

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY363988
Inspection date	07 May 2008
Inspector	Sue Anslow
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 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged six and two, in Sandbach Heath. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding two children under five and one child over five, for the occasional day during school holidays. The childminder walks to the local school and accesses other play facilities during the week.

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's health is protected and promoted very well through good routines and attention to hygiene requirements. Children are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times and

signs and pictures in the toilet remind children to flush after use and wash their hands. Sick or injured children are managed well by the childminder, who holds a current first aid certificate and records any accidents or medication correctly. The home is clean and well maintained, nappies are changed hygienically and sterile wipes used for minor clean-ups. A healthy lifestyle is encouraged by the childminder through plenty of fresh air and exercise and the provision of a well balanced diet. Children play actively in the garden at every opportunity and walk to and from school every day. They can rest or be active according to their individual needs and appropriate facilities are available for young children to sleep in peace and quiet.

Children are well nourished throughout the day with a variety of meals and snacks. Fresh produce is used by the childminder, with plenty of fresh fruit and salad items to accompany the sandwiches. Occasional treats of sponge pudding and custard or a piece of chocolate after the meal are thoroughly enjoyed by all the children. Drinks are served with the food and younger children have their feeder cups nearby whilst playing to ensure they never get thirsty. Any special diets or particular requests from parents are respected and maintained at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy ample space to play, eat and sleep in this child friendly home. The small front room contains all the toy boxes, child sized furniture and low shelving, enabling children to help themselves to whatever they want to play with. The through dining room, kitchen and lounge at the back of the house provides extra space for children to use as required. This enables children to play separately if they prefer or for different activities to take place at the same time. The large garden with decking, paving and grassed areas, offers excellent opportunities for active and imaginative outdoor play. A wide range of toys and equipment for all ages promotes enjoyment and learning for the children and all items are kept clean and safe to protect their welfare. Children's art work and brightly coloured posters adorn the walls in the front room, which enhance the feeling of welcome and belonging.

Children are kept safe and secure by the childminder who pays reasonably close attention to all possible hazards. Written risk assessments are carried out for most situations, however, clumps of stinging nettles in the hedgerow and a stable door on the children's playhouse, which cannot be fastened back, compromises children's safety when playing outside. Smoke alarms and a fire blanket ensure protection from fire and the childminder has discussed evacuation procedures with all the minded children. The childminder ensures that she has her mobile phone with her when away from home, for easy contact with parents or emergency services. Young children are strapped securely into the pushchair, reins are used if needed for older toddlers and they practise the 'stop, look and listen' procedure before crossing the road. Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder, who is familiar with her role and responsibilities with regard to any child protection issues. A written policy informs parents of the actions the childminder will take, should the need arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy and benefit from a wide range of activities, both indoors and outside. They thoroughly enjoy physical activities on the swing, slide and rockers in the garden and use the various wheeled toys with increasing skill. Ample play space is available indoors, allowing children to play together or separately as they wish. Children are able to make choices from

the range of toys and play equipment and they love baking, painting and making models out of play dough. Children enjoy close relationships with the childminder, which help them feel supported and well cared for. They snuggle up to read books or watch films together, talking about what is happening or what might happen next.

Children develop in all areas of learning through the many and varied play opportunities offered by the childminder. Brightly coloured posters of numbers and letters help children recognise the shapes and sounds. Pencils and crayons are always available and older children enjoy tracing round the letters of their names. Each child's individual personality and interests is familiar to the childminder and care is taken to provide familiar toys or activities. For example, children who love dinosaurs thoroughly enjoy watching, 'The Land before Time' series on video.

Outdoor activities and outings are promoted strongly throughout the year. Children go for walks down nearby country lanes to collect leaves and twigs for their pictures or talk to the animals in the fields. They enjoy digging in the flower beds and filling up the bird feeders with nuts. These activities help children understand more about the world around them and promote their physical development and curiosity. Imaginative play is promoted strongly as children 'make the tea' with the kitchen set and play food or pretend to be gardeners riding round on the tractor, pulling a trailer filled with garden tools. The childminder uses the internet to research ideas and illustrations for different activities. She observes the children's interests and abilities and provides a wide variety of games and toys to enhance their development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the childminder's home and no one is discriminated against for any reason. Individual needs are met well by the childminder who is familiar with the children's interests and characters. Any particular requirements are discussed with the parents and their wishes are respected. Children learn something of their local community and an appreciation of animals and nature through walks in the countryside to collect leaves and talk to the animals over the fence. A range of outdoor activities in the garden and keeping the bird feeders topped up with nuts add to children's understanding of the world around them. Young children are beginning to learn about other cultures and people with disabilities through looking at picture books and posters. They enjoy celebrating different festivals, particularly making chocolate nests for their mini-eggs at Easter time.

Children behave very well due to the variety of interesting activities provided by the childminder. Lots of praise for achievements, kindness and helpfulness, enhances the children's confidence and self-esteem. They proudly show off the stickers they have been awarded for playing nicely together or helping to put the toys away. A written behaviour management policy for parents, outlines the 'house rules' and assures them that their children will be managed appropriately in full consultation with their wishes. Children are happy and confident due to good liaison between their parents and the childminder. New children have ample time to settle in with the childminder's family, and copies of the policies and procedures, outlining the service offered, is given to all parents. Consistency of care and routine is maintained through daily exchanges of information between all parties and an album of photographs informs parents of all the fun the children are having. Signed contracts, consent forms and other relevant details are kept as required and serve to enhance and support the good care management.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by a childminder who is committed to providing an interesting and varied programme of activities for the children. Routines are planned and organised well, giving children a variety of play and learning opportunities as well as freedom of choice to help themselves to whatever they want to play with. A number of relevant courses have been completed and the childminder has devised a chart based on the new Early Years Foundation Stage profile, in order to track the children's development. Ample space is available indoors with toys arranged appropriately to allow easy access. Outdoor activities in the large garden as well as walks to and from school every day, enhance children's experiences and enjoyment.

Children's care and routines are well supported by the up to date records and written policies and procedures. A daily register of attendance is kept as well as a 'fire register' totalling the number of children present each day. Parents are kept well informed of their children's enjoyment and progress through verbal exchanges of information every day and confidentiality is respected and maintained. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 complaint 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):

- minimise all hazards in the garden.

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