



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	209820
Inspection date	06 February 2006
Inspector	Sheila Dawn Flounders

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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1998. She lives with her husband and 2 school aged children in the Wilnecote area of Tamworth, Staffordshire. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and the upstairs bathroom. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 5 children at any one time and is currently minding 3 children under 5 all day and 2 children over 5 before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children or uses the car. The childminder attends the local toddler group

regularly. The family have 2 guinea pigs and 2 gerbils.

The childminder is able to support children with additional needs. She holds an appropriate child care qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association and the Staffordshire childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children have very good opportunities for physical play either within the premises or in the local community, such as building with soft play blocks, using a trampoline, climbing frame or a variety of bikes. They access a wide range of resources in the rear garden and make regular trips to local parks or attend play events with other childminders. Older children have a daily walk to school in the fresh air and the childminder ensures that planned activities for the younger children enable them to benefit from exercise. Children understand simple good health and hygiene practices, such as the use of liquid soap, individual towels and their own hairbrushes, which all help to reduce the spread of any infections. They know that it is part of their routine to wash their hands after toileting, before eating and after certain activities, such as handling the guinea pigs. The regular cleaning routines and the robust nappy changing procedures help children to stay healthy and parents are made aware that they will have to collect any children who are taken ill. A written sickness policy is in place, requesting that children do not attend when they are ill, but it does not advise parents on periods of exclusion following illness. Children rest and sleep according to their need, with the childminder finding out their routines through detailed, and ongoing contact with parents. They normally bring packed lunches from home which are well stored and served, as the childminder has good knowledge of food handling procedures. Children are encouraged to bring healthy options and the childminder can provide information for parents, if they wish, on a healthy diet to ensure that children are well nourished. All the children have good access to fluids, with the older children able to serve themselves and younger children offered frequent drinks throughout the day. Children have their health and dietary needs fully met because the childminder works with parents to ensure that she knows what these are. Any medication needed is appropriately stored and only given with parental consent.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe environment where they have had no serious accidents. They remain on the ground floor most of the time, except to use the bathroom, which ensures constant supervision and that younger children are monitored easily when sleeping. Suitable measures have been put in place to minimise risks to the children, such as bark chippings under the play equipment in the garden and risk assessments are being undertaken. Children use suitable and safe equipment which the childminder takes care to select according to their ages

and stages of development. They are kept safe on their frequent outings through the use of car seats or harnesses and reins when walking. Children learn to protect themselves as they practise the detailed fire evacuation regularly to ensure that all children participate. They are also encouraged to use sun cream in the summer months. Children are further protected because the childminder understands her role in child protection and knows what procedures to put in place when necessary. She has ensured that her training is up to date and that parents are aware of her policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem as they play with a wide range of age appropriate resources. They are interested in what they do and will spend long periods at play with certain activities, such as with creative story telling using puppets, using stencils or playing with the dolls house. During this time pertinent intervention and skilful discussion is used by the childminder to extend the child's understanding of issues, such as disability. They are all offered very good first hand experiences, such as cooking, gardening and attending local groups. So they benefit from learning and play opportunities inside and outside and through visits and outings. Children ask questions often as they have constant opportunities to interact with the childminder, which helps them to acquire new knowledge and skills such as how an electric wheelchair works or about aspects of various forms of transport. They use their initiative as they develop their ideas and become more independent, such as thinking about how to use the paper whilst stencilling and deciding to sellotape it to the table to stop it moving. Children respond well to the challenge which is provided through planned graded activities which are relevant to their individual progress. They have very good opportunities to be independent and self-select resources, balanced with ready support available from the childminder if they need it. Younger children are particularly well supported through the frequent use of activities which are planned using the 'Birth to three matters' framework and records of their progress are shared with their families. Children make strong, positive relationships with the childminder and with each other, as she plays with them joining in with activities at an appropriate level. Most have attended for some time and the childminder ensures that each has some periods of individual attention. They begin to distinguish between right and wrong as they are aware of the basic rules which are in place. Thus children's language, thinking, imagination and social relationships are well fostered.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have their individual needs met well, including those with additional needs, as the childminder has good ongoing contact with parents to ensure that she is fully updated as to what these are. Opportunities are made for daily verbal exchanges of information and parents also use their child's journal to send messages. This ensures that younger children particularly eat, sleep and are toileted in keeping with their own routines and that the childminder is aware of each families individual circumstances.

The childminder has been pro-active in attending additional training to enable her to better support children and their parents with certain specific needs. All children have a sense of belonging in the setting and are obviously happy and settled. They enjoy being involved in household routines, such as caring for their personal hygiene or taking responsibility for organising their lunch tray. Children understand reasonable behaviour and are all aware of the 'golden rules' which are in place. These are fully shared with parents, as are all policies. Reminders are given to the children before certain situations, such as going to the park, or walking outside, so that issues can be avoided. Each child is given consistent praise and attention by the childminder. She acts as a positive role model by being polite to them and accepting their comments and suggestions, so that they are encouraged to behave positively and get on well together. Children have many good opportunities to make choices and decisions for themselves with self selection encouraged. The childminder also ensures that children are involved in deciding what activities they would like to do in connection with her chosen theme for the month. They continue to develop self-esteem and respect for others as they frequently use resources within the local community. They are able to make the childminder aware of their needs. However, they also learn that at times the needs of another child, especially one younger, may take priority over their own and accept that. Children become aware of wider society as they play with a good range of resources which promote positive images of gender, disability and culture, some of which the childminder supplements by making regular use of a toy library.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has high regard for the well-being of the children in her care. She plans activities according to the different age groups that attend and tracks children's progress through the use of assessments of those activities, journals and photographic evidence. She makes good use of her time and the space within her home to provide a child centred environment and continually evaluates her own practise to ensure that all the outcomes for children are met well. She continues to attend training regularly on a variety of issues which are relevant to the children she is currently caring for. She has detailed written policies and procedures in place which work to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievements and their positive contribution to the setting. All the necessary documentation is in place, readily available and mostly kept up to date. However, the complaints procedure does not reflect the recent changes to the national standards and no evidence is kept that contracts with parents are reviewed. 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 make an amendment to her records of medication. She now ensures that a signature is obtained to acknowledge the administration of all medication from parents or carers.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 complaints policy reflects current Ofsted standards
- ensure that parents are made aware of the period of exclusion for illness
- ensure that contracts are reviewed regularly.

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