



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224418
Inspection date	13 January 2006
Inspector	Valerie Thomas

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 1993. She lives with her husband and 2 children, 1 of whom is an adult and 1 of whom is 12 years, in Stoke-on-Trent. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, except for the conservatory and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding six children under five, five of whom attend on a part time basis. She transports children to local schools to take and collect them. The childminder attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis. The family has pet guinea pigs.

The childminder is a member of the Accredited Stoke-on-Trent Childminding Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home, where the routines and procedures implemented by the childminder help them develop a clear understanding of when and why they need to wash their hands. Methods implemented for nappy changing are good and reduce the risk of cross contamination. The clear procedures in place for sick and infectious children help limit the spread of infection and helps them to keep healthy.

Children's individual dietary needs are met well in partnership with parents. A varied and nutritional diet is provided throughout the day in order that children develop a healthy approach to eating. Fruit is given regularly for snacks and after lunch and children are encouraged to drink milk and water. They rest and sleep according to their needs and the childminder has a good knowledge of the children's individual routines. This helps children to settle.

Children benefit from regular opportunities to play outside in the fresh air. Children are taken to local parks, nature areas and an activity centre where they are encouraged to develop their physical skills and develop a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where risks are identified and minimised. This means that they are able to move around safely, freely and independently. Young babies are able to sit up safely with protection for if they topple over and older children learn that they should not climb on the chairs as they may fall, which helps them stay safe. Good awareness and supervision by the childminder as they play encourages their independence well and protects them from harm.

The home is well-maintained and offers good space and a welcoming environment for children to play comfortably with the toys and equipment. Toys are organised in low storage boxes and shelving to allow easy access and help create a stimulating environment for children to make their own choices about their play.

The childminder's secure understanding of child protection procedures in line with the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures ensures children are protected from harm or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very settled and enjoy their time in the setting. They are confident and approach the childminder for their needs which are met well and the childminder demonstrates good awareness of signs shown by the younger children that they require something. They enjoy close physical contact and relate well to the childminder, giving lots of smiles and verbalisation. The continual use of conversation and stimulation by the childminder is helping children to develop their language skills appropriately. The varied range of activities provided indoors and out promotes children's learning and achievements and maintains their interest well. Children are happy and enjoy exploring the easily accessible toys and equipment, feeling the texture of different toys and reaching out for items on the baby gym.

Older children's creative, sensory and imaginary skills are developed through painting, exploring play dough and baking. However, younger children do not often explore natural objects from the environment or have opportunities to make marks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their individual needs are met well as the childminder follows their normal daily routine as discussed with their parents and as a result children are settled. Clear behaviour management methods implemented by the childminder help children develop their understanding of what is right and wrong. Children develop good levels of self-esteem enjoying the use of praise and encouragement given to them as they play. Children learn about the wider world through visits to the local toddler group and play group where they can develop their socialising skills. There is a varied range of resources to promote positive images of different cultures, gender and disability which, help to raise children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others.

Good methods are in place to develop the partnership with parents with detailed written information given on how the setting operates and relevant written consent obtained for all procedures. Children's well-being and how their needs are met during the day are recorded in a home book for the child. This enables the childminder and parents to work together to meet the needs of the child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children feel at home and at ease in the well-organised environment. They are confident to sit and play with the toys with good support from the childminder to help them feel secure.

The childminder places great importance on developing her knowledge of childcare issues. She has attended many training courses and is part of an accredited network. This enables her to broaden children's experiences and contributes to the quality of care provided.

Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. They are shared regularly with parents to keep them well-informed about the service and their child's activities. This contributes to the continuity in the children's care. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the childminder should improve her knowledge of the national child protection guidance and increase the range of resources to promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

The childminder has developed her knowledge of the child protection guidance and has a good understanding of all procedures to follow. Consequently, this helps to safeguard children's welfare. The resources to promote positive images of diversity have been increased and as a result children are able to develop their understanding of others.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received one complaint relating to Standard 6: Safety, Standard 7: Health and Standard 12: Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers. The complaint related to a child burning their fingers while in the care of the childminder and parents had not been notified of the incident. We carried out an investigation in September 2005. We found no evidence to suggest a breach of standards 6 or 7; however, there was evidence to suggest a breach of standard 12 and an action was raised as a result. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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.

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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):

- improve opportunities for children to explore natural objects and making marks with the use of 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