

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224495
Inspection date	17 July 2007
Inspector	John Vernon
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 has been registered since 1992. She lives with her husband in a house in Burslem, within walking distance of the town centre and local schools. All areas of the property, except for the childminder's own bedroom, are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed area available for outside play.

The childminder works with an assistant and is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years. She currently cares for eight children who attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder takes positive steps to develop children's understanding and awareness of good health and hygiene, during daily routines. For example, children are encouraged to wash hands after messy play, before eating and after visiting the toilet. The childminder reminds the

children to cover their mouth when they cough. Consequently, the possibility of the spread of infection is minimised and children maintain good health.

Written information is in place for excluding children who are ill. Parents are aware of the procedures to be followed should a child become sick during the day. The childminder has a current first aid certificate, which includes training in first aid for infants and young children. Appropriate permission is gained from parents in respect of the administration of medication thus enabling children's needs to be met.

Children have good access to outdoor play facilities as they visit the local park most days. At the childminder's home, they have access to a range of suitable outdoor equipment and are developing a healthy attitude to being active.

The childminder has a good knowledge of healthy eating. She actively promotes a healthy diet for the children by discouraging the use of additional salt and sugar in cooking. Children are offered a hot, home cooked meal each day and at inspection enjoyed roast turkey and fresh vegetables. They are offered sugar-free juice, milk or water on a regular basis throughout the day and enjoy nutritious snacks such as fresh fruit. The individual dietary needs of the children are adequately catered for. Additionally, the childminder has produced written information to share with parents about a healthy diet and consequently, children have good opportunities to learn about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment which is clean, well maintained and child-friendly. Children are able to play with a range of developmentally appropriate resources, which meet safety standards. Children are able to rest and play in comfort as there is ample space for their needs. Toys and play resources are available at floor level and are easily accessible to children. Consequently they are able to self-select, and make free choices about their play.

Children are cared for in a safe environment as the childminder has put in place a number of measures to ensure their safety, including smoke alarms, a carbon monoxide detector, safety gate and a fire blanket. Children have discussed and practised with the childminder what they should do in the event of a fire. Clear procedures for the evacuation of the home in the event of an emergency ensure that children stay safe.

Effective, regular cleaning routines ensure that the areas used by the children are hygienic and free from germs. Additionally, the childminder monitors the play materials to ensure they are safe and age appropriate and the regular cleaning of toys and equipment helps to reduce the possibility of the spread of infection. Children are encouraged to tidy away toys after play, to hold hands when away from the home and to stop, look and listen when crossing the road. As a consequence they are beginning to develop a greater awareness of personal safety.

The childminder and her assistant have a satisfactory awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. They are aware of the correct procedure to follow should a concern arise and therefore children's welfare is fully safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages clearly enjoy the care and fun offered by the childminder and her assistant. During the week, the childminder's home provides children with good quality care spread over three floors. Children are well stimulated and enjoy a mix of free and adult-led play. The childminder uses her experience and understanding of the needs of young children to provide a good range of experiences which appeal to their interests, and enable them to have fun. As a result, children develop well.

The childminder and her assistant are welcoming and friendly and clearly enjoy the company of children. Together they have many years of providing care and support for young children and have a good understanding of how children develop through play. The children are offered some creative opportunities which are organised by the childminder and enjoy drawing, making, modelling, sticking, colouring and painting. Children are able to complete their designs to their own satisfaction and as a result their interest is maintained and self-esteem raised.

The childminder likes to be spontaneous and flexible with the children's time, for example, fine weather enables them to go to the park or do more activities outside. The childminder provides some planned activities and play opportunities along with some first hand experiences which afford children opportunities to learn and develop. Through different play experiences and daily routines, such as walking to school, children develop and enhance their understanding of number, size, letters and words. As a consequence, children are able to learn, play and develop.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Individual children's needs are met. The childminder has an appropriate knowledge of the care needs of children with special needs. She has a good understanding of the importance of building positive relationships with parents to ensure that all children are cared for according to their wishes. Parents are provided with a comprehensive range of written information, including a 'Welcome pack' which outlines the childminder's ways of working and managing the children's care. Her information is clear, and is displayed around the home for all parents to ensure consistency of care.

Children's uniqueness is celebrated and valued. The childminder is aware of her responsibility to promote diversity and equality of opportunity and has a sound understanding of the importance of anti-discrimination. Overall, the childminder has a satisfactory range of books, toys and resources which positively promote equality of opportunity, which are freely accessible to the children. Additionally, children have made cards to celebrate different world festivals and enjoyed tasting foods enjoyed by other cultures. Consequently, children have suitable opportunities to gain a greater awareness of the wider community.

Older children have discussed with the childminder what is appropriate behaviour whilst being cared for in her home and have consequently written some ground rules together. In turn, younger children follow clear boundaries established by the childminder. Children grow in self-esteem as the childminder endorses good behaviour. She praises the children when they behave well and sensitively discourages inappropriate behaviour when it arises. Consequently, the handling of children's behaviour is developmentally appropriate, and respects individual children's level of understanding and maturity.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a good knowledge of the National Standards. In turn, together with her assistant, they have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities as registered carers. At inspection, the childminder was well organised. Information kept about the children is clear, and suitable documents and procedures are in place to support the appropriate care of each child. The childminder and her assistant work well together to offer to children good levels of support and supervision to enable them to feel secure. Children's needs and routines are discussed on a regular basis with parents thus contributing to the continuity of the children's care.

The childminder does keep a record of children's attendance and documents are stored securely and safely in order to ensure children's privacy. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to make sure the window in the loft area is made safe or inaccessible to children and develop knowledge of the national guidance for child protection.

The childminder has made sure the window in the loft area is safe and completed training to develop her knowledge of the national guidance for child protection. Consequently, children are safe when playing in the loft area and in respect of child protection, their welfare is protected.

Complaints since the last inspection

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 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:

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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):

- further increase the resources available to children, in respect of equality, diversity and disability.

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