



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205036
Inspection date	22 June 2005
Inspector	Christine Lynn Williams

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 1995. She lives with her husband and one child aged 13 years in a house in Bromsgrove, Worcestershire. The whole of the property is 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 minding four children under five who all attend part time. She works with an assistant who may, at times, be left in sole charge of the children.

The childminder supports children with special needs. She walks to local pre-schools

and nurseries to collect children and works closely with other childminders in the area.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a clean and homely environment where good health is consistently promoted through well-planned daily routines, careful hygiene arrangements and learning from example. They wash their hands after going to the toilet, before they eat and in-between messy play activities. High levels of hygiene are maintained throughout the home. Children wear different types of aprons for food and craft activities and always help the childminder to wash fruit before they eat it. Toys are checked each day to make sure they are safe and children help with the regular cleaning routine by washing Lego, dolls and small toys in a washing up bowl in the garden.

The childminder acts quickly and effectively when children become ill in her care. She uses her first aid knowledge to best effect to ensure children receive appropriate treatment and are kept calm and comfortable until their parents arrive or emergency medical attention can be sought. Their medication needs are well recorded and they are given appropriate rest and sleep according to their individual routines and preferences.

Children enjoy a wide variety of outdoor activities that help them to keep healthy through being active. They use the garden extensively, moving freely from inside to out as they play with boats in a water trough, water plants, play with sand or enjoy swings and a variety of sit-and-rides toys. They put on sun hats and protective cream during regular walks to the nearby park to see the street clowns, feed the ducks, and use large playground equipment.

Children benefit from a wide variety of cooking activities that help them learn to prepare a variety of healthy foods. They wash and prepare strawberries, grapes and cherries when making a fruit salad for tea, then carefully cut them up and place them attractively in a bowl. They also make cakes and sandwiches and often go the shops with the childminder to help her buy and choose the ingredients they will need. Children help themselves to drinks throughout the day, with their own cups or beakers placed near-by at all times. Meals are mainly provided by parents and children sit together at tables in the kitchen or conservatory to enjoy eating and talking with each other.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a close family atmosphere where they move freely and safely around the childminder's home and garden and can sit and lay comfortably to play within spacious rooms. They have free use of most of the home, and are able to extend

their play outside as they move freely from the lounge to the conservatory and out into the garden. They are given an enormous choice of different toys to play with and are frequently asked throughout the day to choose and suggest what they want to do next.

Children play safely both indoors and out due to the high priority the childminder places on ensuring all safety features are in place. Good security arrangements are maintained and the childminder carefully supervises children at all times. They develop a very good understanding of safety rules due to gentle reminders and constant re-enforcement such as being careful when using knives or when standing on a bench to help with the washing up. Road safety rules are repeated as children walk with the childminder to the local park. They always cross at the pelican crossing, press the button and wait for the green man to appear before moving off the pavement, and look and listen for traffic as they cross.

Children have talked about what to do if they need to evacuate the home in an emergency and the childminder has made an arrangement with neighbours to ensure she will be able to keep children safe if they can not return to her home. However, children have not practiced the emergency evacuation drill in order to become familiar with the routine.

Children are well protected because the childminder understands child protection procedures and how to implement these when necessary. She has a professional reference guide to help her act appropriately if she has any concerns about a child in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop close and affectionate relationships with the childminder who joins-in with their play and develops and plans many creative and stimulating activities that reflect their interests and build on what they can already do. They grow in confidence and independence through being able to choose and plan what they want to do next and enjoy a wealth of themed activities that help them learn, question, explore and have fun.

Creative activities linked to letter sounds help them have fun while they make their own book using pictures of different objects starting with the letter "F". They prepare a fruit salad and play a game of putting numbered fish into a bowl. Constant support and encouragement help them to make the most of each learning experience such as cooking activities, trips to feed the ducks and playing in the garden, while they enthusiastically join-in with in everyday household tasks such as watering the plants or helping to hang out the washing. They are kept absorbed and interested through constantly chatting, questioning and talking about what they are doing and become excited as they discover how things work such as how to inflate the water pool by pushing down on the foot pump with their feet and hands.

Songs, poems and nursery rhymes help them develop their language skills and learn new words, while counting everyday objects such as the amount of strawberries or

cherries in the bowl helps them to develop an understanding of what numbers mean. They are fascinated by books and stories and learn to act out their favourite ones as they use props and toys to look at, count and predict what the 'Hungry caterpillar' will eat next.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children receive close and affectionate care where their individual needs, likes and anxieties are known, understood and acted upon. They know the childminder is interested in what they say and feel and this helps them develop close bonds and a feeling of trust and security. Some children are cared for alongside their brothers or sisters, enabling family traditions and special days to be celebrated and maintained. They celebrate their own culture as they enjoy birthday teas and treats together, while a good range of toys and activities are provided to help children acknowledge the views, beliefs and culture of other people.

Children with special needs are very well supported, with the childminder and parents working closely together to help the child overcome their difficulties and learn and play alongside their friends. Information is gained from specialists, is carefully followed and incorporated into the childminder's daily practice.

Children learn to behave positively through careful explanation and constant praise. They develop confidence and independence through making their own decisions and choices as they play, and are encouraged to show care and consideration for each other. Children's difficulties with sharing are handled sensitively, with positive encouragement, careful explanation. Story books are used to help young children learn to take turns, share and talk about how they feel.

A close and supportive relationship with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being. They work closely together, sharing information about what children can do, what they are learning and the extra support they might need. Parents are invited to sit and talk about their children each day, and they learn what their children have been doing from photographs, learning plans and the craft work that is sent home. They receive copies of the songs and poems that their children have been learning, and borrow their children's favourite books to share with them.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the way the childminder carefully organises her home, time and daily routine to ensure they are well supported. They benefit from her experience and commitment to gaining new play activity ideas and keeping up-to-date with current early years thinking. She occasionally works with an assistant, who at times collects children from school. This is done with the full knowledge and written permission of parents.

All required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and carefully stored, well organised and kept up-to-date. This allows her to always meet children's needs while maintaining confidentiality. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children in her care very well.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to consider improving her practice by further increasing the range of resources and activities that promote equality of opportunity.

Children's understanding of a diverse society has been extended by ensuring that their family traditions and special days are celebrated and that these opportunities are used to discuss how other people celebrate. Children use a variety of toys and resources that provide positive images of differing family backgrounds, culture and disability, while story books are used effectively to help them discuss and understand their behaviour and feelings.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- practice the emergency evacuation drill with children to ensure they are them familiar with the routine.

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