premises and a fire blanket is accessible in the kitchen. She invites the fire brigade to visit the children who have opportunities to climb on a fire engine and use the fire hose. Children play securely as all entrance and exit doors are securely locked and the rear garden is fully enclosed. The childminder uses safety equipment, such as socket covers and safety gates to ensure children are not exposed to hazard or injury. She is constantly reviewing her practice to ensure children are kept safe. Children learn about safety issues such as crossing the road and staying safe when on outings.

The childminder has procedures in place to ensure that children are protected and well-cared for. She has an understanding of child protection procedures, such as signs and symptoms of abuse and appropriate responses, which help to keep children safe. The childminder has a comprehensive range of procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted including a policy on collection of children and procedures for taking children on outings.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children engage happily in meaningful play. They are using resources and equipment that are stimulating and fun to maintain their interest. They enjoy selecting activities, such as role play equipment, jigsaws, and books. The childminder constantly talks to the children during activities to promote their development and understanding. Children discover the natural world as they plant sunflower seeds and watch them grow and visit a local farm to see the animals. The childminder provides a good range and balance of activities for children of all ages, to enhance children's learning and development. She plans activities in advance around themes and topics such as 'All About Me' where children can bring items from home and talk about their likes and dislikes. This is enhanced further through the topic 'Looking After me' where children learn about healthy eating and the importance of cleaning their teeth.

Children are very settled at the childminder's house and with her family. They eagerly communicate to make their needs known and show pleasure and pride in their achievements. Children play happily together. They are able to develop their imagination and independence by selecting their own activities and initiating their own play. For example, playing shops and building with construction toys. The childminder is not currently caring for children under three years but is aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan and provide activities for babies and young children.

Children experience a positive warm relationship with the childminder, which increases their sense of trust and well-being. They are well supported by the childminder who is skilled at listening and talking to them. Children enjoy listening to stories and singing songs and rhymes. Their mathematical skills are developing as they are learning to count, weigh and measure as they make cakes and pizzas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children settle well in the childminder's home. They are valued and respected as individuals by the childminder. Their individual needs are met well as they follow their normal daily routines as discussed with parents. The childminder is aware of their likes, dislikes and any special needs. Children benefit from the effective working relationship the childminder has established with their parents. Verbal and written information about their welfare, activities and behaviour is exchanged on a daily basis.

Children play well together and are learning to show respect for others in the setting. Their behaviour is good in response to clear boundaries set by the childminder. Good use of praise and encouragement by the childminder helps build children's self-esteem and confidence and promotes good behaviour. Children are involved in making choices about their play and choosing resources. The childminder has a good understanding of equal opportunities and children learn about the wider world through regular outings and discussions about other cultures. The childminder provides a meaningful range of activities and resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and to help children understand differences and similarities, such as puppets, dolls and books. However, there are few resources that reflect gender roles, this limits children's awareness of equality.

Although the childminder is not currently caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities there are good arrangements in place to ensure they are fully supported and included

in all activities to enhance their development and progress. The childminder supports children who speak English as an additional language well.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's needs are met effectively through the good use of space and resources. Their care is enhanced by efficient and effective organisation. The childminder has a routine and prepares for each session with relevant age-appropriate resources. Free play, craft time, and outdoor play are included to ensure children have a good balance of educational and developmental experiences. Children are able to access resources and toys because the childminder has organised all toys and resources in children's reach.

All records and procedures are in place and are used well in practice. This promotes the welfare, care and learning of all children, according to the wishes of their parents. The childminder provides a good range of written policies and procedures which ensure parents are well informed about the service and their child's activities. This contributes to the continuity in the children's care.

Children benefit from the childminder attending regular training to ensure she is aware of current childcare practice and regulation requirements. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- obtain written parental permission to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment for all children
- develop further promotion of equality of opportunity regarding gender issues

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