

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	209785
Inspection date	14 May 2007
Inspector	Christine Holmes

Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1989. She lives with her three adult children in Tamworth, Staffordshire. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently caring for seven children on a part time basis.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association, she is accredited to provide nursery education and she holds an appropriate childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are supported very well to develop an understanding and interest in healthy eating. The childminder has introduced a sticker chart to the children and parents to encourage them to see if they are eating five fruit and vegetables each day. Children are eager to place their sticker on the fruit items they have just eaten in the 'fruit smoothies' they have made. They take part in activities such as cutting out pictures of healthy foods to stick on their paper plates. The childminder is always on hand to explain that foods such as fish help to make them strong. Children understand simple good hygiene practices because the childminder includes these in the daily routine. They very quickly become very independent in their personal care and know when they go to the toilet or when they have sticky hands after using the glue they need to wash their hands. This helps to minimise cross-infection and helps to develop children's independence. Children's good health is further promoted because the childminder implements very good hygiene practices when she changes nappies including using disposable gloves and aprons. She has devised and shared with parents and emergency policy which ensures appropriate action is taken in the event of children becoming ill or sustaining injury.

Daily routines and activities ensure children have lots of opportunities for fresh air and rigorous play. The large garden provides children with lots of space to run and play on push-along toys and play with balls and children take regular walks and trips to the local parks to play on the large equipment. This helps children to develop a positive attitude towards physical exercise and helps to develop their physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. The lounge has pictures relating the current topics and a range of toys which are set out each day by the childminder which encourages children to initiate their own play. Children move freely into the hall and kitchen where their work is displayed and from where they can easily access the toilet and the outdoor play area. There is a safe and suitable range of resources and play equipment to interest and stimulate children's play and learning. Children are involved in tidying up and caring for their toys and as a result they develop a sense of ownership and independence. The childminder has devised a health and safety policy which includes what action she would take in the event of a child becoming lost or uncollected. This helps to ensure children are safeguarded. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through exciting stimulating activities. During practice fire drills they wriggle like snakes along the floor which helps them understand what action they may need to take in the event of smoke being present in the house. A recent visit from the fire brigade was arranged by the childminder to further develop their interest and awareness of fire safety. Pictures show children enjoying the experience of sitting in the fire engine and trying on the fire fighter mask.

Children are cared for in a very secure environment. Their risk of accidental injury is minimised because the childminder provides a good level of supervision and completes a risk assessment

which has helped her to identify and minimise hazards. However, although the childminder takes a number of steps to minimise the potential risk of the greenhouse such as, teaching the children not to play around the area and always accompanying children in the area, this risk has not yet been fully minimised. The childminder has devised a clear policy and procedure to ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of abuse which she shares with parents. This helps to ensure children are safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and developing their confidence in the childminder's care because she is kind and affectionate. She spends her time at the children's level encouraging them and praising them for their efforts. She has cared for some children since they were babies which contribute towards the continuity of their care. This increases children's well-being and sense of trust. Children are able to progress well because the childminder uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework well and she has a good understanding of child development. She gives good emphasis to developing children's personal independence and choice and as a result, children initiate and develop their own play which is particularly good for supporting their learning. Their emerging communication skills are supported very well which enables them to express their needs and feelings. Imaginary play with a wide variety of resources keeps children purposefully occupied for an extended period, especially when the childminder play alongside them. Children enjoy lots of opportunities to play with other children which help to develop their social skills.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. As a result children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder uses effective teaching methods that help children to learn. She gets to know the children well and her interactions with the children are very positive. She spends her time talking and listening to them, asking them questions and encouraging them to express themselves, to demonstrate what they know and try new experiences. She is a good role model who effectively helps children to begin to understand the need to share, take turns and show consideration for others. She organises her space and resources generally well to give children the opportunity to become self-sufficient and initiate and choose activities for themselves and she provides children with a wide range of stimulating activities and experiences. This approach contributes to a harmonious environment where children are learning acceptable behaviour and developing their confidence and motivation to learn. However, the childminder's knowledge of the Foundation Stage is not fully secure. As a result, at times she does not fully utilise all learning opportunities for children. This does not ensure they are making as much progress they could in areas such as communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. The childminder seeks information from parents about their child's development when they start receiving nursery education with her which helps to ascertain an accurate starting point for assessing children's development but she has not yet developed a effective system to fully monitor children progress along the stepping stones. Therefore she is presently unable to fully identify children's next learning

steps in all the six learning areas. This limits the support she is able to provide for children's learning.

