

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	268472
Inspection date	04 October 2007
Inspector	Lisa Jeffries
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 2001. She lives her partner and three children in the Whitestone area of Nuneaton. A variety of shops, parks and schools are within walking distance. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, including access to toilet facilities. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding three children. All are part-time arrangements. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools. The family have a pet dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is exceptionally promoted as the childminder follows thorough procedures relating to health and hygiene. The childminder ensures that children are cared for in a clean and prolifically maintained environment. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. The risk of cross-infection is minimised through the provision

of liquid soap and clean towels which are washed and replaced on a daily basis. Children are protected further as the childminder follows highly efficient practices when preparing and serving food. For example, food preparation and serving areas are consistently cleaned with antibacterial spray and the childminder washes her hands before handling food.

Children receive excellent care if they are ill or have an accident because cohesive information is obtained from parents about their individual healthcare needs including consent to seek emergency medical advice and treatment. The childminder holds a current paediatric first aid certificate and a fully stocked first aid kit is easily accessible in the kitchen. Accident sheets have been designed by the childminder for recording accidents and include a section for parents to sign to acknowledge entries relating to their children. A comprehensive procedure is in place for the exclusion of children who are unwell and this is shared verbally with parents when they join the setting. As a result, children are unquestionably protected from the spread of infectious illnesses.

Children's dietary needs are meticulously met because the childminder requests information about children's individual dietary requirements and these are respected when providing food. Children enjoy snacks that are balanced and nutritious such as toast and fresh fruit. They remain well-hydrated as they help themselves to drinks from their individual beakers which are easily accessible and regularly replenished throughout the session. The childminder has a dynamic approach to help children learn about healthy eating as she takes them to the local greengrocers where they use pictorial shopping lists to select fruit and vegetables. Children take pleasure in baking cakes and biscuits and after listening to the story of 'The Gingerbread Man' they enthusiastically leaf through a cook book to find a suitable recipe. In addition, children have exciting opportunities to try new foods as the childminder takes them out to eat once a fortnight. At Chinese New Year they used chopsticks at a Chinese restaurant and they have sampled Italian foods like pizza and pasta.

Children's physical play experiences are unreservedly promoted as they ride on bicycles and use balls in the well-maintained and spacious garden. They access the fresh air frequently when running around and climbing on larger apparatus in the local parks and during the walk to and from school. The childminder implements a vast range of outdoor activities and children bring snowsuits and wellington boots in the winter months. As a result, children enjoy plenty of physical exercise which contributes towards a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely well cared for in a highly organised and safe environment, where they can move around freely and independently. They play mainly in the homely lounge area which provides a light and airy feeling and a good amount of floor space for the children to initiate and extend their play. Displays of children's creative work help to create a welcoming and child-friendly environment. Safety gates are in place to ensure children do not have unsupervised access to the first floor and children are supervised when accessing the clean and well-maintained toilet facilities located on the ground floor. Children self-select from a wide range of resources and play equipment which is checked and rotated regularly to ensure it is safe and continues to maintain children's interest. The childminder rotates toys and makes good use of the local authority's toy library scheme, ensuring that children can choose from new resources and remain engaged and interested in their play.

Extensive steps are taken to minimise risk and promote children's safety such as conducting daily visual risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor play areas. Fire safety precautions are in place and the childminder is extremely confident in her actions in the event of an emergency. She has devised a comprehensive emergency evacuation procedure which includes a detailed floor plan of the premises. This is rehearsed regularly with the children so they know how to act safely and promptly. The children enjoyed a recent visit from local fire-fighters, who explained the escape plan and allowed the children to sit in the fire engine and use the hose. Access to the setting is monitored as the childminder requests identification from visitors and the entrance doors are securely locked during sessions. This also ensures that children are unable to leave unsupervised. The walk to and from school is used as a valuable opportunity to teach children about road safety and the childminder has purchased books to consolidate children's understanding.

Children are unreservedly safeguarded as the childminder has vast knowledge, experience and understanding of her role in child protection and is confident to implement local procedures. She is aware of how to seek advice and is unquestionably knowledgeable about the children in her care and immensely intuitive of their needs. Children feel comfortable expressing their feelings which aids their emotional stability and supports their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

All children are extraordinarily happy and secure at the setting. They settle immediately as the childminder is genuinely pleased to see them and she thoughtfully prepares their favourite resources and activities ready for their arrival. Children respond confidently to the familiar routine and the warm, friendly and loving atmosphere created by the childminder. They delight in telling her about their experiences at home and the childminder responds eagerly, asking questions to extend their conversation. Children's play and learning is inspired through the childminder's purposeful interaction with them and they develop confidence through optimum support and encouragement. The childminder's imaginative and resourceful approach ensures that children are constantly captivated. Children benefit from the obvious delight and devotion she takes in her role and they unmistakably enjoy their time in her care.

