

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224000
Inspection date	29 November 2007
Inspector	Helen Barter
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 has been registered since 1995. The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years. She minds before and after school only, for children aged over five years. Currently one child under the age of eight years is on roll. The childminder also cares for older children up to the age of 14. The childminder lives in a detached house near Shrewsbury with her husband. She is a school cook, Girl Guide leader and foster carer.

The family have dogs as pets, which are in an outside pen and do not come into the house. Areas of the house used for minding are the kitchen, the hall, the lounge, the dining room and the downstairs bathroom. The upstairs rooms are not used for minding. There is a good-sized rear garden which is visible from the lounge and the kitchen.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean premises where good hygiene procedures are encouraged. For example, children know they wash their hands before eating tea and after going to the toilet.

The use of liquid soap and paper towels promotes good hygiene because it prevents the risk of cross infection. Parental permission is sought for emergency medical treatment. The childminder is knowledgeable about what to do in the event of an accident because she has up-to-date paediatric first aid training. However, the first-aid box is kept upstairs and not immediately accessible in the event of an accident.

Children's dietary needs are well met because, as a school cook, the childminder understands well the need to provide healthy options. Children enjoy their food at teatime because she listens to them and provides items which suits their preferences, such as their favourite yoghurt variety. Children enjoy freshly cooked meals, such as pasta with cheese and small home-made cakes. They are always offered fresh fruit, water and healthy drinks. Small snacks are provided for those who eat at home but are taken with the other children so that mealtimes are shared and sociable occasions.

Children have plenty of space in which to play indoors and, in good weather, enjoy activities in the spacious garden which promote their physical well-being. They ride bikes, play football, create obstacle courses and engage in messy water play. Children learn not to depend on transport because they walk to and from school each day with the childminder and this promotes a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is assured in the home because it is well maintained and organised. Safety procedures are well established and children understand that they are expected to follow them. Children are always in sight and sound of the childminder. They enjoy the homely environment a great deal because they have scope to play freely but feel safe because they are always supervised. This means that they have great fun together and particularly enjoy using the large and secure garden. Children are well protected from fire because extinguishing equipment is readily available and clear evacuation procedures are in place. They learn to be responsible for their own safety by practising these and being taught how to open the doors or windows in the event of an emergency. Equipment, such as games, jigsaws and bikes are in good condition and suitable for the children's interests and stages of development. Worn-out and broken resources are regularly replaced.

Children learn good road safety habits because, in going to and from school, the childminder expects them to walk close to her and to take particular care when crossing the lay-by entrance. Older children are good role models for the younger ones to follow. The childminder is well aware of her responsibilities to follow up any child protection concerns in line with current safeguarding guidance. This information is shared with parents so that they are clear about how well their child is protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and relaxed because they have warm relationships with the childminder and are valued as individuals. The childminder listens carefully to them as they happily discuss their day and activities, such as clubs. She knows them very well and uses informal observations to engage them in a wide range of activities. Children have a good range of age-appropriate activities to progress their play and which promote their social, emotional and physical needs. They get along very well with each other and particularly enjoy doing things as a group because

it is greatly encouraged by the childminder. For example, children are building a large marble run with cardboard boxes and tubes. It grows day by day as they re-design and add to it. The childminder values this collaborative activity and does not mind as it takes up more and more of her lounge! Children also pursue independent activities which interest them, for example, the older ones do homework or read quietly. Puzzles and games support the language and mathematical learning of the younger child. They enjoy learning catering skills as they bake cakes with the childminder.

The outside environment is excellent and adds much to children's enjoyment and achievement. They practise physical skills, such as riding bikes and playing with balls. Their team working skills are developed well through activities, such as devising an obstacle 'circus' for their bikes. The supervised wooded area is a particular favourite with the children. They use their imaginative and construction skills well to build a 'greasy spoon café' where they role play being cooks and customers who want a 'Full English' for their breakfast!

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder is consistent and caring in her dealings with children. She is a good role model and children follow her example by being respectful towards her and getting on well with each other. The childminder knows the children very well from their school setting. She uses this knowledge, patience and clear expectations for behaviour to create a positive environment. Children understand these expectations and play happily in the calm and homely environment. They are encouraged to share and help each other and this promotes their social skills well.

Although the childminder does not currently care for children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities, she has a good awareness of the importance of working with parents to meet children's individual needs. For example, the gradual introduction of children who are nervous at the new routine of coming to the setting and walking to school. Inclusion is promoted effectively so all children feel welcome. All have access to toys and books which promote positive images of different people's backgrounds.

The childminder ensures she has all relevant information about children prior to them starting. This ensures they settle well and their individual needs are met. Written agreements ensure parents and the childminder have shared expectations for the children's care. Informal discussion on arrival or departure helps parents and the childminder to share information about daily events and experiences. In discussion with parents, they say they are extremely happy with the care provided for their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are confident and happy in the welcoming environment where they are kept safe because of well established routines and procedures. The childminder uses the ground floor and outdoor environment effectively to help children participate in a good range of activities which promote their different needs well. For example, children can work quietly at the table while others engage in creative group activities in the lounge.

The childminder is aware of the need to maintain accurate records to promote children's welfare, for example, parental consent for emergency treatment. Record keeping procedures are much improved and information about children is kept confidentially in secure files. Through her

other child orientated roles as a school cook, Girl Guide leader and foster carer the childminder demonstrates her suitability and commitment to caring for children and providing them with a good quality service. 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 asked to update policies and procedures and maintain them in good order. The childminder has sought parental permission for emergency medical treatment or advice on new written agreements and all paperwork is stored appropriately in files. The childminder was asked to update her knowledge and understanding of child protection guidelines and procedures. She has done so within the different roles she plays in the community and has had very recent update training prior to the inspection. Children's safety and welfare is assured as a result.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 the first aid box can be easily accessed in the event of an emergency.

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