



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205087
Inspection date	31 January 2006
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 1980. She lives with her husband in a semi-detached house situated on the outskirts of Worcester city. There are local shops, parks, playing fields, pre-schools and schools within walking distance.

The main areas used for childminding are situated on the ground floor. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play. Children are also taken on local visits and outings. The family has no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding six children under eight years, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. She also cares for children over eight years of age. The childminder has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She regularly attends the local childminding support group meetings and events. Children are walked to and from local pre-schools and schools.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are starting to develop an awareness of healthy lifestyles as they participate in regular outdoor play which enables them to run, jump, peddle on bikes and develop their physical skills. Regular visits and outings are also incorporated into the planned activities which gives them the experience of going on local walks, visiting various parks, playing fields and local soft play areas. 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 using soft balls for bat and ball games. Babies and young children have opportunities for creative physical experiences and development, such as bouncing, rolling and crawling. The childminder ensures appropriate equipment and space is made available for children to be able to safely build on these skills.

Children have access to clean, well-maintained areas. They are made aware of the good hygiene procedures, which ensures any risk of infection is reduced. This includes regular hand washing, especially after outdoor play, toileting and before meals. Older children are able to independently visit the toilet with the childminder over-seeing them, gently reminding them to wash their hands. The risk of infection is also 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 the childminder is aware of procedures for administering any medications if required. However, the written procedures for administering any medications need developing to ensure children's health and well-being is not compromised. Babies' and young children's needs are well met as the childminder knows the children well and is aware of their individual health needs. For example she gives children a long time to wake up after napping, sitting them on her lap and constantly comforting them. Their individual routines are well met as the childminder discusses these with the parents and carers, and adjusts the childminding session to meet these.

Children enjoy well organised meal times, which are also used as social times, with all the children sitting to eat together. They learn about healthy eating during snack and meal times when discussions are held about the types of food they eat and what is good for them. Children enjoy nutritious and healthy meals, which are discussed and planned with the parents and carers to ensure all their individual dietary needs and preferences are met. Their independence is fostered as they are encouraged to feed themselves. The childminder provides all the food and drink, but is flexible and gives parents and carers the choice to provide their own if they wish. She shows good awareness of meeting individual children's special dietary needs and always makes alternatives available, such as vegetarian meals. Children have access to suitable drinks at all times, which are freshly prepared.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, safe and family-friendly environment. The areas used by children are made safe by ensuring age-appropriate safety items are in place, such as use of

safety gates and electrical socket covers. 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. They take part in regular emergency evacuation practises to ensure they are fully aware of the procedures. The written procedures are also displayed to ensure all visitors and parents are also made aware. Sleeping children are physically checked on a regular basis. The childminder prefers to sleep young children on the ground floor as she is able to observe and hear them at all times.

Children are able to access spacious indoor and outdoor areas, which are adapted for their use. They are able to safely use the outdoor patio area as the steps to the higher level grassed area are fitted with a secured gate. Children are always supervised when using the large grassed area. Children are able to self-select from a wide variety of safe play equipment and resources, which are stored within the play rooms at floor level. All indoor and outdoor play equipment is sturdy and clean. The childminder includes cleaning and checking play equipment and toys as part of her daily routines.

Children are kept safe from harm as the childminder has a very good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. She has completed child protection training and is aware of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board guidelines, and the procedures to follow if there are any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled within the environment. They are very comfortable with the childminder and have built a trusting relationship. Their interest and involvement is encouraged by the consistent and positive adult interaction. The childminder constantly talks and plays with each individual child and encourages interaction between all ages. Children are allowed time to explore ideas and use their imagination and the childminder assists by supplying appropriate resources. For example they enjoy using the home corner play equipment to 'look after their babies and take them for walks in the play buggies'. The childminder assists by supplying suitable materials such as play feeding bottles and eating equipment suitable for the dolls when the children want to 'sit with their babies and feed them'.

