

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 255752 |
| Inspection date | 07 June 2007 |
| Inspector | Emma Neads |
| 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 has been registered since 1986. She lives with her husband in Dudley.

The whole of the ground floor is used for minding including the toilet facilities. There is a fully enclosed rear garden laid out to lawn, patio, bark-chipped play area and decking.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding six children. The childminder drives to the local schools to take and collect children. The family has two dogs and two rabbits.

The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group and is an active member of the Dudley Childminders Support Group responsible for the administration of her equipment library.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is extremely well promoted. All areas for promoting health and hygiene are reinforced through effective daily routines, such as washing hands after playing outside. The childminder's own actions provide a positive example. Younger children wash their hands alongside the childminder after nappy changing which encourages familiarity with routines from an early age.

The premises and equipment are cleaned systematically, which ensures children are highly protected from dirt and animal hair. Children are fully protected from cross-infection as the childminder ensures children have personal flannels and towels, cups and cutlery.

The childminder ensures that the dogs are safe to be in the proximity of children, and do not pose a health risk. They are kept separate from the children, however, they do have time to play with them in the presence of the childminder. Children are aware of the need to wash their hands after being in contact with the animals and put this into practice consistently. The same rules apply to handling the rabbits in the garden.

Meals are provided by parents. These are effectively labelled and stored at suitable temperatures, preventing foods from becoming contaminated. The childminder provides healthy snacks, for example, fruit and bread sticks. Children's understanding of eating healthy foods is highly accomplished because they are introduced to new tastes, such as exotic fruits which they help to prepare with the childminder. The childminder discusses with the children which foods help them to keep healthy. Children have opportunities to grow their own vegetables outside, for example, runner beans, which reinforces their understanding of healthy eating. When ready, the children help to prepare, cook and eat them.

The childminder is meticulous in ensuring children drink regularly and fresh drinking water is available all day. Children learn about healthy lifestyles, for example, if they run around in the park, they will be fit and strong. Children's physical development is unreservedly promoted. Children have extensive access to a variety of outdoor equipment. Children are highly active both in the outdoor garden and in the local park which is two minutes' walk away.

Arrangements are in place to care for children who are ill. In these circumstances, the childminder ensures they are comfortable and cared for sensitively while waiting to be collected by parents. The childminder is trained in first aid and has comprehensive permissions and records in place regarding the administration of medication to children. Accurate records are kept of all accidents and are shared with parents.

Children under three benefit from sensitivity to their routine and the childminder ensures that young children follow their own routines when supporting their individual feeding, rest and sleep needs. This enables them to develop securely and confidently in a nurturing environment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder is highly committed to ensuring children are safe in her care. The premises are very safe and secure. Regular and concise risk assessments are carried out on resources and fixtures and fittings. The childminder records all relevant information in a risk assessment book.

The outdoor area is secure and well maintained. The dogs have their own separate area indoors and out. The childminder's attention to safety issues ensures children are protected from harm at all times and can play safely.

Indoor and outdoor space is organised creatively and the children remain supervised at all times. This ensures the environment is child-friendly and enables children to explore and take risks. Children learn to take their first steps up the slide whilst being supported by the childminder.

The risk of accidents to children is minimised as the childminder ensures all safety equipment is in place. Older children understand how to keep themselves safe, for example, staying out of the kitchen when the cooker is on. The childminder talks to children about keeping themselves safe and they in turn act as a 'special helper' making sure the younger children remain safe when playing outside.

Children are very well protected when on outings or trips. Older children have developed a plan of action if something were to happen to the childminder. The childminder always keeps her mobile telephone in her pocket. Children know how to use it and have a safe list of people to contact should the need arise. The childminder also explains how children can contact the relevant authorities. This procedure is well organised thus promoting children's safety.

Children learn to cook in the kitchen with the childminder. Regular shopping trips give children opportunities to buy ingredients and choose what they want to make. Children are made aware of possible hazards, such as knives, which 'we don't touch'. In the event of a fire, the childminder has an emergency escape plan. This is practised monthly and the older children support the childminder in helping the younger children outside. Children know who to contact and how in case of an emergency.

The childminder has a substantial awareness of security. She ensures children cannot leave the premises unsupervised and no adults can gain unauthorised access. The garden is fully secure and enclosed, which ensures children can play freely and securely.

