

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	209381
Inspection date	13 September 2007
Inspector	Jennie Lenton
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 1998. She lives with her two children, aged 13 and 14 years in Leek, Staffordshire. All rooms on the ground and first floor are used for childminding. The attic room is not used. There is a fully enclosed garden available at the front of the house for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years of age. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are warmly welcomed. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and nurseries.

The childminder is qualified to Level 3 CACHE. She is also a qualified teacher and a home educator to her own children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well protected from cross-infection as the childminder has effective procedures in place. Good standards of hygiene and cleanliness are maintained throughout the home. Children access toys and equipment that are clean and in a good state of repair. They learn about how to keep themselves healthy as they follow well established routines. For example, they use warm water and soap to wash their hands effectively after visiting the toilet and before meals. There is a clear exclusion policy for sick children and any child who becomes ill at the setting is appropriately cared for and monitored while they wait for a parent to collect them from the premises. This ensures that the good health of all children is maintained.

The childminder's knowledge and good practice means that children are appropriately cared for should they have an accident or if medication is required. The childminder accurately records any accidents and shares this information with parents so that children receive consistent care. Similarly, if medicine is administered, the childminder collates information regarding the dosages given and ensures that parents sign to acknowledge the care provided. However, written permission to give medicine is not gained prior to administration. This heightens the potential for children to be incorrectly medicated.

Dietary needs are met as the childminder works with parents to meet each child's individual requirements. Children are well nourished as they are provided with healthy snacks such as fruit, rice cakes or breadsticks. Meals are also balanced and nutritious. Children benefit from freshly prepared food. Most food is organic and much of it is grown by the childminder in her allotment. Children are encouraged to try new foods and to be involved in the selection and preparation of meals. For example, they help to collect vegetables from the allotment and pick plums from the fruit trees. This encourages them to have an active interest in healthy eating and where food comes from.

Children also have good opportunities to participate in challenging active play. The childminder promotes physical exercise through regular access to the spacious garden, where children can run and jump or play on a range of equipment. Visits are also made to local parks and indoor play centres. As a result, children develop a positive attitude towards exercise as they have fun engaging in the varied activities on offer.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel content and secure in the welcoming premises. The childminder provides a warm and relaxed environment, where children's safety is well promoted. The potential for accidental injury is effectively reduced through the use of appropriate safety equipment. For example, there is a full fireguard and a stair gate in place. The childminder also explains safety procedures to children to help them understand how to keep themselves safe. For instance, she talks to them about being careful in the kitchen, helping them develop an understanding of hazards. Similarly, children discuss how to play safely on popular equipment such as the large trampoline. As a result, they appreciate the need for rules and willingly follow instruction. Children are further safeguarded as they receive a high level of supervision at all times. The childminder is vigilant in ensuring any hazards are minimised as children rest or play. She provides a wide array of safe toys and equipment to enhance children's welfare and enjoyment.

Children are actively protected outside the home setting. The childminder encourages children to stay together and talks to them about road safety. She ensures that they are protected from harm by using appropriate restraints in the car, or when walking. Parental consent to transport children in a vehicle is usually gained at the start of a placement. However, this is not in place for all children. Where omissions occur, children's care is potentially not in agreement with parental wishes.

The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of child protection and is clear about her responsibilities. She has a comprehensive policy in place which is shared with parents. The childminder has all the correct contact details regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board. As a result, children are protected from future harm as she is able to promptly report any concerns to the appropriate agencies.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy and settled in the childminder's nurturing care. They have warm and comfortable relationships with the childminder and her adult children as they relax in the family atmosphere. As a result, children have a strong sense of belonging. The childminder is fully supportive in assisting every child to meet their full potential. Children are encouraged to direct their own play, enabling them to express themselves fully. The childminder expertly promotes their learning by asking questions which encourage them to explore their understanding. For instance, as children play with toy food she asks them what a real mushroom looks and feels like. Similarly, the childminder enhances play by providing detailed explanations to children's questions. When children ask about a toy bird the childminder tells them all about owls in an age-appropriate manner that they can understand. Children are captivated as they hear about how owls fly at night 'while you are asleep' and how they catch mice to eat. As a result, all children progress rapidly developing their communication skills, creativity and imagination.