Children are interested and keen to engage in play and learning and they focus well on activities for a suitable period of time. For instance, children eagerly take part in imaginative play with each other and the childminder acting as a shopkeeper and shoppers. They follow instructions well to make a 'fruit smoothie' and then sit and concentrate to cut pictures and stick them with glue. Children clearly enjoy their growing independence. They confidently go into the kitchen to find themselves a pencil and they talk about what they are going to do after they have finished their glueing. This developing confidence and enthusiasm helps to support children's progress in all other areas of learning. Children spend a lot of their time talking. They are encouraged to think and answer questions and learn new words such as 'Kiwi' which is effectively supporting their language development. They are beginning to develop a keen interest in books and enjoy predicting the story line. They are beginning to recognise their name in print but their understanding of the sound letters make and that print carries meaning is not promoted within all activities such as using a recipe book to follow instructions or writing for a purpose whilst playing shopping. Children take part in a suitable range of activities to increase their concepts of pattern, measure and shape. They are beginning to use number in their vocabulary. For example, they ask for two straws for their drink. They see numerals on resources such as the 'five a day' poster and number line and calendar in the kitchen and they are able to match correct the numeral for numbers one, two and three. However this interest is not fully fostered in the children's play or routines. Children's emerging interest and understanding of their world is supported well by the childminder. She fosters their interest in growing and living things through projects such as growing and caring for plants and through 'bug hunts' and visits to places such as the zoo. Children are encouraged to begin to develop a sense of time as they cross off each day on the calendar and they learn how to operate simple equipment such as the compact disc player. They have lots of opportunities to talk about significant personal events as they share their experiences away from the childminder's by demonstrating their 'ballet steps' and their 'swimming strokes' across the lounge floor. Children use small tools such as scissors, children's knives and glue-spreaders. They are competent manipulators of different tools and equipment and show good co-ordination. Their creativity is supported well as they explore a range of different materials and textures in their play and in art and craft activities and they show great enjoyment singing and moving to their favourite music and songs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Their efforts, views and involvement are encouraged, valued and respected. For example, when visitors arrive they are introduced to the children and the childminder explains why the visitor has come and what the visitor will be doing. Children receive continual reassurance, praise and encouragement to support their increasing understanding of acceptable behaviour. Their work and photographs of them are displayed which contributes to their sense of belonging. Resources such as books prepare children for new experiences such as meeting the Ofsted inspector. Stories, posters, small world resources and activities are used very well to develop a positive awareness of

diversity. The childminder provides an inclusive service and presently supports children with learning difficulties very well.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early years education is satisfactory. Parents are introduced to the Foundation Stage when their child first receives funding through completing a questionnaire about their child's development in the six areas of learning. They receive daily information about their child's activities and progress which helps them to become involved in their child's learning. The childminder is much more active in keeping parents informed about how her setting runs and how their children are cared for in line with the National Standards. She has compiled a comprehensive portfolio for parents which she keeps undated with any new regulations such as the complaints policy. Written statements from parents demonstrate parents are happy with the care their children receive. They feel she provides lots of activities which help their child's development and they report that their children often ask to go to the childminders when they are not attending. Parents of very young children particularly like the daily diary which the childminder completes. Parents find the childminder very easy to talk to and very supportive. This significantly contributes to enhancing children's care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall children's needs are met. The childminder has much experience of caring for children and has cared for a number of children since they were babies. She holds a recognised early years qualifications and she has continued to update her knowledge of child care issues, including becoming accredited to deliver early years education and a 'support childminder' to newly registered childminders. She continually evaluates her provision and she is keen to make continual improvements. As a result children receive good quality childcare and a sound nursery education.

The childminder organises her space and time well. Children benefit from being able to move freely around the ground floor of the premises which is helping them to develop their independence. She spends her time interacting with the children and providing them with a wide range of activities which include planned trips and visits to local groups. This helps to support children's learning.

Comprehensive records, policies and procedures are in place, shared with parents and implemented well to ensure the welfare, care and learning of children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to increase her knowledge of child protection procedures. She has attended an advance child protection training event and collected written reference materials which has greatly improved her knowledge. This has contributed to ensuring children's welfare is safeguarded.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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.

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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):

- take further steps to reduce the hazard of the greenhouse.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop a fully secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use this to develop planning and assessment systems to ensure children's next learning steps are identified.

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