

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	255007
Inspection date	10 October 2007
Inspector	Angela Dyer
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 outstanding. 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 1990 and lives with her husband and adult child in Bearwood, Smethwick. The home is within walking distance of local schools and shops. Areas of the property used for childminding include the lounge, playroom, upstairs toilet and a fully enclosed garden area.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time and is currently minding 10 children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She attends a local pre-school group on a regular basis and is able to take and collect children from local schools.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is exceptionally well protected because the childminder places a high priority on ensuring they learn the importance of good personal hygiene, eat healthily and get plenty

of fresh air and exercise. Children develop a mature understanding and awareness of why they need to follow good hand washing routines due to the childminder's guidance. Children are escorted to the bathroom upstairs but encouraged to be independent in their hand washing and help themselves to their named individual hand towels which help to reduce the risk of cross infection. Daily cleaning routines and the childminder's extensive knowledge of effective procedures also prevent the spread of infection, for example, all areas of the home are cleaned before children arrive and the childminder explained how she uses gloves when changing nappies. Clear and very effective records are kept and maintained about children's health and medication needs and the childminder described how she would use her first aid knowledge to ensure that any minor bumps and bruises are handled in a timely, sensitive and efficient manner.

Children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating is effectively supported through discussions and activities, including creating collages of pictures of foods that children consider to be good for them or not. The childminder has an excellent knowledge of nutrition and children's dietary needs. She gives considerable thought to the weekly menu and children are provided with tasty and nutritious meals and snacks, including various fresh fruits, meat and vegetables. Children are able to help themselves to drinks throughout the day and the childminder monitors their intake to ensure they always drink enough. Meal times are sociable occasions and the childminder takes time to chat to the children praising them for good table manners.

The childminder places great value on the importance of physical play and ensures that children continue to be active in all weathers. The garden is a very secure environment where children can play with a wide range of excellent quality resources. The childminder also described other fun activities that children enjoy, including going for walks in the nearby woods, going on outings to the park and Botanical Gardens and visiting indoor play areas where children can develop skills including climbing and balancing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised because the childminder has an excellent understanding of health and safety issues. Potential risks to children, inside and outside, have been identified through the completion of detailed risk assessments and appropriate safety measures put in place including socket covers, which sound an alarm when removed, and stair gates to prevent children from having unsupervised access to the stairs. Children are always supervised and the home and garden are safe and secure, to ensure that children are unable to leave unsupervised.

Children use a wide range of safe, high quality, stimulating and age appropriate resources that are frequently checked for cleanliness and safety. Toys which are appropriate for younger children are stored where they can be easily accessed and the childminder described how older children are aware that if they want to play with toys with smaller parts then they must do so in the other room away from younger children. Children have a mature understanding of how to keep themselves safe because the childminder discusses safe practices with them. The childminder is proactive in promoting fire safety and regularly practises the fire evacuation procedures with children to enhance their awareness of what to do in an emergency.

Children are well protected because the childminder has a professional understanding of child protection procedures and is fully aware of her role and responsibility to protect the children in her care. She has an excellent understanding of how to protect children and has attended

training to update her knowledge and skills. Parents have been made aware of the procedures so that they know what action she will take if she has any concerns about their children. The childminder has a range of professional documents and policies both for her reference and to support discussions with parents and older children about safety issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit significantly from the childminder's remarkable levels of enthusiasm, sensitivity and obvious enjoyment in her role as a childminder. Children are extremely happy in her care and eager to participate in a rich and stimulating range of activities that excite and captivate their concentration. A wealth of hands-on experiences are planned and offered which are fun, stimulating, and educational, these include various art activities, the use of musical instruments and interactive story telling sessions. Children regularly go on outings to places of interest including local toddler groups where children have opportunities to be sociable with others.

Close and caring relationships have formed between the childminder and children and playful interactions reflect the outstanding level of care offered. High quality adult and child interactions are extremely supportive of children's communication skills and the childminder is attentive to what they say and do, fully respecting their contributions. The use of high quality visual aids including story sacks, Barnaby Bear and a large puppet called 'Pete' further encourage children to communicate and help develop their confidence and self-esteem.

Children talked excitedly about Barnaby Bear going home with them and taking him to see their families. His accompanying diary contains photographs and pictures which provide the childminder with a greater insight into children's lives and extended families, this enables her to build on children's interests within the activities that she plans. The childminder has an exceptional knowledge of the children in her care and her knowledge has been built on through the completion of observations and assessments of children's skills and abilities. Children make excellent progress because she recognises their individual needs and has a professional understanding of child development and early years guidance, including the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's behaviour is consistently rewarded with praise and recognition and younger children glow with pleasure as the childminder tells them how proud she is of them. The childminder has high but realistic expectations of children's behaviour and children are very well behaved, polite and confident. The childminder also described a recent initiative that she has introduced where older children share the responsibilities in helping to look after the younger children in a 'buddy' role, in order to enhance their awareness of the importance of looking after others and to develop their own self-esteem. Therefore, children make close relationships with the childminder and each other.

Children have extensive opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through the broad range of resources and well-planned activities. Children celebrate and recognise different festivals and go on outings, in and around their own community, to help them become aware of the diversity of our society. There is a strong commitment from the childminder to ensure all children are included. She works collaboratively with parents in order to fully meet the needs of all children.

The childminder has developed an excellent partnership with parents. Children's needs are established through detailed discussions with parents and are met as the childminder respects and follows their daily routines. As a result, children benefit from consistent high levels of care from their main carers. Parents are kept informed of the progress their children are making, through daily verbal feedback and when requested individual diaries. Written policies and procedures also help them to understand the childminder's roles and responsibilities. The childminder seeks parents' views and concerns in the form of questionnaires, which she then uses to evaluate her own practices. Parents questionnaires contain extremely positive comments regarding the 'exceptional care provided' and how the childminder is 'approachable, often going beyond her call of duty in caring for the children'. Parents have also nominated her for an independent award and shared their high praise with the local authority who have recently presented her with the title of 'Sandwell's Childminder of the Year 2007'.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge of childcare, her experience, enthusiasm and easy going nature. The childminder has ensured that all adults in the household and regular visitors have been suitably checked, to safeguard children. She demonstrates an ongoing commitment to improvement and developing and enhancing her practice and keeps herself informed of current issues and training opportunities in early years by maintaining regular contact with the local authority.

The childminder has excellent organisational skills and the environment is well-organised both indoors and outdoors to maximise play opportunities for children. All required documentation that contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed. The childminder has developed a comprehensive folder of well-written policies, to help parents understand her practice. All significant information is recorded and used to best effect, ensuring an outstanding level of care is offered. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to record children's arrival and departure times. Children's safety and welfare are now fully promoted as a daily diary is completed, recording accurate times of when children arrive and depart.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since their 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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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