

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205054
Inspection date	28 August 2007
Inspector	Linda Christie Ravenall

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 1996. She lives with her husband in a house in Redditch, Worcestershire. The whole of the childminder's ground floor is used for childminding. A bedroom for sleeping children in a cot and toilet facilities are on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is currently minding three children under five on a part-time basis, one child over five before school and three children over five after school. The childminder takes children to school and pre-school and also collects children from school. She attends the local soft play centre and takes children to the local parks and play areas.

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 well promoted as the childminder encourages them to begin to take responsibility of meeting their own health needs. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures taken when children are ill so that health needs are met. Children understand the importance of good hand washing to keep them healthy and prevent tummy upsets. The childminder recognises and reduces possible risks to prevent the spread of infection. She keeps the premises clean, understands the safe handling and storage of food and excludes children who may be unwell.

Children learn consistently about the importance of healthy eating and have a balanced diet. They are well nourished as they are offered nutritious, balanced meals and snacks appropriate to their individual dietary needs. Children ask the childminder for snacks such as apples and bananas because they understand that fruit is good for them. The children also learn about healthy eating through activities such as cookery when they learn which types of food are good for their bodies.

Children take part in good regular physical activities such as riding their bikes to the local parks where equipment is varied and more challenging for older children. As a result the children are happy to engage in an excellent range of energetic activities such as swimming, cricket and cycling which readily supports their understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a family atmosphere where they move freely and safely around the home and can sit comfortably to play with their friends. This is because the childminder provides children with good access to a stimulating range of facilities that help to promote children's development. Children enjoy good access to a varied range of toys and resources that are stored in the cupboard, on open shelving, to allow children to choose what they want to play with. These are checked daily to ensure they are safe and suitable for use. Access to toys and materials that positively promote equality of opportunity remain limited.

Children are safe and appropriately cared for in premises that are mostly safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. A safety recommendation regarding the installation of a hand rail on the stairs is not yet complete due to delayed progress with internal decoration. Although the children are able to safely access toilet facilities on the upper floor as they are well supervised, not all identified risks have been fully minimised. Supervision is good according to their age and ability, which develops their independence and self-confidence.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe due to the childminder's keen awareness of safety issues outdoors. They learn about road safety, cycling safely and stranger danger issues, which are discussed regularly with the children as they walk to the park or on the way to school.

Children are adequately protected from harm because the childminder has a satisfactory understanding of her role in child protection with regard to recognition and recording concerns. Although the childminder has the latest guidance she lacks confidence with its content and as a result, is unsure of the procedures to follow should allegations be made regarding a child who may be in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and look forward to attending as the childminder provides a calm environment where children are happy and confident. This is because they are involved in the planning and decision making about how they spend their time, for example the older children are encouraged to bring their own games, providing they are suitable to be used with the younger children. Children greatly enjoy stimulating activities such as pond dipping where they look for water insects and pond life, such as tadpoles turning into frogs.

Children enthusiastically take part in creative, physical, social and imaginative play. They enjoy playing imaginatively with a Fuzzy Felt activity, laughing together at the humorous faces and characters they are creating. Older children have time to sit and relax; they play games of their own choice and enjoy attending. They talk happily about their play, make decisions about what they want to do, and are confident to ask for what they need. Children are well supported with their homework tasks as the childminder helps them to access educational websites on the computer, under supervision, such as how people lived in Tudor times. As a result, warm, caring relationships between adults and children are evident and the children enjoy themselves and are helped to achieve.

Children's individual routines for meals, rest and play are fully respected as this enables them to feel secure. Babies and young children enjoy singing their favourite songs from current television programmes as they play. Some aspects of the framework for babies and children under three is apparent in the childminder's practice. As the childminder is not familiar with the current framework she lacks an awareness of how to plan a range of activities to further support their development and progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are able to feel a strong sense of belonging, work harmoniously with others and make choices and decisions. The children are developing good self-esteem and respect for others as the childminder plans activities such as a treasure hunt in the garden, where older children are paired with the younger children. This ensures all children are valued and included as activities are adapted to suit their individual needs well.

Children benefit from some activities such as food tasting that help them to develop an understanding of diverse cultures and there is no bias in her practice in relation to gender. The childminder understands that some children may have differing abilities requiring additional support. Although she has little experience of providing care for them, the childminder understands how to access support and liaise supportively with parents to support inclusion.

Children understand responsible behaviour because the childminder creates an environment that encourages children to respect boundaries and begin to control their own behaviour. Children learn how to behave in an acceptable manner as they are given reasons for doing so and this information is shared with parents to ensure consistent care is given. As a result the children behave extremely well and both their manners and social skills are particularly good.

Children's individual needs are consistently met because the childminder works closely with parents and carers. Relationships are strong and trusting; this ensures the children feel comfortable and settled because they see parents and childminder acting together and giving

consistent messages. A complaints log is provided for parents and the childminder understands the procedures she is required to follow in response to any written complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder ensures that the welfare of the children in her care is a priority by ensuring that all adults who come into regular contact with the children are suitably vetted. The children's safety within the house is mainly well promoted. The childminder has updated some of her knowledge by attending a first aid course. She engages children in many outdoor safety routines to help keep them safe. Children enjoy access to an interesting range of enjoyable activities although there is a lack of relevant planning for the youngest children. Access to toys and resources are generally good to promote their welfare and development, however few reflect positive images of culture and differing abilities. Children are treated with equal respect in all aspects of their care and access to facilities. Although the childminder has limited experience of caring for any child with additional needs she has a suitable awareness of how to access appropriate support. The children's health is well promoted as children enjoy activities which help them to develop a positive understanding of a healthy lifestyle.

The children benefit from the mainly good organisational skills of the childminder who uses her home and time well, to support all children who attend. Some improvements have been made following recommendations at the last inspection to further promote positive outcomes for the children. The childminder keeps all the relevant records on the children in her care. This includes detailed information of the children's needs. Parents are kept informed verbally on a daily basis. Information is exchanged about children's needs and progress. All significant information is recorded, demonstrating to parents that the children are being provided with care which will promote the children's well-being and support their development. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked improve the safety of children using the stairs and increase her knowledge of child protection and equality of opportunity.

At the last inspection a handrail on the stairs had been removed to facilitate access for an extension. Although the work has been completed and decorating recently finished, the hand rail has not been refitted. Whilst the childminder has endeavoured to ensure the safety of children using the stair way through close supervision, not all necessary risks from slips and falls have been minimised for herself or the children. A further recommendation has been made to fully promote safety of children using the stairway. In order to update her knowledge of child protection the childminder read through the local child protection procedures to improve her awareness. New Local Safeguarding Children Boards guidance has been issued and although the childminder has a general awareness of her role and responsibilities she is not familiar with its content and a further recommendation has been made to further safeguard the welfare of the children who attend. The childminder has focussed equality of opportunity discussions with the children around their school projects, food based topics and personal religious beliefs for the benefit of all the children. Some additional resources have been obtained to support the children's understanding of equality issues but the childminder has experienced difficulty in broadening the range to reflect positive images of culture, race and abilities. This limits the children's ability to explore these issues through their play. An additional recommendation has

been made to improve the range of materials that show positive images of people of all races, cultures and abilities.

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 of 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 access to play materials reflecting positive images of culture, race and abilities, update awareness of current child protection procedures such as accessing relevant training and initiate the completion of internal decoration to further promote the children's welfare and safety
- improve outcomes for children under three years old by developing an awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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