

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 207604         |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 25 July 2007   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Michelle Smith |

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|---------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Type of inspection</b> | Childcare    |
| <b>Type of care</b>       | 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](http://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 1992. She lives with her husband, one child aged 13 years plus an adult child on the outskirts of Ashbourne. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. Children also use the bathroom 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 12 children aged seven months to 13 years. All children attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also drives to the local school to take and collect children.

The childminder attends toddler and childminding groups on a regular basis and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are developing a superb understanding of the benefits of healthy living. They sit alongside their friends to enjoy wholesome, nutritious, home cooked food, including cottage pie, and snacks, such as fruit and toast. The practice in relation to the provision of food is very impressive. Children not only eat healthy, organic food but also reap the benefits of outdoor play as they help to plant and water crops such as beetroot and mange toot. The childminder explains stage-appropriately to children what vegetables, such as potatoes need to grow, and involves children fully in the harvest. This helps them to develop a very positive attitude towards food and self-sufficiency.

Children are shown the importance of daily tasks, such as hand washing, through the childminder's positive and consistent approach. Appropriate procedures are in place for ensuring that parents are informed about the administration of medication and about any accidents. In addition, first aid training has been accessed so that any minor incidents can be dealt with effectively. Children's medical care is further safeguarded as the childminder carries a portable first aid kit with her on outings and has constructed a pergola to protect children from the sun during spells of hot weather.

Children of all ages thrive when playing in the fresh air. They have frequent, unrushed opportunities to explore, test and develop their physical skills. Through the innovative use of equipment, such as tunnels, children are inspired to take part in challenging outdoor activities, such as obstacle courses. In less favourable weather, they put on their waterproofs and go into the fresh air to see the new chicks. All children's physical skills are challenged, for example, more able children ride on bikes with two wheels whilst younger children enjoy pushing large vehicles around household furniture. This makes learning fun.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy playing in a bright, accessible and stimulating environment that is welcoming and safe. All toys, such as dolls houses and trains, are age and stage appropriate, which means children can use equipment imaginatively and follow their natural curiosity as learners. Children spend much of their time in the kitchen and designated playroom. They move freely along the hallway and reach their toys with ease, showing familiarity and comfort within the environment.

Children are safe when playing indoors and outside. There are notices on the gates to the farm requesting for people to drive slowly as there are children playing and all the required fire safety equipment is in place. The childminder has a marvellous 'car file' system which safeguards children should an emergency situation occur when children are being transported in a vehicle. However, prior written consent is not gained from parents for their child to be transported in a vehicle. This compromises their well-being overall. Children begin to understand how to keep themselves safe as the childminder takes the time to explain how to cross the road safely and why it is not safe to go near working tractors. This is then reinforced through their play, for example, their playing freely with pretend tractors.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminder is confident in her role to protect children from risk of harm. She is very aware of what procedures to follow if she has concerns

about a child in her care. All the contact details for the relevant agencies are readily at hand, ensuring that any concerns are handled in a swift and calm manner.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children happily and securely engage in an exciting range of toys, activities and resources within an environment that encourages them to make choices about what they want to do. They show great levels of contentment as they drive cars along the wooden arms of a cosy chair and find musical instruments out of a large storage container full of toys. They enjoy using boats, balls and figures in water whilst wearing an apron and chatting to the childminder, using key words such as 'duck' and 'quack'. The childminder talks to children throughout their play and also through daily routines. This helps children to appreciate the value of communication.

Every child has the capacity to create through a freely accessible art table. This enables children to express their unique artistic talent. They draw pictures independently, showing their finished product with pride to the childminder, and paint Easter baskets. The childminder shows lovely interaction with the children and is keen and interested in what children say and do. As a result, children are encouraged to think for themselves and their ideas are celebrated. The childminder has attended 'Birth to three matters' framework training. She implements her knowledge with great success to provide children with a diverse range of activities, such as feeding chickens and reading stories in character. She strikes an admirable balance between free play and adult-led play opportunities. Consequently, children are motivated learners.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children are included in all activities, for example, young babies take part in safe water play alongside more able children. This helps to make them feel special, secure and valued, for example, they take their turn to count freshly dug potatoes. On entering the setting, they are able to choose what coat peg they would like to use for the day, which helps them to develop a sense of belonging. Children show good levels of confidence in the setting, as they are familiar with routines and behavioural boundaries. The childminder demonstrates through discussion a good understanding of how to positively manage a wide range of children's behaviour. She has a firm and kind approach, explaining to them what the outcome for their behaviour might be. This helps children to understand right from wrong.

Children benefit from the strong partnership between the childminder, parents and carers, who act together to give consistent messages which promote children's development and learning in all areas. The childminder has good quality, well written policies and procedures which parents can ask to view at any time. She works closely with them from the very start of the contract of care to establish every child's individual care needs and, as a result, children receive consistent care. She is willing to attend any specific training needs to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and disabilities, so helping to provide an inclusive environment. Children learn about their own needs and their local community through attending community groups and making special keepsakes for family members. They begin to understand the wider world as they play with many resources that reflect positive images of culture, race and disability, for example, dolls, books and jigsaws.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children feel at ease in the well organised environment. This means they play and move freely, initiating their own play and building upon their own ideas. The space within the home is used successfully to provide children with safe and stimulating play experiences, for example, children take part in messy art activities in the kitchen and concentrate on pretend play with houses and figures in the designated playroom. They benefit significantly from the childminder's experience of working with children and her ongoing commitment to improving practice.

All of the legally required documentation, such as a record of children's attendance, is maintained and a high percentage of parental consents are in place. There are many other written policies and procedures which cover subject areas such as child protection and equal opportunities. This helps to ensure the setting runs smoothly and children are safe. The childminder has devised contingency plans to ensure that children can be cared for by suitable people should an emergency situation occur. In addition, they are never left alone in the care of any person who has not been vetted. On occasions, children take benefit from playing with the childminder's family members, for example, the childminder's daughter reads to children whilst sitting cosy in a chair. This helps children to relax and feel at home.

Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure accident records are maintained confidentially. The childminder ensures that no details from any accident record transfers onto another. This means that confidentiality is maintained and consequently, respects children's privacy.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 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 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**

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):

- gain parents written permission for their child to be transported in a vehicle.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)