Children are extremely well safeguarded because the childminder has a comprehensive understanding of her role in child protection. She has a particularly thorough knowledge of the indicators of possible abuse. She has attended child protection training and is competent in her duties, should she have concerns about the safety of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The children are at the centre of everything that is planned for them. Children are eager to attend and relish their time at the setting. Younger children seek comfort when they are upset or need something, for example, a drink. The childminder offers them warmth and affection and talks to them in a gentle voice.

Children play a dynamic part in the setting. They are animated and enthusiastic as they make choices about their activity and care. The children work together, socialising and chatting as they paint their toy shed outside, discussing colour and design schemes.

Children are engrossed in a wide range of good quality purposeful and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities. These provide high levels of challenge to their age and stage of development. Themed weeks provide opportunities for all children to dress up. As 'cowboys and Indians', the older children design a puppet show using junk modelling

materials. They are supported by the childminder to entertain the younger children by making up stories and acting them out. This has a positive impact on children's confidence, independence and their self-esteem.

Children flourish as they are given opportunities to mix with other children outside the childminder's home. Twice a week, they spend time at the local playgroup. They make friends and talk about their latest art project with the childminder. Children use their imagination, ask questions and learn about the world around them through exciting activities. For example, they list all the animals they see during a zoo trip then later use a big map of the world to identify where they come from. Children remain motivated and inquisitive because the childminder plans inspiring activities and outings.

The childminder puts the children first and her dedication for the children's well-being and happiness allows them to feel confident in asking for what they want and talking to her about their worries. Children are listened to and the childminder values what they say. She talks to them about what they are doing and has high expectations of what they can achieve. Children have their own 'artists' wall' where they can display their work and put photographs of their achievements. Children feel proud of their work as they eagerly show it off and talk about past activities.

The childminder becomes absorbed when playing with the children. The children are responsive and stimulated. Younger children are enabled to make positive relationships and develop their individual confidence and self-awareness. The childminder encourages them to try new activities in a safe and supportive environment, for example, babies and toddlers crawl and walk near her within reach.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder ensures children's individual needs are met by requesting a high level of relevant information from the parents. She finds out about family customs and beliefs, dietary requirements, dress code, hair and skin care. This information is accurately recorded and updated annually.

Children are treated with equal concern and productive activities are provided that help children appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences. Play materials reflect diversity such as books and puzzles which show positive images of boys and girls and men and women from a variety of cultural backgrounds and with varying needs.

Children feel a sense of belonging. Photographs and videos are taken of them during play and when involved in special art projects. These are shared with the parents and the children together. Children are enthusiastic when talking to their parents about their activities and how much fun they are having.

Children's behaviour is exceptional because the childminder uses highly effective and age-appropriate behaviour management strategies. She establishes clear and realistic boundaries and children know what is expected of them. Good behaviour is encouraged because the childminder sets a good example and readily praises good behaviour.

Currently the childminder does not care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, she has a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the care involved. She is

willing to undertake any training necessary and would be proactive in ensuring that appropriate action is taken to offer appropriate care.

The childminder values her partnership with parents and remains professional, yet warm in her approach. Exchanging information with parents is achieved by regular discussions and by sharing records kept of daily routines. Parents agree to their children's achievements being captured on video and enjoy their children's success. Personal information on children and their families is kept securely, ensuring privacy and confidentiality.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. Policies and procedures are individual to the childminder. They are robust and fully support the expert practice of the childminder who is knowledgeable and highly skilled. Children are consistently given utmost priority, are well protected and their well-being is promoted.

The children feel at home and are secure in the exceptionally well organised environment. The organisation of the home provides children with excellent opportunities to access an extensive range of equipment easily and safely.

Children can confidently select resources for themselves, which significantly fosters independence and decision-making skills. The childminder is fully aware of the purpose of her role. She makes excellent use of her time and attends relevant courses to ensure children are cared for in a high quality environment where they feel safe and secure. A portfolio is kept to share with parents displaying all training and qualification certificates. Effective use is made of materials such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework to prepare activities and experiences to meet the growing needs of the younger children.

Children's development is monitored as the childminder engages with the children and records what they can and can't do. She uses this information to ensure children are challenged with new experiences and activities.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

During the last inspection, the childminder was asked to improve confidentiality in her records. When recording accidents, the childminder no longer identifies children's names if the injury has been caused by another child. This ensures children remain anonymous and confidentiality is maintained.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since their 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