

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 506587  
**Inspection date** 25 January 2008  
**Inspector** Jane Muriel Laraman

**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](http://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 satisfactory. 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 1987 and lives with her husband in a large detached house in Shrewsbury, Shropshire. The whole of the ground floor of her home, which consists of the kitchen, four reception rooms, hall and downstairs toilet facilities, is available for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The house is situated near to local shops, schools, pre-school groups, leisure facilities and parks. The childminder is able to take walks with the children and goes on outings to places of interest with them. The family do not have any pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight years at any one time. She is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also those who speak English as an additional language.

The childminder is an experienced child carer and is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted because the childminder follows highly effective hygiene procedures and practices, which meet their physical, nutritional and healthcare needs. The childminder is meticulous in providing a very clean and well-maintained care environment. She ensures that children's exposure to the risk of infection is minimised through her rigorous cleaning procedures. For example, the kitchen, downstairs toilet facilities and all play areas, including the garden, are checked and cleaned before children arrive. This means that children's health is suitably protected.

The sensitive guidance and support provided by the childminder helps children to gain a good understanding of hygiene issues and this helps them to become independent in their personal care. She ensures that there is always a good supply of wet wipes, liquid soap, kitchen roll and tissues available for use in attending to children's personal needs. Nappies are changed on individual vinyl changing mats, which are cleaned with antibacterial spray or wipes after each use to reduce the risk of contamination. The childminder's own hygiene practices are excellent, for example she routinely washes her hands before preparing meals and after changing nappies. She also ensures that toys and equipment are kept clean and in good condition.

Documentation is maintained regarding the administration of medication and recording of accidents. Medications are stored safely and administered appropriately, with the required records in place. A suitably stocked first aid box is available to ensure children's well-being is safeguarded in the event of accidents. Children are protected from infectious disease or illness because the childminder has regard to current health guidelines. Information regarding infection control and the advised minimum exclusion periods is appropriately shared with parents.

Children are able to develop positive attitudes to exercise as they benefit from good opportunities to engage in physical activities. They regularly access fresh air and enjoy countryside walks, music and movement, swimming and visits to local parks. The garden provides an attractive and challenging play environment where children can explore and use outdoor play equipment to test and develop physical control of their bodies and muscles.

Children enjoy nutritious snacks and meals which help to maintain their good health. The childminder usually provides all the children's food and drink, but parents can opt to provide packed meals if they prefer to. The menu is well-planned, healthy and appetising as the childminder has a good knowledge of nutrition. She uses meat, fish, cheese, eggs, pasta, rice and a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables. Children are well-hydrated through the provision of fresh drinks, which are available for them to independently access throughout the day. Babies and younger children are encouraged to feed themselves and good table manners are taught from an early age. The childminder works in partnership with parents and keeps them well-informed about what their child has eaten during the day. The needs of children who have specific dietary requirements are respected and met diligently due to the childminder's knowledge and daily discussions with parents.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children arrive to very welcoming premises and they are able to play in a safe and secure environment. The childminder prepares a good range of appropriate and stimulating activities for the children before they arrive each day and they have a good balance of energetic or quiet play. Children have sufficient space in which to play and benefit from a very wide range of play equipment, which is appropriate for their individual ages and stages of development. Toys and resources are well presented at children's level, so they are accessible and can be reached independently. This gives the children the opportunity to become increasingly confident in making their own decisions and choices. Children are protected from harm as the childminder ensures all equipment is safe by checking that it conforms to standards and she maintains it in a good condition.

Good safety measures ensure that children can play safely in the childminder's home. She makes a daily visual check of the premises to identify any potential risks and takes reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children, both inside and outside the house, are minimised. For example, doors are kept locked and alarmed so that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised, electrical sockets are protected, the radiators are thermostatically controlled and safety gates are available when required. Dangerous substances such as cleaning materials, medicines and garden chemicals are inaccessible to children. Fire safety equipment is in place and is kept in working order to safeguard children in the event of a fire.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect. The childminder has a good understanding of her child protection responsibilities as she has attended relevant training. She is aware of the types and signs of abuse and has familiarised herself with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. As a result, she is fully aware of the procedures to follow should a concern arise and she has made parents aware of her responsibilities in relation to child protection.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good balance of appropriate activities provided by the childminder. They are settled, happy and very comfortable in her care, as she interacts well with them. Children's independence and choice is encouraged whilst they develop and learn through the childminder's skilful and sensitive interaction. She uses an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Consequently, younger children's needs are met well as the childminder adapts different activities to ensure they are challenging and relate to children's developing abilities. Older children are able to access resources for themselves, use their initiative and make independent choices about their play and activities.

