

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY275520
Inspection date	08 August 2007
Inspector	Linda Tomkins
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 2003. She lives with her husband and one child age two years in Stafford. Areas of the childminder's home used for childminding are; ground floor playroom, sleep room, kitchen, first floor bathroom and separate toilet and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently caring for two children under five years part-time and full time and three children over five years before and after school and some school holidays. The childminder attends local pre-school groups.

The childminder is a member of the local childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, comfortable home where the childminder is developing examples of good practice to ensure the children understand why and how they wash their hands before food and after using the toilet. Children are provided with colour coded towels and flannels which they currently use in the first floor bathroom. This means that children are encouraged to learn how to prevent contamination of food.

There are good arrangements and written policies for managing illness. The childminder does not care for sick or infectious children which helps to prevent cross-infection. Procedures for managing accidents and giving medication are good, they are clearly recorded and explained in the procedures which are given to parents when children are settled into the childminder's home. The childminder discusses and records the children's individual health and dietary needs which ensures all their needs are met. Written permission for seeking emergency treatment or advice has been obtained from parents which means that children will receive appropriate treatment in an emergency.

The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of how children's health is promoted. Children are provided with a varied range of activities which contribute to their continued good health such as regular outside play in the garden and walks.

The childminder provides snacks of fresh and dried fruit and flapjacks. They have drinks of orange and apple juice and milk. However, water is not freely available for children to help themselves when thirsty. The childminder prepares a varied range of nutritional meals for children such as pasta and vegetables, tuna melt and salmon starfish. The childminder organises her routine so that children eat together at regular times at the dining table in the kitchen. In addition, children are helped to learn about healthy food as they visit farms to pick fruit.

Children have regular periods of rest and sleep in accordance with their routine. The playroom is used as a quiet area where children rest on the sofas with their own linen. Younger children sleep in the sleep-room adjacent to the playroom in a full sized wooden cot.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are provided with clear safe space to move around freely and independently. The childminder has devised an emergency evacuation plan and ensures all minded children practise this regularly. There are two smoke alarms and fire-fighting equipment in place. This helps to keep children safe in an emergency situation.

Children select activities from a wide range of toys and equipment stored in the playroom. Outdoor toys are stored in the shed and garden. However, the paddling pool in the rear garden is not hygienic and children are able to access the gardening equipment in the shed which exposes them to hazards. The childminder supervises children's selection to ensure children can safely access the resources. She provides toys that are appropriate for the children's age and stage of development. The children play outside in the garden with a varied range of outside equipment such as a tent, a castle and tricycles.

All of the required procedures and equipment are in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. Children are helped to begin to understand road safety, for example, always holding hands and crossing the road at the zebra crossings. The childminder ensures children are secured in car seats, seat-belts and boosters whilst being transported by car.

Children are protected because the childminder understands her duty to protect children in her care and has extensive knowledge of signs and symptoms of abuse. She has a written policy and clear procedures to report concerns to the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The children's level of development is excellent because the childminder plans and organises her routines and activities to suit each child, which allows children to progress and increase their independence in her home. She discusses and records children's individual routines with their parents so that children have time to be active and to rest. Children have regular opportunities for physical development as they are taken on regular walks in the surrounding areas and run and climb in the garden. In wet weather children wear all-weather suits and boots to enjoy jumping in puddles whilst out walking.

The childminder is actively developing and extending her knowledge of how children learn and ensures her resources suit the age and preferences of the children she cares for. An estimable, varied range is available to allow for choice of activity. For example, children enjoy role play as they use the play-food and oven whilst dressed-up as a chef. Laughter, singing and jumping play an important part in the day. Children sang 'The runaway train' and studied pictures in books linked to their topic on 'transport'. The childminder constantly praises and congratulates the children on their achievements and conversational responses.

Children's paintings and artwork are displayed on the playroom walls. In addition, all children's activities and progress are shared verbally with parents when they are collected. Parents have open access to the children's development and progress files. The childminder demonstrates an excellent understanding of children's stages of development and values degrees of independence and free choice. The children are very settled and have formed close relationships with the childminder, her family and each other.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder and children interact together using interesting resources such as play figures, books and dressing-up clothes with positive images of race, disability and gender. Children enjoy making Hanukkah lanterns and taking part in Mendhi hand painting for Diwali. They have frequent outside visits in the surrounding community. This helps to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity and understanding of customs.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. They receive individual attention and have conversations with the childminder who encourages them to freely express their views. For example, choosing their favourite activities. The childminder has commendable policies and procedure to take appropriate action to ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully supported and included.

Children are positively encouraged to behave well and make themselves at home to foster good levels of self-esteem and well-being. There are clear boundaries and house rules which ensure children are encouraged to respond to the exemplary high levels of good behaviour displayed by the childminder. Children are expected to say 'please' and 'thank you' and help to tidy away their toys. They are rewarded with smiles, hugs, verbal praise and the 'Sunflower reward chart'.

Parents are provided with a 'welcome pack' with detailed written information on policies and procedures when they attend introductory visits prior to placing their child. The childminder encourages parents to stay to share information each day when they collect their children. In addition, parents are invited to review their children's progress and examine their children's achievement files. This ensures parents are involved and contribute to the quality of care their children receive. Children take their artwork home to help parents to be involved in their learning and development. The childminder provides parents with clear information to contact Ofsted in the event of a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is qualified, knowledgeable and experienced to provide a range of activities to develop children's skills and independence. She enthusiastically attends training to extend and increase her knowledge and understanding of how children learn. For example, advanced child protection, food hygiene and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. In addition, the childminder supports and advises newly registered childminders as a member of the local childminder's network. Currently, the childminder is working towards accreditation to become qualified to deliver early education to children in her care.

Exemplary detailed written policies and procedures ensure that children are secure and relaxed in the setting. This means they are confident to initiate and extend their own learning and play. The environment provides clear space for children's free movement. The policies and procedures are used effectively to promote welfare, care and learning of minded children.

The childminder has a good knowledge of required records and ensures that they are accurately maintained, up to date, stored confidentially and available for parents and inspection. This enables the childminder to monitor and improve the quality of her care and contributes to continuity in the children's care. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain written permission to seek emergency medical advice and treatment and to ensure the register records accurate arrival and departure times.

The childminder has obtained written permission to seek emergency medical advice and treatment for each minded child and this is clearly recorded in a record book. The children's record of arrival and departure is accurately recorded and displayed in the entrance area of her home.

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):

- ensure drinks are available at all times
- minimise hazards to children outside the premises; this refers to the cleaning of the paddling pool and access to the shed.

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