



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY229800
Inspection date	18 July 2005
Inspector	Deborah Ball

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 2002. She lives with her husband and 3 children; 2 aged 15 years and 1 aged 9 years on the outskirts of the city of Hereford. The whole of the downstairs of the property and two first floor bedrooms are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 5 children at any one time and is currently minding 4 children under 5 years and 3 children over 5 years. The childminder takes children to and from local schools.

The family has one rabbit as a pet.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a warm and homely environment where hygiene is given a high priority and their personal care needs are met very well. Good levels of cleanliness are maintained throughout the home and young children are gently encouraged to wash their hands before food and after outside play. They are sensitively supported during nappy changing, with good hygiene still maintained while they kick and move on the changing mat. Children are kept comfortable and well cared for if they fall ill while in the childminder's care. They readily turn to her for comfort, support and cuddles. Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder's efficient medication and accident procedures; records are well maintained.

Children develop positive attitudes to exercising their bodies through fun activities such as climbing and sliding on appropriate sized equipment. Babies and toddlers are given plenty of space to move, roll, stretch and explore the things around them, and they experience and achieve pleasure and control as they learn to throw a ball, play with shape sorters and use simple musical instruments. Children's needs during rest and sleep times are carefully considered, with comforters and special toys kept close by so that children always feel emotionally secure.

Children enjoy sitting together at meal times for packed lunches and nourishing snacks of fruit, biscuits and yoghurts. Babies and toddlers are helped to feed themselves with appropriate cutlery and all children are encouraged to drink frequently throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move freely and safely around spacious rooms where they can sit or lay comfortably to play. Children enjoy free access to a broad range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate toys and resources, which are thoroughly cleaned and maintained by the childminder. Children are encouraged to help maintain their environment with the childminder giving support and offering age appropriate explanations.

Children play safely due to the childminder's high level of awareness of all risks to children's safety. The childminder has taken precautions to keep the physical environment safe and secure. Careful explanation helps children to become aware of how to keep themselves safe, such as not running inside the house, and the childminder sensitively responds to toddlers' attempts to climb on furniture. Children are protected from the harmful effects of the sun; parents are reminded to provide

sun hats and sunscreen which the childminder regularly applies to ensure children do not get sunburnt.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminder has a sound understanding of child protection procedures. Parents have agreed child protection procedures with the childminder so they know what action she will take if she has any concerns about their children. The childminder does not have a valid first aid certificate, which means that children's health and safety may be compromised in the event of an accident.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happy and eager and settle quickly. Children feel secure due to good settling-in procedures which ensure younger children's favourite toys are put out ready for them and children are encouraged to treat the childminder's home like it is their own. Children thrive due to the childminder's daily routines which allow plenty of time for young children to be held, cuddled and played with. Children's language development is promoted throughout the day as they are given frequent opportunities to learn to imitate sounds and words through playful interactions with the childminder, who stimulates their language skills through talking to them and introducing new words. Children's care is enhanced as the childminder knows and understands their individual needs and preferences over such things as sleep routines, favourite toys and comforters. As a result children develop close relationships and a sense of trust.

Children play happily together and with a wide range of stimulating resources that offer suitable challenges and help them learn and progress. For example, construction equipment, musical instruments and sound toys are placed within easy reach for toddlers.

Young children gain confidence and want to learn new things, because the childminder provides a positive atmosphere where achievement and effort is both praised and valued. Children want to learn to climb and slide on outdoor apparatus because they know the childminder is always close by to help. Children learn to develop their pretend play because she joins in, uses different voices and suggests what they might do next. Children enjoy looking at books because she involves them in the story, asks them what they see in the pictures and listens to what they say. This lets them know that they are important and valued.

Children benefit from the childminder's experience and sharing of good practice through the National Childminding Association (NCMA). The childminder is constantly looking at ways to further develop her practice and intends to expand her current knowledge and understanding of providing play and activities for the under threes by implementing the "Birth to three matters" framework.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed and enjoy a family atmosphere where the childminder values and respects their individuality and family background. They develop confidence and independence as they make choices and decisions about what to play with and benefit from being able to join in with all activities. Children have access to a range of activities and resources which meet their individual needs. Suitable arrangements are made to ensure all children are included and the childminder understands that some children may have special needs and has thought carefully about how she might care for them.

Children's self-esteem is promoted as they are praised frequently for effort and achievement. Their sense of security is promoted through consistency of care and positive behaviour management strategies. They enjoy a warm relationship with the childminder and show care and concern for one another. Toddlers are encouraged to play together, take turns and share, while the childminder talks and negotiates with older children, acknowledging their needs and helping them to understand the needs of others.

Children's sense of security is fostered through a strong partnership with parents, which promotes continuity of care and regular sharing of information. Parents receive written information about how she approaches specific issues such as equality of opportunity and behaviour, and daily discussions help them contribute to children's care. Children are secure and cared for consistently and according to their individual needs as a result of the childminder obtaining all the required information about children relating to health and care. Children benefit from the childminder actively seeking early information on children's interests and having developed methods for encouraging parents to share fully in what their children have been doing.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are able to confidently explore and investigate as a result of the creative use made of the available space. Their sense of security is fostered through effective adult support and a familiar daily routine.

Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to providing a warm, caring and stimulating environment. Children's care is enhanced by efficient and effective organisation which ensures children are always well cared for and have ample room to play and rest. Children are provided with a homely atmosphere, where a wide range of toys and equipment provides them with a variety of stimulating experiences.

The children's welfare and care is effectively promoted through the range of policies and procedures, which are well organised, confidentially maintained and shared with parents. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children in her care.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection, the childminder has improved the range of toys and equipment to reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability.

Children's understanding of the wider world has been promoted through new books and resources reflecting positive images of other cultures, beliefs and abilities. Children are well protected because the childminder has a very good understanding of child protection procedures and how to implement these when necessary. She has obtained a copy of the detailed Area Child Protection reference guide to help her act professionally.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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 the range of activities offered to the younger children, for example by using the "Birth to three matters" framework;
- complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children.

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