



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	223438
Inspection date	18 May 2005
Inspector	Josephine Mary Hammick

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 1990. She lives with her husband in Whitecross, a suburb of Hereford. The whole of the ground floor of the house is used for childminding, one bedroom upstairs for rest and sleep and a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler group, takes children to the local park and library.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time.

The childminder has one cat.

The childminder supports children with special educational needs.

The childminder is an active member of the National Childminding Association and is involved in running the local childminders support group. She is currently training to become part of an accredited childminder network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder takes positive steps to develop children's understanding and awareness of good health and hygiene, she explains the importance of hand washing, she provides encouragement and support and children use good quality hand washing facilities before meals, after handling animals, after playing outside and at frequent intervals during the day. The family has one cat who is fed on the landing which is accessible to children. It is up to date with vaccinations and worming.

Children benefit from a clean and warm environment. Sick children are made comfortable. Procedures include contacting parents, collecting children and excluding ill / infectious children. Children's records are well maintained and are regularly reviewed and updated. Parental consent for seeking emergency medical advice and treatment is maintained.

Children are offered drinks regularly throughout the day e.g. fruit juice, squash (sugar free), milk, and water. Children's individual needs, in particular their particular allergies, dietary and cultural needs are respected and appropriate action is taken. Parents wishes are also respected. Children are developing an awareness of a healthy lifestyle as they partake in physical activities, and make independent choices from healthy snacks and drinks. Snacks are sociable occasions. Mealtimes are based on children's individual needs. Mealtimes for babies may not be at traditional mealtimes, but are based upon their own routines.

Children's physical development is encouraged and promoted through walking to and from schools, local amenities and outside play on the premises.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe as a result of the childminders good awareness of health and safety and all reasonable steps are taken to eliminate risk of injury. Children learn about safety within planned and unplanned play and learning activities. Safety issues are discussed with and understood by the older children. Children's awareness of safety issues is continuously developed through every day activities within the home and during outings, such as the use of the Green Cross Code, highlighting hazards such as water, fire, as appropriate, and practising emergency evacuation procedures. Children are learning to adhere to rules and boundaries, they seek help and are

learning to say no and accept when others say 'No'. For example, one baby wanted to crawl in the flower bed and eat the flowers. The childminder was firm but fair, using distraction and praise.

Children are well supervised and there are good procedures for their safe arrival and collection. Good security measures are in place including vetting all visitors and effective supervision of the children is maintained. A high priority is given to the condition and safety of equipment, the procedures for fire safety and the security of the premises. All equipment is safety checked as it is used and good attention is given to all aspects of safety both inside and outside the home. The garden is secure & smoke alarms are fitted on every level. Electrical sockets and leads are made safe.

Children are well protected. The childminder has received training in child protection and has a good understanding of the indicators of abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are actively encouraged to make the most of their day to day experiences by the childminders careful consideration of what the child might be able to learn from her and what they say and do guides their learning. She consistently and positively interacts with the children to encourage their interest, involvement and learning. The childminder has a sound knowledge of child development. She takes time to find out what interests each child and what each child knows and can do. She builds upon this information to plan and provide a variety of activities and opportunities to help the child progress in all areas of learning. For example, the use of themes to broaden the children's knowledge and experiences. The children are also actively involved in choosing what they want to play with. The childminder supports and extends their knowledge, as she knows the children well and is experienced in providing a supportive learning environment.

Children's personal social and emotional development is promoted by sitting down together at meal times. Babies are held securely whilst being bottle fed, and children are learning to share and listen whilst they discuss family members and things about home. Language and mathematical thinking is promoted through songs, rhymes, counting every day objects, introducing simple addition and subtraction, reading and story books. Children also learn by participating in many day-to-day domestic routines and activities. The children are developing positive relationships, they are developing their listening and communication skills and story times are geared around their personal likes and dislikes. The childminder organises trips and outings and knows when to encourage free play, when to stimulate interest, when to encourage rest or sleep. Children are developing their independence, they are able to access resources for themselves, use their initiative and take responsibility. They behave well in response to the childminder's warm encouragement and praise. The children respond well to methods, expectations and questions that challenge and support them and encourage them to achieve as much as they can.

Parents receive good quality information about the provision. They are kept informed about their children's progress and achievements. The childminder seeks, values and

acts on parents' views with conversations at the beginning and end of the day. Written records of babies food intake and routines are shared daily. Contracts and details are regularly updated and reviewed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a sense of belonging, the childminder knows them well and she respects children's individual routines. She encourages them to work harmoniously with others, make choices, make decisions, develop self-esteem and respect for others, whilst receiving appropriate support. The children are taken to toddler groups, to local parks and amenities to stimulate their interest and to help them become aware of the wider society in which they live.

Children are able to share the toys and enjoy playing together. The children respond to clear behaviour management policy and strategies which are shared with and understood by parents. Behaviour is good and 'rules' are clear. The children are praised when they try to help each other. Children are praised and applauded when they share and cooperate.

There are good partnerships with parents. Attractive clear and detailed information is provided to parents about the childminding practice and service. Written agreements with parents are detailed, are comprehensive and clear. This includes training certificates, public liability insurance certificate, registration certificate and an introduction to the childminder and her family. Regular discussions take place with parents to exchange information, discuss concerns and to highlight their child's progress. Opportunities are provided for confidential discussion. Parents are informed about how they may complain about any aspect of the service.

Children's individual needs are well met, good partnerships with parents mean that children are well settled with a familiar and trusted adult, can separate happily from the parent, and are gaining self assurance and confidence with others.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is very well organised. Adult/child ratio's are adhered to and respected at all times, the children are well supervised. The childminder keeps up to date with training and updates her knowledge by attending workshops and information sessions on a regular basis. She currently holds an NVQ Level three in childcare and education, has knowledge and experience of caring for babies, attends regular workshops organised by the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and is interested in becoming an accredited childminder.

All records, policies and procedures are in place and written for parents to see in full. Her knowledge of the National Standards and Foundation Stage curriculum are sound. Children's welfare is monitored, recorded and shared with parents on an

ongoing basis. Equipment and resources are regularly extended, updated, maintained and kept clean. The risk of injury or infection is minimized significantly.

Space and resources are well organised and children benefit from this e.g. access to equipment. All the downstairs rooms are registered, but mostly the dining room and conservatory are used. Cupboards are full of toys and equipment, more are stored in the cellar and these are rotated. Equipment is very clean and well maintained, of good quality and play value, covering all needs and ages/ stages of development - from babies to after school children. Children can access toys and resources easily and they are stored at their height. Toys and resources incorporate positive images of race, culture, ethnicity and ability. The childminder has acquired them herself either by buying or using the local toy library.

Regular discussions with parents are set up to ensure there are good opportunities to exchange information, share concerns and highlight children's progress. Children are seen as individuals. Their needs are met by ongoing communication and co-operation with parents. Additional documentation is made available to parents relating to the childminders qualifications and training, and information about the service she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, Ofsted have not had any complaints about this provider.

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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):

- Continue to improve knowledge and understanding of the needs of children under three. For example by completing the training workshops based on The Birth to Three Matters Framework.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk