

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	204940
Inspection date	05 September 2007
Inspector	Saida Cummings
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 1998. She lives with her partner and two adult children in an end-terraced house situated on the outskirts of Worcester city. There are local shops, parks, playing fields, pre-schools and schools.

The main areas used for childminding are situated on the ground floor with bathroom facilities available on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play. Children are also taken on local visits and outings. They are walked to and from local daycare settings.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding five children under five years, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have access to clean, well-maintained areas. Their health is very well promoted as the childminder encourages them to begin to take responsibility for meeting their own health needs and to develop their independence and self-care skills. They are developing an understanding of good personal hygiene which includes regular hand washing especially after outdoor play, toileting and before meals. The risk of infection is reduced as the childminder follows the local health authority guidelines and ensures all parents and carers are made aware that children are not cared for if they have an infectious illness. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with any accidents and for administering any medication if requested.

Children are starting to develop an awareness of healthy lifestyles as they participate in regular outdoor play which enables them to run, jump and develop their physical skills. They enjoy making up physical games whilst using the various outdoor play equipment. For example, they move the play tents and tunnel around to devise different obstacle courses enabling them to crawl through the tunnel and run in and out of the tents. Regular visits and outings are also incorporated into the planned activities which give children the experience of going on local walks, such as visiting various parks. Children also have the opportunity to take part in regular indoor physical activities and use the large play areas for various indoor games, such as music and movement sessions and making dens under the table. Babies' and young children's needs are met as the childminder knows the children well and is aware of their individual health needs. For example, they are given time to wake up when they rouse from naps and enjoy sitting on the childminder's lap whilst slowly taking in their surroundings. Babies have many opportunities for creative physical experiences and development, such as bouncing, rolling, crawling and starting to walk. The childminder ensures appropriate equipment and space is made available for children to be able to safely build on these skills and is very aware of each child's specific abilities.

Children enjoy well-organised mealtimes which are also used as social times with all the children sitting to eat together. They learn about healthy eating during these sociable times when discussions are held about the types of food they eat, what makes them grow and what keeps them healthy. Children enjoy nutritious and healthy meals and snacks which are discussed and planned with the parents and carers to ensure all their individual dietary needs and preferences are met. Parents and carers are requested to provide healthy lunch boxes and appropriate milk and food for the younger children. They have access to suitable drinks at all times and the childminder encourages them to drink plenty of fluids especially after exercising and during hot weather. Younger children are constantly offered appropriate drinks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are constantly supervised and taught safety as part of their everyday activities. This includes how to keep themselves safe through awareness of road safety when out walking and safety when playing indoors, such as not to run within the premises. They are kept safe during outings as the childminder ensures age-appropriate pushchairs and harnesses are available. Parents' and carers' written consents are obtained for routine outings. Children take part in regular emergency evacuation practices to ensure they are fully aware of the procedures and how to keep themselves safe in an emergency.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. The areas used by children are made safe by ensuring age-appropriate safety items are in place, such as alarms fitted to low-level kitchen cupboards which contain hazardous items. The childminder identifies and minimises risks for children according to the ages of the children currently cared for. Children have a choice of suitable and safe play equipment and resources. All equipment is regularly checked for safety and cleaned including sterilisation of all the baby toys.

Children are kept safe as there are good collection procedures in place which are shared with all the parents and carers. The childminder is very aware of the need to ensure children are kept safe and makes sure parents and carers are also made aware of the procedures she follows, through appropriate discussions and through use of the written policies and procedures. Children are kept safe from harm as the childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of child protection. She has made herself familiar with the latest Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance and is aware of the appropriate procedures to follow should she have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have access to a good range of activities which are adapted depending on their ages and stages of development. They independently choose activities from a selection of appropriate play equipment and resources. They are able to self-select from a wide variety of interesting and stimulating toys and resources which are made easily accessible in the areas they use for play. Children's activities are well planned with different types of play made available during each session. The childminder is very flexible and adapts the activities according to children's individual needs and how they are feeling when they attend. She makes sure a wide range of appropriate and interesting activities are made available so that children can make free choices and instigate their own play. Children are very comfortable with the childminder and have built a trusting relationship with her. The childminder consistently and positively interacts with the children, constantly talking and playing with each individual child and encourages interaction between all ages. As a result, children play well together and are developing good socialising skills.

Children are happy and settled within the environment. Babies' and young children's needs are well catered for as the childminder uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan specific activities for this age group, which are adapted accordingly to ensure they are sufficiently challenged and meet their individual abilities. They are well stimulated as the childminder interacts with them at all times and encourages them to experiment with different play materials and resources. For example, they enjoy joining in with messy play activities, such as using their hands to paint and to manipulate a cornflour and water mixture.

Children's language and listening skills are encouraged through various spontaneous activities including reading stories, holding discussions, listening to music and copying sounds. For example, children have opportunities to hold discussions during outings when they are encouraged to describe what they can see and touch. Children are able to use their imagination and be creative as they have access to a variety of art and craft materials which they use to instigate their own creative sessions and produce interesting and colourful pictures. Children have opportunities to take part in gardening activities and enjoy growing their own plants, such as sunflowers. They have use of a small accessible plastic greenhouse where they initially plant the seeds into the pots and then enjoy watering them whilst watching their own plants grow. They understand that plants need sunshine and water to grow and take great pride in comparing which one is growing the tallest.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are settled in on a gradual basis which is fully planned with the parents and carers to ensure enough time is allowed. This varies depending on the individual child's needs and how quickly they settle into their new environment. Children's individual needs are very well met as the childminder initially holds full discussions with parents and carers to ensure she is able to meet all requirements. Parents and carers are kept well informed of their children's activities, any issues and the domestic routines through daily communication.

Children are given lots of individual attention and thoroughly enjoy good interaction with the childminder which enables their individual needs to be met. The childminder demonstrates an awareness of being able to meet the needs for any children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She has previous experience of caring for children with specific needs and works closely with parents and carers to ensure any particular requirements are met. Children respond well to the childminder's approach to any behavioural issues. She creates an environment that encourages children to behave well. Their positive behaviour is encouraged, praised and they are taught to be polite, to share, take turns and to give consideration to each other. The childminder shares and agrees the behaviour management policy with all the parents and carers to ensure consistency is practised between the home and the setting.

All children are treated equally and have equal access to resources and activities. They are valued and respected and the childminder is committed to ensuring all children feel secure and are included. Children have access to a range of resources and activities to promote their awareness of diversity, such as use of dressing-up clothes, puzzles and books.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's individual needs are well met as the childminder has effective verbal and written systems in place which also keep parents and carers well informed about what their children do, all the procedures and how the childminding is organised. The childminder has developed relevant information, including various appropriate written policies and procedures, which she shares with the parents and carers to ensure they are made fully aware of all the childminding arrangements. This also includes procedures to inform parents and carers of how they can make a complaint.

Children are comfortable in the well-resourced and organised surroundings which are made accessible and welcoming to them. They have access to all of the ground floor of the property including easy safe access to the garden for regular outdoor play activities. Children are cared for in a warm, friendly and organised environment as the childminder plans the childminding sessions to meet their individual needs and their preferences. They enjoy good interaction with the childminder as she organises her time during sessions to be able to adapt to their particular needs and routines. Children are being extended and challenged in a safe and stimulating environment that develops their emotional, intellectual, physical and social skills. There are opportunities for children to be valued, cuddled, comforted and their individual needs and personalities are recognised and provided for.

The childminder has developed appropriate systems for keeping all the required documentation. However, the procedures for recording any incidents need further development to make sure children's safety and well-being is assured. The childminder is committed to further development

and keeping herself updated about childcare practice. She uses the internet and appropriate publications to ensure she is aware of any latest procedures and good practice. Children benefit from the childminder's development as any new procedures or good practice is incorporated into the care provided. She has clear aims and is committed to evolving and developing the provision. Consequently, this contributes to children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take an active part in the sessions. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to develop a system for recording any incidents and to update the complaints procedure.

The complaints procedure has now been updated and reflects the latest legislation. All parents and carers are made aware of this procedure and the childminder is aware to keep records of any complaints. As a result, this ensures children's safety and well-being is assured.

There is now a system for ensuring parents and carers are made aware of any incidents. However, the system for keeping a written record of any incidents needs further development. A further recommendation was agreed.

Complaints since the last inspection

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents and carers, 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:

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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):

- develop the system for recording any incidents further to include obtaining parents' or carers' signatures.

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