

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY289850
Inspection date	17 October 2007
Inspector	Bernadina Lavery

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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2004. She lives with her husband and four children ages 15, 14, 10 and four years. They live in Oldbury, in the West Midlands. The whole of the ground floor is used for minding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time and currently has four children on roll. The childminder takes children on outings to the local parks and shops. She takes and collects children from local schools.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children's health and welfare are not adequately promoted as the childminder does not have written consent from parents to seek emergency medical treatment or advice for all children. Even though relevant documentation is in place relating to administering medication and recording of accidents, the childminder could not confirm that her first aid certificate is still

valid, as she could not locate it at inspection. As a result, this jeopardises the quality of care children will receive in an emergency.

Children are cared for in a clean and welcoming home where they learn to understand appropriate health and hygiene practices as part of their daily routines. For example, they visit the toilet independently and clean their hands afterwards using antibacterial gel. There are sufficient procedures in place to protect children from illness and infection as the childminder operates an exclusion policy regarding sick children.

Mealtimes are sociable occasions where children sit together eating packed lunches prepared for them by their parents. Children are provided with regular drinks including juice and water. This ensures they have sufficient fluids. The childminder recognises the importance of her responsibility to promote healthy eating through discussions with parents, such as making suggestions as to what to include in children's lunch boxes. This helps to ensure children benefit from a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle. The childminder discusses children's dietary requirements and daily routines with parents including sleep patterns and as a result children rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Children benefit from different activities to promote their physical skills, enjoying fresh air and exercise. They visit different attractions including Dudley Zoo and Sandwell Valley Park. They have access to a garden and outdoor equipment, ensuring they can practise their running and balance skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children's welfare is not fully protected. The childminder has some knowledge of child protection in that she understands she has a responsibility to protect all children in her care. The childminder has included a statement in her own terms and conditions relating to her duty to report concerns. However, she has insufficient knowledge of child protection procedures approved by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), particularly in relation to allegations of abuse alleged to have taken place whilst the child is in the care of the childminder, as she has not read the current documentation.

Children play comfortably in a suitable environment, which includes a spacious lounge and a kitchen for mealtimes. Children's safety is considered as the childminder has taken action to ensure that risks have been minimised. For example, she regularly checks toys, equipment and makes appropriate use of stair gates. Familiar daily routines help children to anticipate the flow of the day and easy access to resources ensures they can safely help themselves to safe and suitable equipment.

Children are supervised effectively and are learning to keep themselves safe. For example, whilst on outings, children are encouraged to hold on to the pram, be alert to traffic and develop road safety awareness. However, written permission for children to be transported in a vehicle has yet to be obtained for all children. This compromises children's safety and working relationships with parents. Children are developing some awareness of fire safety through discussions and the childminder has devised an emergency escape plan. Fire safety recommendations are complied with, such as an easily accessible fire blanket located in the kitchen and smoke detectors are in place, helping to promote an early warning system in the event of a fire.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play happily within this homely environment. They settle quickly as they are comforted by the childminder, who clearly knows the children well and understands their individual needs. They approach the childminder with confidence, asking questions to check out the daily routine and are patiently re-assured by the childminder. Daily routines allow plenty of time for children to be held and cuddled. Activities are balanced to provide opportunities for independent play and learning as well as activities that require support and encouragement. Children concentrate well whilst playing and use their imagination, encouraged by the childminder's interaction. They select their own toys and equipment and direct their own play. For example, they persevere whilst building a fort using construction bricks and enjoy praise for their efforts. This helps develop their confidence, independence and self-esteem. They take part in a broad range of activities which promote their welfare. Toys and equipment are regularly alternated ensuring children have access to range of resources that maintain their interest.

Babies and toddlers have access to a range of suitable and safe equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development. However, the childminder has not yet attended training for the 'Birth to three matters' framework. As a consequence, her ability to plan, extend and enhance activities for babies and young children to develop their learning using this framework is limited.

Children get on well together and are encouraged to make positive relationships with each other. For example, they help each other complete jigsaw puzzles by looking for the pieces and trying to fit them into the board. Children respond to new challenges as the childminder encourages children to help tidy up, offering clear guidance and assistance where necessary.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Although the childminder endeavours to work in partnership with parents and share information on a daily basis, the absence of appropriate consents for some children compromises their well-being. Children feel a sense of belonging because of the familiar daily routine. Their individuality is valued as the childminder understands how to re-assure them and is aware of their likes and dislikes.

Children are reminded to say 'please' and 'thank-you' and praised for appropriate manners and behaviour. This helps them to develop social skills and friendships. Although the childminder has some understanding of equal opportunities, she lacks awareness of how children develop their values and beliefs regarding equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. There are still insufficient resources to reflect diversity and this limits children's understanding of the wider world. Whilst there are currently no children attending with learning difficulties and/or disabilities the childminder has sufficient understanding to be sensitive to children's individual needs.

Children behave well and learn to respond to appropriate expectations of behaviour. They are learning to share, take turns and manage simple disputes over toys through clear guidance from the childminder. They help with the care of younger children, such as volunteering to find toys for them and explaining which jigsaw puzzle pieces fit into the board.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Although children are happy and play contentedly within this homely environment, the provision overall is inadequate because some of the required documentation for the efficient and safe management of the setting is not in place. Attendance records are not consistently completed for all children to show their hours of attendance, which compromises their safety in the event of an emergency.

The childminder cannot demonstrate that she has fulfilled training requirements, as she cannot locate all documentation required to be available for inspection. For example, she has no evidence of her attendance on a pre-registration course or an appropriate first aid course. This means that she cannot demonstrate that she has the required level of up-to-date knowledge of child care issues or how to treat a child in an emergency. She is aware of the impending changes regarding the introduction of the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' and the need to embrace change and attend further training.

Children develop their independence and initiate their own play as space and resources are organised effectively. Children settle easily into this homely atmosphere and benefit from flexible routines that meet their individual needs. Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, to improve the standards of care, the childminder was asked to: ensure parental consent is obtained for children to travel in the car; ensure parental permission is obtained in the event of emergency medical treatment being required; ensure parents sign the register; ensure the resources promote positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability.

The issues raised at the last inspection have not received sufficient attention to improve outcomes for children overall. Regulations do not require the daily register to be signed. However, a system for recording all children's attendance on a daily basis, showing their hours of attendance is a regulation which is not being met. Although the childminder has bought some resources that promote positive images, these are still limited.

These combined issues potentially compromise children's safety and welfare and as a result are carried through as actions at this inspection.

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

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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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure children's good health is promoted, that positive steps to prevent the spread of infection are taken and appropriate measures are in place to support children when they are ill
- ensure local child protection procedures approved by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) are complied with and that procedures are put into practice
- ensure positive steps are taken to promote safety within the setting, whilst on outings and that proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents
- ensure equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children is promoted and further improve the range of resources to support children's play in this area
- ensure records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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