

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	209508
Inspection date	08 November 2007
Inspector	Jayne Rooke
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 1992 and works with an assistant. She lives with her husband in Fazeley, Staffordshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding two children under five all day and two children over five before and after school. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group.

She has systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and comfortable home where they learn to follow simple and good health and hygiene practices from an early age. Child-sized toilet furniture, soap and a paper towel dispenser helps to promote children's developing independence as they learn how

to manage their own personal hygiene routines to keep themselves clean. Their good health is promoted well as the childminder obtains appropriate information from parents about individual children's health care needs, including consent to seek emergency medical advice and treatment. She keeps written records of any accidents, which are countersigned by parents, and she is aware of the procedures to follow if administering medication. She takes advice from health agencies to ensure her first aid box is appropriately stocked.

Children's individual dietary needs and preferences are met as the childminder provides a nutritious range of meals and snacks taking into account parents' wishes. Sweet and savoury snacks are kept to a minimum, and children are regularly offered fresh fruit such as grapes and bananas. Water is offered as an alternative to juice drinks. Children enjoy an interesting range of physical play experiences including music and dance activities and outings to the local park, shops and nature areas. All children are able to rest or sleep according to their individual routines. As a result children benefit from a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. The premises remain secure against unauthorised entry and children remain under the childminder's close supervision at all times. For example, the childminder uses a monitoring device to keep a check on children's safety whilst they are sleeping upstairs. Safety gates exclude children from the stairs and kitchen, and any hazardous substances are stored securely so that they are inaccessible to children. The childminder is vigilant about safety in the home, ensuring that safety equipment and appliances are regularly checked and well-maintained. She shares useful and detailed information with parents and carers to promote children's safety within the home and when travelling in a vehicle. Outings are conducted with children's safety in mind as she ensures public transport can be used safely. She ensures children are fully aware of safety procedures when walking along the road or when they are out walking near the canal. Fire safety precautions such as a fire blanket and smoke alarms are in place and the childminder has carefully considered how she would escape in an emergency and how to keep children safe if they are in the upstairs rooms. Children play with good quality resources that meet safety standards and which are maintained in good condition.

Children are protected from harm and neglect because the childminder has a good understanding of her role and responsibilities in safeguarding children. She has a detailed policy which includes information about allegations of abuse whilst a child is in the care of the provider. Information is made available to parents through discussion and written procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settle well in the welcoming environment. They have good relationships with the childminder who is very involved in their play and learning, promoting their development. Children choose from a selection of toys and equipment which they enjoy and have some involvement in choosing what they would like to play with each day, although the range of toys and equipment within their reach if they wish to make changes is limited. This minimises children's independence and self-choice. They are keen to complete jigsaw puzzles and chatter happily about what they see and do. Books are used as a valuable resource to support the development of their language and curiosity as they look at pictures and talk about

a variety of shapes, name different animals and insects and practise making a range of sounds. Their learning is further developed and consolidated as the childminder asks many open-ended questions and uses positive encouragement to stimulate children's interest and enthusiasm during activities, games and everyday routines. For example, children are frequently praised for being 'clever' as they recognise and name pictures such as a 'dragonfly' and other animals. Also, as they repeat colour symbols from road safety pictures and demonstrate awareness of their meaning such as 'green' for 'go' and 'orange' to 'stop'. Good links are made to nursery rhymes to help children develop their knowledge of different shapes. This is further extended as children are encouraged to use their fingers to create shapes and patterns and select shapes to fit into the shape sorter toy. They are helped to recognise different colours linked to familiar objects such as 'yellow bananas' and to take an interest in what is happening around them as they watch the wind blowing the leaves off the trees outside.

Older children contribute ideas about what they like to do before and after school, and enjoy a variety of games and creative activities. The childminder provides a balanced routine so that children have opportunities for quiet and rest according to their individual needs and interests. They enjoy many social activities outside of the home with children of similar and different ages creating a friendly and interesting environment. The childminder is interested in how children develop and learn. She is implementing good systems in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework to monitor and record children's progress and share valuable information with parents. This successfully supports children's progress in their learning, leisure and personal development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a sense of belonging because the childminder knows them and their families well and ensures they are all valued and included. For example, younger children are made to feel comfortable and welcome in their own sleep rooms with child-sized furniture and equipment. The childminder understands the importance of children's own comfort toys and blankets so that children feel settled and secure. The childminder responds sensitively to children and respects their individual personalities, providing activities and resources which hold their interest. Children play with resources which reflect diversity such as play figures representing different ethnic groups and people with disabilities. The childminder encourages their conversation about people they see outside of the home or on television who may be different from themselves. This helps children to gain a good understanding of the wider world. The childminder has a positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is willing to work closely with parents and other agencies to support children's individual needs, promoting inclusion. Children learn about responsible behaviour as the childminder is a positive role model and has a good understanding of how to manage different types of behaviour, taking into account children's age and level of maturity. Daily conversation with parents enables any behavioural changes to be shared and ensures a consistent approach is maintained. A positive relationship is built with parents and carers. They receive useful and informative details about their child's care and routines through daily conversation, diary books and newsletters. They are fully informed of the inspection process and safety procedures, receiving copies of reports and health and safety leaflets. There is a detailed complaints procedure which is in line with current guidelines and regulations.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of the National Minimum Standards which ensures children are well-protected in her care. Appropriate checks have been carried out to ensure children are cared for by a suitably vetted person. Children remain under the childminder's close supervision at all times. Appropriate consent is obtained from parents regarding children being left in the care of her assistant. The childminder has attended basic training to support her knowledge and skills. She holds a current first aid qualification ensuring children receive appropriate medical intervention if needed. She is interested in developing and improving her practice, attending child development training to keep up to date with new ideas and information, and also obtains useful information from the internet and other childcare and safety agencies. The childminder organises the home effectively to provide a stimulating and child-friendly environment in which children can take part in a range of activities to support their care, learning and play indoors and outside. However, children have limited opportunities to choose and select from a wider range of resources for themselves, minimising their independence. Children benefit from the individual care and attention given, promoting their well-being. All of the required documents and information is kept. This is well-organised to ensure children's details are kept confidential and parents are fully informed of their child's development and progress and of the service provided, promoting continuity of care.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. She now has a signed document from parents containing the necessary consent. This is attached to each child's record form, ensuring that children can receive appropriate care in the event of a medical emergency.

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:

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):

- develop further opportunities for children to choose and select a wider range of resources for themselves.

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