



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	204916
Inspection date	20 February 2007
Inspector	Esther Gray
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 1982. She lives with her husband and one adult child and one child aged 15 in Redditch, Worcestershire. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding one child under five on a part time basis and six children over eight before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group. The family have no pets.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminders Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted as the childminder takes positive steps to promote children's good health and encourages them to begin to take responsibility of meeting their own health needs. This is achieved as the childminder models good practice and encourages children in the establish routines of good hygiene, as children are welcomed into the home after school, before they have a snack. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures taken when children are ill so that health needs are met. The childminder has maintained a first aid qualification suitable for the care of young children and ensures that appropriate action can be taken if a child sustains an injury or becomes ill whilst in her care. The information about exclusion periods for more serious illness is made available for parents and carers.

Children enjoy a variety of good opportunities to experience physical activity and develop their skills. For example, children walk to and from school. In the holidays there are opportunities to make visits to the countryside, where children enjoy winter and summer activities. For instance, they build snowmen and enjoy sledging. There are a number of resources available to encourage children to play outdoors in the garden, including a swing, balls, bats and a slide. Younger children are developing their independence physically and emotionally. They are active and are becoming increasingly independent, acquiring new physical skills and control over their bodies. They are learning to express their needs and are beginning to meet those needs independently. For example, children learn to put on gloves and shoes and successfully use toilet and potty with developing confidence. The needs of the younger children are very well met, because the childminder has a good understanding of the needs of the younger children and provides good activities and resources to support children's physical and emotional development.

Children are well nourished. They have regular opportunities to learn about healthy eating because the childminder ensures drinks are always available for children. Food is provided that is nutritious and complies with their dietary and religious needs. Mealtimes are relaxed, social occasions when children and adults sit together around the table to enjoy their food and each other's company. Most meals are snacks and no main meals are provided, because younger children are provided a packed lunch by their parents. The childminder discusses aspects of healthy eating with their parents and carers. Children attending as part of after school care, or part time during the day, enjoy spontaneous activities which promote healthy eating. They learn about healthy living through a range of suitable activities that encourage them to appreciate the benefits of a healthy diet. For example, there are puzzles and games which prompt discussion about making healthy choices and some older children help prepare fruit and vegetables as their after school snack. Overall children are developing an awareness of factors which influence good outcomes for a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and are well cared for in premises which are suitable for the purpose because they are clean and well-maintained. The childminder is careful to ensure the premises are locked and children are supervised on the ground floor only. There is access to the ground floor bathroom and garden areas, where they are within sight and hearing at all times. The childminder ensures that the environment gives children good access to a suitable range of facilities that promote children's development. She is very aware of safety in use of resources and standards and kite marks. She ensures, for example, that the marble run is not out when younger children are present. Children can safely access resources and make their own choices. There are sufficient, suitable and safe toys and resources for all age groups. This includes the use of the family's piano, which was played with gusto quite tunefully.

Children's safety is well promoted because the registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings. Good arrangements are made for collecting children from school, including encouraging children to use the 'Stop Look and Listen' code, whilst out walking. They all hold hands as they walk along the pavement. The provider ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents and minimise identified risks to children. As a result, children are learning to keep themselves safe. They begin to understand about safety issues, both within the setting, outside and during spontaneous activities. They learn about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe. They learn about the evacuation procedure and fire safety, although they do not rehearse the emergency evacuation procedure with the provider. The childminder provides appropriate equipment, encouraging children to explore; letting them be involved in clearing up, ensuring children don't hurt themselves or others. Children are well protected from harm because the childminder has a sound understanding of her role in child protection. She does not make parents aware of her role and responsibilities in writing, but is able to put appropriate procedures into practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident, independent and are developing their self-esteem. Their social, emotional, physical and intellectual development is promoted by the importance the childminder places on listening to and valuing what children say. They ask questions and respond to new challenges by questioning and using their own initiative. All children have their individual needs met and are developing a good range of knowledge and skills, because there are sufficient resources, activities and play opportunities provided to help children achieve in all areas. Children begin to distinguish right from wrong and form positive relationships. There are consistent boundaries and good adult support which helps children to develop appropriate skills.

Younger children are beginning to use language appropriately to communicate their thoughts, ideas and experiences. They use their growing language skills to socialise, become part of the group and begin to negotiate with others as a member of that group. The older children play and care for the younger children, taking account of their age and ensuring they are mindful of their size and ability, as they share the space at the end of the school day. All children enjoy and share stories, songs and rhymes. Although there is very little planned structure to the

routines of the day, because most activities are child initiated, activities and routines enable children to make progress in their development and enjoy each other's company by visits to toddler groups in the day. Children also attend nursery. The childminder models good language and gives children the opportunity and time to use their language skills. She talks to children and listens to their responses promoting interests and ideas from their time at nursery.

