



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	510541
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 February 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Carol Johnson

<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 1991. She lives in Coventry with her husband, adult son and child aged fourteen years. The whole of the ground floor and upstairs bathroom are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently caring for five children under eight years of age, together with further five, older children who attend for a variety of sessions before and after school. She also provides care during school holidays. The family has a cat.

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 stay healthy because they are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment. They are beginning to take responsibility for their own personal care and are learning about good hygiene practices. Children are encouraged to wash hands before meals and after visiting the toilet or playing outside. The childminder models good practice and explains to them why this is necessary. Older children visit the toilet independently. Children are provided with liquid soap and individual paper towels. Through discussion the childminder demonstrates a clear knowledge of appropriate food hygiene precautions. For example, surfaces are kept clean, fridge and freezer temperatures are monitored and food is freshly prepared. Hygiene routines in relation to the family cat are suitable. Consequently, children are well-protected from the risks of cross-contamination and infection. Children's best interests are served should they become ill or have an accident because the childminder takes effective measures to ensure that all necessary medical information is appropriately exchanged, recorded and taken into account. She is fully aware of any medical conditions relating to the children in her care and has a clear written sickness policy that she shares with parents.

Children's dietary needs are well met because they are provided with a good range of healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. Children enjoy a wide range of foods and the childminder provides home-cooked meals that use a range of freshly prepared and healthy ingredients. The childminder shares planned menus with parents and meals include fresh fruit and vegetables, stews, pasta and soups. Children learn about the benefits of a healthy diet through everyday activities and discussions with the childminder. They take part in regular cookery activities and help to prepare some meals. They grow vegetables in the childminder's garden. Children's allergies and dietary requirements are considered well as the childminder talks to parents about their child's needs and preferences and she records and respects individual requirements.

Children have access to a good range of activities that contribute to their good health and physical development. They enjoy regular physical activity through outings to local community groups and walks in the local environment. The childminder does not drive and older children walk to and from school on a daily basis. Younger ones are safely restrained within a pushchair. Children have access to a fully enclosed garden where they can enjoy play with a variety of equipment including a slide, swing, balls, sandpit and wheeled toys. Consequently, they are receiving frequent opportunities to develop their balance, control and co-ordination. Indoors children practise and develop fine motor skills through the use of tools and equipment. Children are learning to use scissors with confidence, whilst engrossed in 'junk' modelling activities. Their hand-eye co-ordination is increased through regular access to jigsaws, craft activities, a 'Playstation' and a computer.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where they have plenty of space to play and rest in comfort. Children are generally kept safe because the childminder has suitably assessed and minimised most potential risks to the children in her care. Appropriate safety equipment is used, for example, a safety gate is fitted at the foot of the stairs and she has a fireguard, smoke alarms and electric socket covers. Suitable security precautions are in place. However, there are some risks to children's safety. Bottles of alcohol are currently stored in the downstairs cloakroom and a saw is accessible in the utility room. Also, the childminder's fire blanket is not fixed in the kitchen and therefore, would not be easily accessible should it be required in an emergency.

Children learn to keep themselves safe by following rules and safe practices. Road safety is discussed and practised whilst out and about in the local environment and house rules are clearly explained to prevent accidents within the home. Children regularly practise emergency evacuation procedures and are able to confidently describe what they would do in a real emergency situation. Children's risk of injury from toys is minimised because the childminder carries out regular safety checks and takes appropriate steps to ensure that they are stored and used safely. Older children are made aware of safety considerations when playing with toys that could pose a risk to younger children. They receive regular reminders from the childminder.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder has an appropriate knowledge of abuse and neglect and she is aware of local child protection referral procedures. She records and asks parents about any existing injuries to children and generally she obtains a parental signature to confirm explanations as to how injuries have occurred. She is aware that her first priority is the welfare of the children in her care and she is confident of her ability to put appropriate procedures into practice if necessary. Children are not left unsupervised with persons who have not been vetted, for example, workmen or visitors.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy and having fun. They can access a wide range of stimulating resources and activities that help to extend their learning in all areas of development. Toys are clean and of good quality. They include a large selection of books, role play items, construction toys and a variety of outdoor toys and equipment. The childminder makes use of local libraries and toy loan schemes in order to supplement her own resources and as a result is able to improve the variety of toys on offer to children and appropriately extend their learning. Resources are stored in various places throughout the childminder's home. Children are confident to help themselves and know what is available. They ask for items that they cannot see or reach. Consequently, children are developing their independence and are able to use to make some self-initiated choices about their play.

