

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260168
Inspection date	15 August 2007
Inspector	Josephine Mary Hammick
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 has been registered since 2001 and lives with her husband and three children aged 13, eight and five years in Kingswinford, West Midlands. The whole of the ground floor of the house is used for childminding with a secure garden for outside play. The childminder walks and uses her car to take and collect children from several local schools and groups. The childminder is registered for a maximum of five children at any one time and currently has 16 children on roll who attend on a part-time and full-time basis.

The family have one cat, a rabbit and three goldfish. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities 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 a warm and welcoming home. They generally learn about the importance of good hygiene and personal care through the daily routine and have a developing understanding of why they must wash their hands before meals, after using the toilet or playing

outside. However, hand washing before eating food is not consistent, therefore children's health is compromised. Domestic hygiene routines are vigilant. For example, the childminder limits the risk of cross-infection by wiping surfaces with antibacterial solution using disposable wipes and children have their own hand towels which are laundered daily. Documentation is well maintained regarding the administration of medication and recording of accidents. A well stocked first aid box is available to ensure children's well-being is safeguarded in the event of an accident.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. They make good use of the enclosed garden and have a range of resources to help them improve and develop new physical skills, for example, having fun on the slide. They benefit from regular walks and visits to the play area and farm park where they further extend their physical skills by playing on large equipment suitable for their age and stage of development. The children enjoy being in the fresh air and being able to stretch, run and let off steam.

Children benefit from the childminder providing nutritious and healthy food and drink. Meals provided are low in sugar, salt and fat. They are freshly prepared using fresh fruit, vegetables, pasta or rice, and are inviting to eat. Children enjoy preparing some of the meals themselves, for example, pizzas or sandwiches, which helps them to develop an understanding of healthy lifestyles and balanced diets. The childminder provides cereals for breakfast, snacks mid-morning and afternoon and a light cooked lunch at midday. Children can access drinks freely from the prepared jug of water, juice and beakers that are available at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a warm and friendly environment. The home is secure and provides the children with sufficient space to play, rest and eat. Children are generally safe within their environment because potential risks have been identified and appropriate safety measures put in place, including stair gates and socket covers. The secure garden is mostly safe and suitable for children to use. However, some areas are unfinished and uneven and pose a risk to children's safety.

The children have access to an extensive and suitable range of toys and equipment. They are interested in and stimulated by what is available to them. The toys and resources are easily accessed because they are attractively stored in low-level crates, cupboards and on shelving. Children benefit from access to a wide range of toys and resources promoting positive images of race, culture, gender and disability. All toys are in good condition and they are kept clean and hygienic for the children to use. The children are learning to keep themselves safe through everyday activities and gentle reminders from the childminder, for example, not to run or push inside the house.

Children are well protected because the childminder has a clear understanding of child protection procedures gained through updating her knowledge and skills through training. She is fully aware of her role and responsibility to protect children in her care. Parents are made aware of these procedures so that they know the action she will take if she has any concerns about their children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are provided with a wide range of activities and resources that are age-appropriate and stimulate all areas of development. They have fun and are challenged by the activities available to them. The children are happy, settled and comfortable in their environment and confidently seek the support of the childminder for comfort and reassurance. They benefit from the childminder's caring approach to their care and her interaction and involvement in activities. For example, the children enjoy setting up a road and rail set. The childminder kneels on the floor with them and encourages them to think and problem solve to enable them to complete linking up the track successfully. The childminder asks questions, uses her tone of voice to raise curiosity without taking over, and praises the children in order to promote learning and raise self-esteem. At other times, children enjoy taking part in domestic routines, for example, they like to stand at the sink and wash up a few bowls, plates and cups. They also enjoy tidying away their toys and equipment. They are very proud when the childminder thanks and congratulates them on a job well done.

Children are well supported in their play which allows them to take part in games and activities at their own level of development. Their physical and emotional needs are recognised and responded to immediately; for example, the childminder knows their routines well, notices when they are getting tired, organises activities around their needs and settles them down to rest when they are tired and becoming irritable. As a result children develop close relationships and a sense of trust.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and are happy and settled in the childminder's care. The children's needs are well met because the childminder has a clear understanding of the care that they require. The childminder seeks additional advice and support in order to meet the requirements of children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Children's access to opportunities to gain a positive view of diversity, and to increase their understanding of other cultures, is good. The childminder is active in seeking out resources and activities to promote inclusive play and knowledge of the wider world in her home and in the community.

The children are well behaved and play well together. A sensitive and consistent approach to behaviour management ensures children know what is expected of them, whilst praise and constant support give them confidence to try new things and help to develop self-esteem.

The parents and the childminder have formed good working relationships. Daily exchanges of information, verbally and by written detailed diaries, ensure that parents are kept well informed about their child's progress, routine and the service provided. However, written permission to take children's photographs has not been obtained from parents. Therefore their welfare is compromised. Children are otherwise cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children benefit from being cared for in a well-organised environment. They are able to move freely and choose toys and activities from the wide range available to them. The children have good access to their playthings which are stored attractively for easy access. The home

is well equipped and child-friendly, while the daily routine is flexible to meet the individual needs of the children.

Children benefit from the childminder extending and updating her knowledge by accessing workshops and training on a regular basis. Most of the required documentation which contributes to the children's health, safety and well-being is in place. Records are well maintained, effectively organised and carefully stored.

Overall, 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: develop her knowledge and understanding of child protection issues; ensure children are safe when accessing upstairs facilities; ensure that all records are seen and signed by parents or carers; ensure that records of attendance are clear, accurate and up to date; and to improve the level of toys and equipment to reflect positive images of diversity. Since then the childminder has accessed child protection training in order to further develop and update her knowledge and skills; moved house so that the children no longer have to access upstairs facilities; ensures that all accident records are seen and signed for by the parents or carers; ensures that accurate records are kept of children's attendance including arrival and departure times; has acquired extensive resources of high quality to reflect positive images of race, culture and disability. Children's welfare is safeguarded now that these systems are in place, together with their ongoing awareness of diversity and the wider world around them.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider to take actions 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):

- carry out an extensive risk assessment to ensure outdoor play space is made safe for minded children at all times
- ensure written permission is sought from parents before taking photographs of children

- ensure that hygiene routines are consistently followed by children. This refers to washing hands before food.

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