Older children are involved in a broad range of unplanned activities and spontaneous events, which help to promote their development and overall learning. For example, children play with puzzles and games which include information to promote a discussion about healthy eating, they also have books and resources around them to encourage them to learn about diversity in society. Children choose what they want to do and the balance of the play is led by their own interests. As children come home from school they can settle to relax for a while with educational computer games, read books, complete homework, or play with many other varied resources. There is no television set in the room on the ground floor. Children are happy and settled because the childminder meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. She establishes a good relationship with parents and carers to meet the children's needs

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder ensures that there is no bias in her practice in relation to gender, race or disability. All children are treated with equal concern. Children have good opportunities to develop an understanding of the wider society because the setting introduces children to different people in their local neighbourhood and to the wider multicultural society. There are some really good books and resources to help the childminder introduce the wider community to children and some festivals are celebrated such as Pancake Day. Play resources are organised in a manner which helps to promote children's free choice. They are sufficient in quantity and easily accessible on low level shelving in plastic see through drawers. The childminder understands her obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act and is pro-active in making reasonable adjustments to ensure that appropriate action can be taken to support children with identified needs. The care is offered on the ground floor only and there is suitable access to most areas including the ground floor toilet area.

Children are developing good self-esteem and respect for others. Children are welcomed and are given sufficient time to settle into the setting so they feel a sense of belonging. There are good opportunities for children to be valued, cuddled, comforted and their individual needs and personalities recognised and affirmed. There is a good relationship between the childminder and the children under five. When one is being cared for alone she appreciates the need for the child to meet and play with other children. She takes them out to a toddler group regularly. They benefit from the social atmosphere and from a calm and supportive approach as they learn right from wrong through careful explanation and consistency. Praise and support helps them start to develop self-esteem. Children are encouraged to play together, take turns and share. Older children make positive relationships and they behave well. They are involved in what is going on around them and gain self confidence and good self-esteem. Younger children behave very well in proportion to their level of understanding and maturity because the

childminder creates an environment that encourages children to respect boundaries and begin to control their own behaviour.

Reliable, satisfactory verbal information is made available for parents when children first start. There are, however, no written admissions procedures, no details of routines children will follow during the week or planned activities they will take part in. There are no menus or written details of the type of snacks the childminder will provide, to share with parents and carers. She shares all this information verbally, which includes details of how the management of behaviour will be agreed for consistency. The daily exchange of information is effective despite the fact there is no portfolio of information about children's activities or notice boards with up-to-date information. The childminder displays the registration certificate and the public liability insurance. There is a folder of information regarding details to share about exclusion periods for sick children, and the local authority guidance, to share with parents, about her role and responsibilities in child protection. However, she has not taken the local authority guidance point on sharing this role in writing with parents. Parents are not informed through the setting's complaints procedure about how they can express any concerns and this includes details of the regulation, in respect of maintaining a log of any complaints received. The childminder takes time to get to know children and parents well. Right from the start, she finds out about their likes and dislikes, what they can and cannot do, and individual routines. The childminder has a good rapport with the families and gains insight into the ongoing changes to younger children's routines, by talking to parents and carers about the individual needs of children. Parents express, in writing and verbally, the confidence they have in the ability of the childminder to provide good quality care. As a result, children benefit from the satisfactory partnership between the childminder and their parents and carers, who act together and give consistent messages, which promote children's development and a sense of well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for in a setting where the childminder is committed to continue to update her skills and knowledge by attending training having a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. She has identified the 'Birth to three matters' framework as an appropriate area to develop her own child care practice. She now finds herself taking care of younger children. As a result, despite many years of experience, she has acknowledged the importance of keeping up with current good practice, by expressing the desire to follow up information and training opportunities in this area of her work. Children are protected from harm as the childminder is aware of the importance of ensuring that all unvetted visitors are suitable and are not left unattended with children, in the setting or whilst on outings.

Children benefit from good organisation of the setting. It ensures that children's health and safety and well-being are met. The childminder is actively and attentively engaged with children and ensures all ancillary tasks are organised outside of the time when children are cared for. For example, the childminder vacuums the carpets after they have gone home. Parents have expressed, in writing, their appreciation for how much time the childminder spends directly engaged with the children's play. Although there are limited policies and procedures in place, they protect children sufficiently and are effectively implemented to promote all the outcomes

for children. For instance, the emergency evacuation procedure is displayed in the hall and all children are familiar with the practice. Detailed records are available and retained for inspection, which ensure appropriate information is held to safeguard children's health and well-being. They are well-organised and kept confidential. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop knowledge and understanding of the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures and to ensure children are given a choice of nutritious drinks and snacks.

Since the last inspection the local authority have reviewed information sent to providers in line with changes made as a result of the development of Local Safeguarding Children Boards. The childminder has a copy of the information and can implement the new procedures. She also ensures that children are provided with nutritious meals and snacks, which include choices of fruit and vegetables. Older children take part in the preparation of these snacks and all children have ready access to drinks at all times. As a result, children's health and well-being is further safeguarded.

Complaints 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.

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 information to parents and carers about the childminder's routines and child care practices, their child's experiences and achievements, including aspects of record keeping, such as, the complaints procedure and the maintenance of a record of complaints.

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