The childminder informally plans her daily routine to include a mixture of planned and spontaneous play that reflects children's interests and meets their individual needs. For example, they take part in cookery activities, gardening, outdoor play and craft activities. Children learn about shapes, numbers, colours and science through everyday activities and experiences. Activities are varied and the childminder informally monitors children's progress and enjoyment during their play. Planned activities are adjusted to suit the varying ages and abilities and the childminder offers plenty of support and encouragement. Children are interested in their play and are keen to join in with the wide range of activities offered. Children are able to eat, rest and sleep according to their individual requirements because the childminder talks to parents about children's routines at home and plans her day accordingly. Consequently, children are able to predict what is likely to happen throughout the day and they receive consistency of care.

Children have good relationships with the childminder and their peers. Children happily play both with and alongside each other. They benefit from the many opportunities that they have to socialise and mix with other adults and children of different ages. Older children offer the younger ones support. Children's communication skills are being developed and encouraged because the childminder listens to children and shows interest in what they have to say. She chats to them and encourages them to practise their language skills and join in with conversations. Children are helped to develop their independence and confidence because the childminder gives them plenty of time and encouragement to practise and refine skills, for example, putting on coats and shoes and using scissors. Children are settled and at ease to go to the childminder for comfort, reassurance and support.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are valued and treated as individuals. Their needs are acknowledged because the childminder takes time to listen to them and she provides care and activities that help to increase their self esteem and sense of security. They celebrate birthdays and special events with parties and cakes and they share photographs of their families and talk about places they have been. Children are learning about diversity through everyday activities and experiences. They talk about issues raised in children's television programmes and the childminder plans activities based around a variety of religious and cultural festivals. They have access to a general range of resources which help them to appreciate the wider world, for example, books, small world figures and jigsaw puzzles. The childminder displays a positive attitude towards caring for children with special needs. She has had experience of catering for a variety of children's individual needs and is well aware of local support mechanisms. She works in partnership with all parents and actively looks for suitable ways to provide the best possible care and experiences for children. Therefore all parents can expect any requests for care to be carefully considered and support sought if necessary.

Children behave well because the childminder effectively uses a range of positive strategies to manage behaviour. For example, she uses discussion, distraction and

explanation. The childminder is firm and fair in her management of behaviour. Strategies are appropriately adjusted to suit the age and level of understanding of the children in her care. Children are encouraged to share, take turns and play together. They are developing a sense of responsibility as they follow instructions and carry out tasks, for example, clearing away toys, helping with younger children and laying the table at mealtimes. Children receive guidance with regards to rules and boundaries and their good behaviour and effort is rewarded with frequent praise and encouragement.

Children benefit from the good relationship that exists between the childminder and their parents. Children experience consistency and security because the childminder regularly shares and exchanges information, with parents, about their children's care, behaviour and routines. Daily diaries are maintained for younger children and all parents receive a set of the childminder's written policies. Parents comment positively on the warm and friendly environment and the childminder's reliability and flexibility. They are aware of the wide range of experiences that children can access through daily chats and they are given examples of their children's craft and art work. Consequently, children are encouraged to share information about their day and demonstrate good levels of self-esteem. They are motivated to learn and achieve.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Shared policies and appropriately maintained documentation contribute to the generally safe and effective management of the setting. All required documentation is in place and paperwork is appropriately stored. Consequently, important information that enhances children's general care and welfare is exchanged and recorded. Children have plenty of space for play. Routines are flexibly organised to meet children's individual needs and planned activities offer stimulation and appropriate challenges for all children. Resources are plentiful and they are adequately organised to allow children some independence and freedom of choice.

Children and their parents benefit from the childminder's knowledge and experience. She demonstrates an ongoing commitment to improving her everyday practice and the service that she provides for children and their families. She has attended some childcare related training sessions and she keeps up to date with relevant issues by reading a variety of publications and using the internet. Children's welfare is positively supported by the childminder who ensures that required ratios are met and maintained. Children receive an appropriate level of supervision and attention. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to two recommendations. She was asked to improve the safety of the garden and garage and update her knowledge of child protection guidelines. The garden and garage have been made safe and the childminder has obtained and read relevant literature to improve her knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. She has also attended child protection

training. Consequently, both of these issues have been fully addressed and children's welfare and safety has now been improved.

### **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):

- improve fire safety precautions by ensuring that the fire blanket is easily accessible
- ensure that all hazardous items are made safe or inaccessible to children.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)