



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY221891
Inspection date	02 February 2006
Inspector	Sally Ann Smith
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2002. She lives with her husband and daughter aged three years in Stafford. All areas of the property are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently caring for seven children on a part time basis. Of these, two children receive funding for nursery education.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children gain an excellent understanding of good hygiene practices and personal care through daily routines. They understand that germs are prevented from spreading by wiping their noses, disposing of tissues in the bin and washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They independently ask for flannels after meals so that they can wipe their hands and mouths.

Children benefit from very healthy and nutritional meals and snacks which are imaginatively prepared and presented to encourage children to eat a variety of different foods. Children's enthusiasm for food is encouraged as they taste the produce they grow in the garden such as beans, strawberries and peas. They participate in cooking activities where they make scones, fruit salad, flapjack and take great delight in designing their own pizzas. Children enjoy mealtimes because time is given for them to savour and enjoy their food. They serve themselves and decide the amount they wish to eat to encourage their independence. Meals are social occasions where the children and childminder sit together to encourage positive social interaction. Children are able to help themselves to drinks throughout the day and enjoy a range of fresh fruit, vegetables and finger foods at snack time. Focused activities and excellent interaction between the childminder and children promotes their understanding of staying healthy. For example, children learn how to care for their teeth.

Children join in all areas of physical play enthusiastically because the childminder plans and organises a stimulating and diverse range of activities. A motorbike in the garden which is cemented into the ground provides a wealth of imaginative opportunities for the children as they journey to Australia, the seaside or to see their grandparents. Children have great fun preparing the garden for their fruit and vegetable plants, digging and weeding the soil. They water the plants to ensure that they are appropriately cared for. Children experience the elements as they play out in all weathers enabling them to splash in puddles when raining. Children are fascinated as they look at skeletons to see how bones, joints and muscles work, for example, which body parts are used for running. They have fun and mimic the movements as the skeleton lifts its arms and legs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a very safe environment in which to play, where risks are substantially minimised due to the diligence of the childminder. Comprehensive and thorough risk assessments are in place for inside and outside the home to reduce any potential hazard and every consideration is given to ensure children are safe at all times. High priority is given to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe. Safety issues are regularly discussed and explained to the children. Planned activities further enhance children's knowledge and understanding as they discuss people who help us such as fire fighters and the police. The childminder has an excellent understanding of creating a balance between encouraging children's freedom and setting limits to maintain their safety.

Children understand what to do in the event of a fire as emergency evacuation procedures are regularly practised, taking into account patterns in children's attendance. The childminder also uses books, stories to reinforce children's understanding. Children thoroughly enjoy visits to the fire station where they learn the importance of fire safety.

Children are very well protected by the childminder who has a clear and robust understanding in all aspects of child protection. Comprehensive and effective policies and procedures are in place to promote children's welfare. The childminder continually undertakes any relevant training regarding health and safety to enhance her practice and safeguard the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle into the environment exceptionally well and are happy, confident and eager to learn. They are involved in a stimulating range of activities which are interesting, fun and develops their curiosity, creativity and imagination.

All areas of children's development is significantly enhanced by the exceptional quality of the childminder's interactions. Children are listened to and their communication skills are well promoted as the childminder positively responds to their gestures, sounds and questions. She has a very good understanding of how children learn and uses 'Birth to three matters' to meet children's individual needs. Activities are adapted to ensure that all children can participate. Children are totally absorbed and interested in everything they do and are confident to try new experiences. Children are inquisitive and eager to learn and listen intently as the childminder talks about what they are doing.

Children's curiosity is heightened as they play with the different scented, coloured and textured play dough. They take great interest as they find out how a laminator works and gaze in amazement as their pictures turn into place mats. Children are involved in a wide range of purposeful outdoor play activities that provide high levels of challenge.

Nursery Education.

Teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making excellent progress because the childminder plans an exciting range of activities both inside and outside the home which are stimulating and fun. Curriculum planning ensures that all six areas are very well covered and gives a clear indication of the learning intentions, the vocabulary to be used, how activities can be extended and any special considerations. All activities are evaluated to determine how they can be improved, if necessary, to inform future plans and enhance all areas of children's learning. Children's communication skills are superb and they are given time to talk individually and listen to each other. Children speak confidently to share their experiences of home, their families and any special news such as birthdays. Discussions play a major part of the children's daily routine and this enhances their language. Their vocabulary is extended due to the exceptionally high quality interactions they have with the childminder and they are asked questions to make them think and consolidate all areas of their learning. The childminder knows the children very well and continually provides children with challenge. She is very perceptive of children's needs

and is very aware of the different rates at which children learn. Children are given time to explore and complete activities. She provides help and support where necessary so children's confidence and self-esteem is increased.

Children are eager to learn and approach all areas of their play with great enthusiasm and interest. Children seize opportunities to develop their independence and take great pride in demonstrating what they can do. They enjoy spreading butter on their toast, serving their food at meal-times and pouring their own drinks. Children take time to complete their own pictures and revel in the praise they receive in recognition of their achievements. Expectations for behaviour are very high and children respond to praise and encouragement from the childminder. They behave very well, taking turns to share. They know that they must sit down for their drinks and meals and take their shoes off when they come inside.

Children have excellent opportunities for mark making and to develop early writing skills. They write letters as they play in the post office, make shopping lists and write orders in the Chinese restaurant. They hold pencils correctly and learn letter formation as they write their names. Some children are able to do this unaided and demonstrate their skills by writing other words such as mummy. Children are able to recognise initial sounds in words and can recognise some upper and lower case letters. Children listen attentively to well known stories, joining in with refrains and know the sequence of events. They have fun making up their own stories deciding whether it should have a happy, sad or funny ending. Older children look at the elements of stories such as the characters, title and author. Children use role play to develop their imagination and language as they blast off to the moon or travel on an underground train. Children make very good use of books, turning the pages from right to left and handling them correctly. They know that books are used for information. Their vocabulary is regularly extended with the introduction of new words such as 'laminator' and 'hibernation' and these are reinforced during discussion. Labels around the room and alphabet charts help to consolidate their recognition of letters and familiar words. Words in children's home language are also displayed.

Children's mathematical development is extremely good. They recognise numbers from one to ten and can count forwards and backwards. For example they count down from ten to zero as they prepare to launch their rockets. Regular activities are used to develop children's awareness of simple number operations such as counting bricks, sorting cars into groups or counting cups and plates at snack time. Children measure their feet and create a pictorial graph depicting smallest up to largest. They also have fun drawing around each other and then measuring their height. Children enjoy playing in the shop or post office where they use money and weigh parcels. They weigh out the required amount of ingredients when cooking. Their understanding of positional language is good as they discuss going over, under, through and around, excitedly relating the language to a familiar story they all know well. Imaginative ways are used to look at sequencing as children create patterns with fruit, initially looking at alternating, for example apple and pear prints and then making the patterns more complex. They learn to predict what comes next in the sequence.

Numerous opportunities and activities develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Role play opportunities are particularly well planned and they enjoy playing in the post office or doctor's surgery. Topic themes ensure that children learn about themselves, other people and their environment. Children celebrate a variety of different festivals such as Chinese

New Year and learn about the culture and customs. Various artefacts and books written in Chinese increase their awareness of people's differences. Children are encouraged to question how things work and why things happen and observe how cameras and a laminator work. They learn about 'power' and electricity' as they switch electrical items on and off.

Children particularly enjoy growing and tasting their own produce such as beans and strawberries. They observe the seeds and plants as they grow and understand that roots help to feed the plant. They learn how to tend to their garden and ensure that their plants have sufficient water in order to grow. Children look at vegetables that grow underground such as onions and potatoes and discuss their texture, smell, appearance and taste. Children see how life evolves and explore animal habitats. They understand that certain creatures hibernate.