The childminder successfully plans a fantastic range of interesting and varied activities for all ages. These include baking, craft activities, outings to parks, theatres and other attractions. Children benefit highly from the childminder's enthusiasm and commitment to providing stimulating and interactive experiences. For instance, older children are taken on a visit to a restaurant in Manchester's 'China Town' to take part in authentic Chinese New Year celebrations. Preferences are taken into account as children also regularly engage in free-play. They access resources independently, making choices and developing their self confidence. Children thoroughly enjoy engaging in imaginative play, dressing up to make deliveries from their café and putting together meals for their 'customers'. An excellent knowledge of how children develop ensures that outcomes for the younger age range are also fully promoted. Valuing and respecting every child's contribution, the childminder successfully ensures that every child flourishes under her care and attention.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are treated with equal concern as the childminder works well with parents to ensure children's needs are met. Individual records are sufficiently detailed to maintain the welfare of all. For example, records include detailed information to meet dietary requirements. The resources at the home also positively reflect individuality. The childminder uses dolls, books

and pictures which reflect different cultures, disabilities and ethnicities. She effectively encourages children to respect diversity by celebrating and exploring different festivals and traditions with them. This encourages children to develop a positive attitude towards the wider community and increases their understanding of the world.

The childminder communicates effectively with parents to ensure that children's care is generally delivered to agreed standards. Parents are able to look through the childminder's portfolio which includes details of her policies and practice. They are given opportunities to express their views about the provision through questionnaires. These illustrate that parents are extremely happy with the care their children receive, with many particularly pleased with the family environment and wholesome meals that are provided. Parents also communicate on a daily basis at arrival and collection times. This ensures that any changes or concerns relating to the children can be quickly responded to. Children benefit from the strong partnership with parents as information is regularly shared to safeguard them from harm. For instance, the childminder makes additional checks with parents if the children are to be collected by any other friend or relative.

Children's behaviour is effectively managed. They learn to play harmoniously as they respond to the childminder's consistent rules and boundaries. The good use of praise and encouragement ensures that children learn how to behave in a positive way which enhances their self-esteem. When dealing with unacceptable behaviour the childminder adapts her methods for younger children to ensure that they are developmentally appropriate. For example, using simple explanation or distraction. Children are also involved in the setting of rules. This encourages them to recognise the need for boundaries and to appreciate the consequences of their actions. As a result, children develop a mature respect for their surroundings and each other.

Children with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities are warmly welcomed as the childminder demonstrates a sound awareness of equal opportunities and special needs. She is committed to providing a quality service to all children. The childminder discusses children's care with the parents and works with them to identify strategies and techniques to support the child. She is positive and proactive, seeking out and sharing information about identified issues. This ensures that children make steady progress as they benefit from the childminder's commitment and genuine desire to help them achieve their individual goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards which helps to ensure that all outcomes for children are effectively promoted. She is well qualified and extremely knowledgeable about how children learn and develop. Children benefit as she incorporates her skills and expertise to enhance their experiences. Her ability to organise her time effectively means that children are always engaged in fruitful activity. Constant supervision means that they enjoy and achieve in all situations while effectively being safeguarded from harm.

Demonstrating a clear understanding of the procedures to notify Ofsted of any changes in her circumstances, the childminder ensures that children receive quality care at all times. Documentation is maintained to a high standard and all records are available for inspection. The childminder's daily register shows children's times of arrival and departure. These indicate that ratios are consistently maintained which ensures children receive high levels of care and attention. Records are accurately filled in and stored confidentially. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to devise and implement a system to record any incident of physical restraint and request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

The childminder has introduced a system to document any use of restraint. This enables any incident to be accurately recorded and shared with parents so that children's welfare can be safeguarded. The childminder has also consistently obtained written permission so that emergency medical advice or treatment can be sought. This ensures that all children receive prompt care in accordance with parental wishes.

Complaints since the last inspection

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 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:

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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):

- obtain written permission from parents prior to the administration of medicine
- request written consent from parents for all children to be transported in a vehicle.

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