The childminder effectively plans activities in advance, linking these to children's individual stages of development and identifying ways to adapt activities to enable all children to participate. As a result, the children's overall learning and development is extremely well promoted at the setting. Children are exceptionally interested in what they see and do because the childminder provides an extensive range of play experiences which are led almost completely by the children's interests. For example, the childminder happily meets children's requests to draw pictures and to bake gingerbread men.

Children's imaginative play is successfully fostered as they play with pots and pans in the play kitchen and act out scenarios whilst engaging in small world play with a doll's house, pirate ship and play people. The childminder encourages children to develop their understanding of mathematical concepts in their play. For example, younger children are encouraged to draw pink circles to develop an awareness of shapes and colours. Children enjoy a range of hands-on practical experiences such as caring for the pet dog and visiting the local greengrocers to help with shopping tasks. They experience vast opportunities to socialise with other children and adults as they enjoy regular visits to the local toddler group and toy library and the childminder has forged effective links with other childminders in the local area.

Younger children receive excellent care as the childminder is experienced in caring for babies and young children and reflects aspects of the 'Birth to three matters' framework in her practice. The childminder has an exceptional understanding of the needs of younger children and draws on this to enable her to adapt activities to meet their individual developmental needs. All children accomplish new skills, develop competence and flourish in the childminder's care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are highly valued because the childminder ensures, through regular discussion and precise written information from parents, that she is fully aware of the level of care each child requires. The childminder recognises that children have specific needs and different personalities and treats them as individuals, with equal concern. Professional, warm and friendly relationships with parents ensures optimum continuity of care. Children make choices about their care and play activities which promotes their self-confidence and enables them to develop an exceptionally strong sense of belonging. The childminder is highly skilled at making all children feel special, treasured and part of her family.

The childminder is dedicated to providing an all-inclusive environment and has an open approach to admissions. She has an excellent practical awareness of how to include and appropriately care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Through discussion and observation when they are walking in the local neighbourhood, children develop a considerable awareness of the wider world and the diversity of adults and children. They visit shops in the local Asian community, choosing new foods, looking at the jewellery and purchasing material to make saris. This is supported in their play at the childminder's home as there are wide-ranging resources to help them learn about equality of opportunity. For example, whilst they are playing with a toy guide dog and white stick the childminder expertly explains about people who are blind. At Thanksgiving the children were visited by the childminder's American relative who cooked them a Thanksgiving dinner. At Diwali, the children sampled different foods and the childminder bought a calendar which revealed new information about the festival on a daily basis.

Children benefit from an affectionate and sympathetic approach and learn right from wrong through careful explanation, reasoning and consistency. The childminder responds to appropriate behaviour with praise and cuddles and encourages children to understand clear and consistent boundaries. For example, children are encouraged to tidy away the books they have been reading before moving on to a different activity. Children behave exceptionally well, are polite and form positive friendships. They play together, take turns and share. Children understand responsible behaviour and respect the needs of others. Younger children are content, gain attention from older children and develop self-assurance through close relationships with the childminder. Children's behaviour is supported further as the childminder discusses their behaviour with parents and would record any significant incidents. Children enjoy being with familiar and trusted others and acquire significant social confidence.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are exceptionally well looked after in a setting where the childminder's top priority is the children's good health, learning, safety and enjoyment. The childminder is very well qualified, knowledgeable and experienced and children benefit from her eager commitment to continuing

her professional development. For example, the childminder keeps fully up to date with good practice by accessing local training courses and workshops. She is confident in her vision for the service she provides for children and their families and displays obvious pleasure in her role. Children are actively safeguarded as the childminder is aware of the importance of ensuring they are consistently supervised.

Careful consideration has been given to the areas of the home that are used for childminding and this ensures that children have the space and freedom to initiate and extend their play, while maintaining some privacy for the childminder's own family. Space and resources are used creatively and effectively to ensure that children have a stimulating day. Children profit from the systematic organisation of the setting. Comprehensive policies and procedures protect children and are successfully implemented to promote all outcomes for children. Accurate, cohesive records are maintained, shared with parents and retained for inspection. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to ensure that gas and electrical appliances are safe. In addition, the childminder was asked to make loose wires safe or inaccessible to children. The childminder has taken positive steps to ensure that children's safety in this area is fully promoted.

The childminder was also asked to ensure that the garden is safe for children to use. Children are able to play safely and this has had a positive impact upon the quality of care. Finally, the childminder was asked to increase knowledge in the event of a child protection allegation made against self or family member. The childminder demonstrates excellent knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and is fully aware of the procedures and of her responsibilities.

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

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