Children's regular use of creative materials enable them to develop a wealth of imaginative, exploratory and sensory experiences. The educational programme effectively covers the areas of music, movement, dance, art and craft and imaginative play. Children are able to explore different materials for themselves using recyclable materials and mixing paint. They have great fun as they make rockets to fly to the moon. Children use different painting and printing techniques to create their designs such as using fruit to make patterns or various materials to make a collage.

Children move extremely confidently with control and coordination. They negotiate obstacles well and use a range of small and large equipment to great effect. They use balls to improve their catching and throwing skills and particularly enjoy a game of skittles or boules. They perfect the art of blowing bubbles and watch as they float in the air. They practice blowing slowly so that the bubbles become larger. Children enjoy moving their bodies in different ways as they dance and interpret the music such as wriggling like worms and thoroughly enjoy action rhymes. Children use small equipment competently and are adept at using paper clips, hole punchers and staplers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are made extremely welcome and the childminder ensures that each child is greeted individually. She takes account of their home language and uses phrases and words that they understand so that children are happy and settled. Each child is valued and included in every aspect of the daily routine. Activities are meaningful, stimulating and fun and adapted to meet the individual needs of each child. Consequently, children relish their time in the childminder's home and are extremely confident and self-assured. There is a very good balance between planned and child initiated activities and children respond to challenges with real enthusiasm. Children have choices in their play which ensures that they are interested in what they do.

Children's behaviour is excellent due to the clear boundaries and positive role model set by the childminder. Children understand the difference between right and wrong and this is continually reinforced through daily routines and practices such as caring for each other. Children gain a high level of self-control and learn to resolve any conflict in an amicable way.

Children have numerous opportunities to learn about themselves and others in the wider community. Imaginatively planned activities and visits to local places of interest help children gain a very good understanding of their environment. They benefit from activities and resources which help them value diversity and are sensitive towards the needs of others. Well planned and varied focused topics further enhance children's awareness of different cultures, religions and disability. This means that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnerships with parents are outstanding. The childminder shares information and liaises with parents closely to meet their child's development needs and enhance all areas of their learning. Extremely detailed daily diaries outline children's progress and development supported by a wealth of photographic evidence. The information gives a vivid account of how the children spend their time whilst with the childminder and the stimulating range of activities they are involved in. Parents are given ideas to help with their child's learning at home and the childminder values their contributions and ideas to improve practice. Regular newsletters inform parents of activities and curriculum planning. Consequently, children make significant progress in all areas of their development.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from an exceptionally well organised routine and stimulating programme of activities. Children are very happy, comfortable and settled in a warm and caring environment where their individual needs are met. The children spend their time purposefully and all activities are planned to maximise play, learning and development opportunities for the children, taking into account each child's individual needs.

Excellent and comprehensively written policies and procedures are in place which are individual to the setting. They address each of the National Standards and have a positive impact on children's safety and well-being. All documentation which is regularly reviewed and updated is shared with parents to keep them well informed about the service. Detailed planning for the Foundation Stage is of the highest quality and ensures that children have a varied curriculum to enrich their learning experiences. The childminder is very aware of her role in delivering a service that enables children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. She ensures that the children have a range of different experiences to cover the six areas of learning. Very informative and detailed daily diaries record children's progress in all areas of their development and these are shared with parents. The childminder's excellent knowledge and practice ensures that all children are able to develop their full potential.

Children benefit from the care of a childminder who is highly motivated and regularly attends training courses. She liaises with other childminders to discuss current childminding issues and provide a support system. In addition she continually monitors and evaluates her practice, working closely with her network coordinator to enhance children's play and learning. The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to maintain a physical restraints record and obtain information on the Data Protection Act. The childminder now maintains a written record for any physical restraint used on the children. There is a clearly written policy which is shared with parents and restraint is only used to protect children from harm.

The childminder has obtained information regarding the Data Protection Act and is fully conversant with procedures to ensure that all information retained on the children is stored appropriately and confidentially.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

The provider is required to keep a copy 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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education 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