The childminder is experienced in childcare and understands how children learn and develop, so their personal, social, emotional and intellectual needs are fostered well. Daily routines are planned flexibly to ensure that children play and rest in accordance with their own individual needs and interests. Children's play is well supported through a good range of interesting resources, including good quality technology equipment, such as interactive puzzles, pop-up toys and musical toys. Babies and younger children are adept at manipulating the technology toys and also enjoy using simple construction toys. They learn as they play, developing confidence, skills and imagination. The childminder talks and listens to children and gives them plenty of encouragement as they develop their early communication and mathematical skills.

She clearly enjoys their company and they confidently approach her for cuddles, support and reassurance. This genuinely warm, responsive interaction boosts children's confidence and contributes to their overall well-being.

The childminder occasionally takes children to local carer and toddler groups and they are able to develop their social skills and enjoy a wider range of toys when they attend. They also have the opportunity to run around and enjoy playing on larger equipment at local play parks.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy warm, secure relationships with the childminder, demonstrated by the affectionate way they interact with her. This enables babies and young children to understand from an early age that they are valued and respected as individuals and this promotes the growth of self-esteem. Their individual needs are identified through discussion with parents and sufficient time is given to help children settle comfortably into the childminder's home. This gives them a sense of belonging. Equipment is easily accessible to all the children and they are provided with resources reflecting positive images of diversity to help them develop their understanding of disability, culture, gender and ethnicity in the wider world.

The childminder has previous experience in caring for children with additional needs and demonstrates a very good awareness of being able to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The opportunity to care for a child with learning difficulties or disabilities is viewed positively and the childminder is able to work with parents and other professionals to ensure children receive appropriate care.

The childminder has high expectations for children's good behaviour. She offers a good role model through being calm, polite and kind towards them and she sets clear house rules and boundaries. This develops children's understanding of right and wrong. The childminder manages behaviour positively through using praise and encouragement and is consistent in her approach. This also helps children to learn how to behave well, promotes their welfare and they develop good levels of self-esteem.

The childminder develops good partnerships with parents and the positive relationships significantly contribute towards children's quality of care, feelings of security and well-being within her home. She exchanges verbal information about their children on a daily basis with them, so that she can be fully aware of any differing needs or wishes. The childminder is able to respond swiftly to any concerns or queries raised by parents and they are able to discuss her service and all aspects of their children's care and learning.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder demonstrates a secure understanding of her role and responsibilities and in the past she has attended relevant training to support her work. She uses appropriate forms of record keeping and has procedures in place to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. However, at the time of inspection, the childminder was unable to produce her certificate of registration and was in breach of the conditions of her registration by not displaying it. This means that parents are not fully informed about the childminder's provision. Consequently, this has affected the overall judgement. The childminder has very few written policies to share with parents and considers this an area for development.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder and make sound progress because she creates a stimulating environment, where they can have fun as they play and learn. She is an experienced childcare practitioner and uses her knowledge of child development to plan exciting and challenging activities. Children are well-supervised as they play and the childminder protects them from anyone who has not been vetted. Children feel relaxed and secure in the homely environment and this results in them being confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the childminder was given one recommendation. She agreed to ensure that all existing injuries to children are recorded. Since then, she has implemented the use of the relevant section of the NCMA accident and incident recording book. If the situation arises, the childminder knows how to appropriately record any existing injuries to children. Parents are required to sign the book to agree and acknowledge any recorded entry relating to their child. This means that children's welfare is safeguarded and parents are kept aware of any information recorded about existing injuries to their children.

### **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 satisfactory. 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):

- comply with conditions of registration with regard to displaying the certificate
- consider developing the existing policies and procedures to improve the written information available about the childminding service.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)