

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY103646
Inspection date	29 August 2007
Inspector	Lynne Milligan
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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children aged five years and five months. They live in a house in the Western Downs area of Stafford, there are schools, shops and a park within walking distance. The whole of the ground floor, first floor bathroom and toilet, and side bedroom are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outside play.

The family have a dog, two cats, a rabbit and a Guinea pig.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is aware of other local childminders and pre-school groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder supports children and enables them to develop a clear understanding about keeping themselves healthy. Children practise good personal hygiene routines which help to

prevent cross-contamination. Written and agreed sick child procedures are in place to ensure everyone is protected from cross-infection. The childminder has completed relevant first aid training enabling her to deal with any accidents quickly and effectively. All health related documentation is in place and the childminder regularly reviews this information with parents to ensure children's changing needs are met. All medications are stored safely and policies are shared with parents in order to provide continuity of care for all children.

Attention to healthy eating provides children with opportunities to try new foods and explore their personal preferences. The childminder ensures areas for food preparation are appropriately cleaned and that the storage of food is safe. Food and drinks are stored appropriately. Children have access to drinking water at all times so no one remains thirsty. They know that drinking lots of water 'makes you healthy'. Children learn about foods which are good for you and those which are not so good during snack and meal time discussions or when they join in with simple cooking activities. This helps children develop a positive approach to healthy eating. Information about what the children have eaten and drank during their stay is exchanged through informal discussions when they are collected by parents and carers.

Children enjoy a good range of physical activities which help contribute to a healthy lifestyle. All children have access to separate physical play through the range of activities the childminder provides. They have access to a large garden where they play on trampolines, slides and bikes. The childminder often takes children for walks around the local park where they have picnics, enjoying the sunshine. All children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The home is warm and welcoming for children where they generally feel safe and secure. Space within the home is organised well, allowing children to move around freely and independently. Informal daily risk assessments are carried out by the childminder although action is not always taken to reduce any potential risks within the home, for example, the steps in the garden are unsafe and garden equipment is not stored safely. Consequently this has the potential to cause harm to children if they were left unsupervised. Access to the kitchen is monitored well and children know they cannot play in there as they cross to get to the conservatory. All cupboards are fitted with child locks and the front door is secure ensuring children cannot leave unsupervised. This helps children remain safe.

Children can access toys and play materials safely and independently as resources are organised to provide a range of play experiences. Toys and equipment are checked as they are rotated to ensure there are no broken parts that could harm them. The childminder ensures activities and experiences are fulfilling for children, considering their individual needs, interests and abilities when providing resources. Children's own awareness of personal safety is developed by the childminder providing gentle reminders such as sitting sensibly at the table and not jumping on the furniture. Fire drills are practised regularly with the children as they point to the exits and say 'that's where we go to wait for the fireman'. This ensures that they are able to leave the premises quickly and safely in the event of an incident or emergency. When on outings the childminder supports children's awareness of danger as they stay close to the pushchair. They are also beginning to understand the importance of stranger danger. This encourages children to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

The childminder has a sound understanding of safeguarding children and ensuring children are protected at all times. The childminder understands the correct procedures to follow for reporting concerns and has a clear understanding of signs and symptoms that may alert to child abuse. This helps to protect children from harm or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident, happy and settled in a warm and welcoming environment. The children enjoy a broad range of planned and spontaneous activities. For example, play dough, constructive building blocks, reading books, and playing in the local park. Children develop confidence and self-esteem as the childminder shows interest in what they do and say by talking and listening to them, asking questions and offering suggestions. Children talk about the book they are reading together and what might happen next. Support is provided by the childminder as she encourages the children to 'guess what's under the flap'. Children know the story well and read it back to her with excitement, further developing their language skills.

The children actively enjoy their time at the childminder's home as they are able to make choices about their play and organise their own time. The children particularly enjoy playing games together and helping with the younger children. They negotiate their play and take turns playing with the cars and share experiences as they talk about their home life. Children also walk to the local tots group where they develop their social skills and chat about the things they see on the way. As a result children enjoy first-hand experiences which help to develop their curiosity as learners.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem through the good relationships they have with the childminder. Children look to the childminder for reassurance, help and assistance and she responds in a warm, caring and enthusiastic manner. All children receive regular praise and encouragement, developing their confidence and ability to feel a sense of belonging.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated as individuals and with respect, helping them feel good about themselves. They are beginning to gain an awareness of diversity through a basic selection of toys and activities. Further opportunities for children to learn about society and its diversity in their everyday play are insufficient. Consequently children's understanding of others are limited.

Whilst there are no children attending with learning difficulties or disabilities, the childminder has considered how the environment and activities could be adapted to ensure inclusion. The childminder works very closely with parents to provide individual care required to promote children's welfare and development. She is willing to work with other agencies to further increase her knowledge and would undertake further training to accommodate an individual child's needs and promote their welfare.

Children are beginning to learn to share and take turns with toys and resources, ensuring they play harmoniously together. Children receive a good level of supervision and support so that any difficulties are sorted out quickly and effectively by the childminder. They respond well to consistent and regular praise and encouragement. Careful consideration to children's feelings is used when helping them understand their behaviour, which encourages positive behaviour and self-respect. This results in children's self-esteem being promoted.

The childminder develops strong relationships with parents and carers. Verbal feedback is shared with parents and carers which helps the childminder to provide continuity of care for all the children. This enables parents to be involved and enhance their own child's learning. Parents are welcomed into the setting and good communication is promoted in order to gauge their opinion and develop a service which meets their needs. The childminder is professional, positive and enthusiastic in her role, ensuring children's individual needs and preferences are met. All parents have access to relevant information about her practice, reports, policies and guidance. There is a sympathetic admissions procedure for new children ensuring the childminder has a good understanding of the children's needs and parents gain a clear understanding of her role.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The good organisation of records, information sharing and daily childminding routines promote positive outcomes for children. Daily registers are in place and are consistently signed to show an agreed record of attendance. The childminder is suitably experienced and qualified and is aware that extending her knowledge and understanding remains important in order to support her practice and provide good quality care.

The childminder has a clear understanding of the National Standards which ensures children are strongly protected in her care. Appropriate checks have been carried out to ensure children are cared for by a suitably vetted person and children are never left alone with any person not vetted. All records are securely stored and confidentiality is respected. The childminder has developed extensive written policies and procedures which she shares with parents and implements in practice to promote the smooth running of her setting. The childminder ensures that all documentation required by regulation is in place. She helps children to make progress and have fun in her care. This helps to promote the welfare of children.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was given two recommendations. The first was to ensure the emergency evacuation plan is practised with all children. The childminder now carries this out on a regular basis and children know where they should go in the event of a fire. Accurate and up to date recordings are kept of each fire drill. The childminder was also asked to obtain written parental agreements for emergency medical treatment. This is now in place. As a result the welfare and safety of all children is promoted.

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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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):

- review the risk assessments for the garden and take appropriate steps to ensure children's safety at all times
- further develop resources that provide children with positive images of diversity.

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