

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224485
Inspection date	13 September 2007
Inspector	John Vernon
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 1987. She lives with her husband in a house in Stoke-on-Trent, within walking distance of local amenities. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family has a pet dog.

The childminder is registered to care for six children aged under eight years, at any one time. Currently, she is caring for four children on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder takes positive steps to develop children's understanding and awareness of good health and hygiene, during daily routines. For example, children are encouraged to wash hands after messy play, before eating and after visiting the toilet. The childminder reminds the children to cover their mouth when they cough and children understand why they need to wash

their hands. Consequently, the possibility of the spread of infection is minimised and children maintain good health.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and there is a first aid box available to support children's health needs. All required documentation is in place, including permission to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment, in order to maintain the welfare of children. Effective, regular cleaning routines ensure that the areas used by the children are hygienic and free from germs.

Children have access to a good range of age-appropriate outdoor equipment which helps to develop coordination and balance. Equally, children enjoy trips to local places of interest where they can run about and play, including Finney Gardens and Hanley Forest Park. As well as having fun, these opportunities enable the children to begin to gain an understanding and appreciation of the importance of being active.

The individual dietary needs of the children are suitably met. The childminder provides children with a good range of healthy snacks and meals and they are offered sugar-free juice, milk or water to drink. The childminder uses a chart to promote healthy eating by encouraging all children to vary their diet by trying a variety of unfamiliar healthy foods. Children receive a sticker on their chart for their willingness to try different healthy options. As a result, children have good opportunities to learn about a healthy diet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment which is well maintained and child friendly. Children select activities, toys and equipment from a suitable range of developmentally-appropriate resources, which meet safety standards. Children are able to rest and play in comfort as there is ample space for their needs. Toys and play resources are available at floor level and are easily accessible to children. Consequently, they are able to self-select and make free choices about their play.

Children are cared for in a safe environment as the childminder has put in place a number of measures to ensure their safety, including smoke alarms and a fire blanket. Children have discussed and practised with the childminder what they should do in the event of a fire or emergency. Children have drawn and coloured an evacuation plan which is clearly displayed for all to see. Therefore, their welfare is safeguarded and in the event of an emergency and they are aware of what to do to stay safe.

The childminder monitors the play materials used by the children to ensure they are safe and age appropriate. Children are encouraged to tidy away toys after play and to hold hands when away from the home and to stop, look and listen when crossing the road. As a consequence they are beginning to develop a greater awareness of personal safety.

The childminder has completed training and has good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. She is aware of the correct procedure to follow when a concern arises. She has a copy of the booklet 'What To Do If You're Worried about a Child'. Consequently, the children's welfare is fully safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children feel secure and benefit from warm and friendly interactions with the childminder. She has a good understanding of how children learn and develop through play. Children have good opportunities to enjoy and achieve. They are well stimulated and enjoy a mix of free and adult-led play. Activities enjoyed by children include drawing and colouring, painting pictures and making celebration cards.

The childminder uses her experience and understanding of the needs of young children to provide a good range of experiences which appeal to their interests and enable them to have fun. Creative play planned for children includes sticking and gluing, making collages and models from junk, sewing, baking and making jewellery. All these activities enable children to explore their own interests. As a result children benefit well from the childminder's commitment to provide stimulating activities.

General conversation, coupled with fun play opportunities, enable children to ask questions and to make sense of the world. Skills and concepts are developed through routines and children's natural curiosity. The childminder undertakes some planning to develop children's learning and overall, children develop well. However, the majority of learning takes place as opportunities occur during the day. The childminder does not consistently plan for all areas of children's learning to ensure all children develop to their full potential in all areas.

Children have good opportunities to enjoy play outdoors and have access to a fully enclosed garden. Equally, they have access to a good range of outdoor equipment to enhance their physical development and ensure that their needs are met.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children make themselves at home and are self-assured in deciding what to do. They take turns, share and demonstrate care for each other, playing amicably. Children are respected and as a consequence, they grow in self-esteem, as the childminder provides a positive role model for the children to follow.

The childminder is keen to work with parents to ensure the most appropriate care for the children. Children are valued and respected as individuals and understand behaviour boundaries, as the childminder has established clear ground rules. Inappropriate behaviour is challenged, and the childminder uses a range of strategies to manage behaviour sensitively. Children's understanding of right and wrong is increased as they respond to gentle reminders to take care of resources, equipment and each other.

Although there are no children currently attending with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the childminder has a good knowledge of ensuring inclusion for all children and the importance of working with parents to meet individual children's needs. The childminder has a good understanding of the importance of building positive relationships with parents and consequently relevant information is shared verbally to ensure consistency of care.

The childminder has a good awareness of her role in promoting equality of opportunity. She plans some activities for the children to enable them to have a greater awareness and understanding of the world. She talks to the children about the difference and similarities of

people from other cultures, as this naturally arises in conversation. The childminder has a suitable range of resources and books which children can access on their own to enable them to explore and learn independently about the wider world.

The childminder fosters good relationships with parents, which contribute to children's well-being in the childminding setting. She seeks parents' views on their child's needs and interests. Information is shared verbally with parents and there are some written policies and procedures in place to inform parents of the childminder's practice. Equally, parents are supplied with the contact details of the regulator should they wish to make a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder and parents work as a team for the benefit of each child. The children's needs, routines and behaviour are discussed, as appropriate, on a regular basis with parents thus contributing to the continuity of the children's care. The childminder ensures that all adults living in her household are vetted and that no unvetted individuals are left alone with the children. Documents are stored securely and safely in order to ensure children's privacy.

The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards and along with effective organisational skills, is clear about her responsibilities as a registered childminder. Children are offered good levels of support and supervision to enable them to feel secure. Indoor and outdoor space is organised appropriately to provide a good range of play opportunities for the children. This enables them to initiate and extend their own play and learning. The childminder maintains an accurate record of attendance. 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, to improve standards of care, two recommendations were raised.

A recommendation was raised to devise and implement a system to record any incident of physical restraint and obtain written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. The provider has devised and implemented a suitable system to record any incident of physical restraint and obtained written permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. As a consequence, children's welfare and safety is assured.

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):

- improve planning and play opportunities to further promote children's all round development.

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