Children independently choose from a wide variety of interesting toys and materials, which they are able to easily access. They have access to a broad range of activities which are adapted depending on their ages and stages of development. Children's activities are well planned with different types of play timetabled into each session. The childminder is very flexible with this timetable and adjusts activities according to children's individual needs and how they are feeling when they attend. Children are provided with an interesting and stimulating balance of activities, allowing for more active play and relaxing sessions. Babies' and young children's needs are catered for as the childminder has adopted some of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to fit in with any planned activities for the older children. They are all able to take part in the activities offered as the childminder makes sure they are adapted according to their individual abilities, such as making smaller potato printers for younger children to use during painting activities.

Children's learning is promoted through everyday activities, such as recognising the different colours of the food during lunch time, and counting different play objects during imaginary play. Their language development is encouraged through various activities, including reading stories, discussions, questioning, nursery rhymes, and making different sounds. Children of different ages enjoy sitting to listen to stories and are able to pick out the pictures in the books which relate to the different parts of the stories. Older children are given opportunities to make free choices about the types of activities they want to take part in. The childminder takes time to find out what interests each child, and builds on this information to plan and provide a variety of activities and opportunities to ensure their preferences are met.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met as the childminder initially holds full discussions with the parents and carers, to ensure that she is able to meet all requirements as outlined. They 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. Parents and carers are kept well informed of their children's activities, any issues and the domestic routines.

Children are all treated equally and have equal access to resources and activities. The childminder ensures children are encouraged to make use of all the play equipment and activities available. Children are valued and respected, and the childminder is committed to ensuring all children feel secure and are included. She knows all the children well and ensures they are provided with equality of opportunity. Children are given lots of individual attention and thoroughly enjoy good interaction with the childminder, which enables their individual needs to be met. They have access to a range of resources and activities to promote their awareness of diversity. Their awareness is also extended through some of the everyday routines, such as having the opportunity to taste food from different parts of the world.

The childminder understands special needs and demonstrates an awareness of being able to meet the needs for any children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Children are given time, resources and assistance to ensure their individual specific needs are met as required, such as taking part in fun games to develop their speech, language and listening skills. Babies' and young children's individual needs are met as the childminder initially discusses their routines and any specific needs with the parents and carers, which are incorporated into the daily routines.

Children respond well to the childminder's approach to behaviour management. She creates an environment that encourages children to behave well. Children's positive behaviour is encouraged and praised, and they are taught to be polite and to give consideration to each other. Children are encouraged to share and take turns, such as sharing any favourite toys they bring with them from home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy good interaction with the childminder as she ensures she organises her time during sessions to be able to adapt to their particular needs and routines. Their care and play needs are met by the childminder's effective organisation of the childminding sessions, and her commitment to ensure she keeps herself updated with current childminding issues. She is an active member of the local childminding group and regularly attends training events and meetings. Children benefit from the childminder's development as any new procedures or good practice is implemented into the care provided.

Children are cared for in friendly and homely surroundings, and the childminder ensures she plans the childminding sessions to meet their individual needs and preferences. They are comfortable in the well resourced and organised environment which is made accessible and welcoming to them. They are able to extend their play and move freely around the large indoor open spaces which include the play area, the dining area and the lounge. 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.

Children have opportunities to meet and interact with other children of the same age group as the childminder holds a weekly coffee morning where previous parents, carers and other registered childminders visit with their children. The childminder has developed relevant information which she shares with parents and carers to ensure they are made fully aware of all the childminding arrangements. This includes a portfolio with relevant details including the written policies and procedures. The childminder has also developed a good system for recording and keeping appropriate children's records as required. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure the high chair is made safe, and to ensure children's details are clearly recorded.

The childminder has disposed of the high chair with ripped covers and ensures she regularly checks all equipment for safety. This ensures children's safety is not compromised.

All children's details, including siblings, are now recorded on separate registration forms. This ensures the childminder has access to clearly recorded children's information and that she is able to meet their individual needs at all times.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are 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

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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 written procedures for administering medications to ensure these clearly include all required details.

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