

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	255597
Inspection date	28 November 2007
Inspector	Helen Barter
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 1993. She lives with her husband and two children, aged 15 and 18 years, in a house located in the Wordsley area of Stourbridge, West Midlands. The house is within walking distance to local shops, parks and schools.

One room on the ground floor, the kitchen and upstairs bathroom are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The childminder is registered to care for five children under eight years. The family have no pets.

The childminder attends a local child centred focus group and a toddler group on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a tidy environment where good attention is paid to their health and hygiene. The childminder promotes children's welfare effectively, ensuring that any risk of

infection is eliminated by keeping toilet facilities spotlessly clean and using individual, disposable nappy changing mats for the younger children. Children's independent hygiene routines are well promoted. They know that they need to wash their hands after going to the toilet and before eating and the youngest carefully clean each finger with a wipe. Children's health is fully protected because the childminder has up-to-date paediatric first aid training and clear procedures for recording the administration of medicine and for sharing with parents any details about minor accidents.

Children enjoy the food provided because their preferences and diets are well considered. Food is hygienically stored and prepared, thus preventing risk of contamination. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge of healthy eating, enjoying foods, such as homemade pizzas with toppings that they have chosen, or wholemeal muffins which they make after school. Children enjoy fresh fruit and drinks between meals, to which they have ready access. Children's health and enjoyment of exercise is well promoted by opportunities in the garden and at toddler group to climb, slide and pedal wheeled toys, and by regular visits to the nearby park where they can run freely.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from well maintained procedures which ensure that they play and relax in a safe and secure environment. They are confident because they know that they are cared for well and are treated with great affection. Children play safely indoors and outside, relax on the sofa or sit at the table to write or draw because the furniture, equipment and toys are well organised and stored. Children enjoy playing with a good number of toys and games, suited to their ages, which are checked regularly for safety and replaced when they are worn-out. Children are helped to develop independence within safe limits. For example, children of all ages help themselves to toys from the shelves but older children use the small piece construction kits that are on the table because they are not safe for the younger ones. Children's safety is assured because the childminder is aware of risk and establishes routines in the home, such as putting a gate at the kitchen door if the oven is hot, and in the wider environment, for example, checking the suitability of a new park for toddlers.

Younger children are kept safe when they are transported in the double buggy for daily walks to collect children from school and regular visits to the toddler group and library. The childminder ensures that parents are fully aware of her safety routines, such as formal identification of anyone collecting a child other than a parent, and this ensures children's security. Children are protected from harm because the childminder clearly understands her role in child protection through regular training. She puts appropriate procedures into practice if necessary and ensures that parents understand that this will take place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit greatly from the childminder's commitment to develop and share her expertise through attending training and meeting with other childminders in her focus group. She uses her longstanding experience, high levels of initiative and knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide children with a stimulating range of play opportunities which capture their curiosity, develop their independence and promote their development and learning. Children's enjoyment and development is considerably enhanced by a wide range of activities,

such as taking children to toddler group, 'Rattle and Rhyme' sessions at the library and fairs at the local school, as well as times for free play, creative activities, such as cooking 'yoghurt pot muffins' and early mark-making through chalking on slabs in the garden.

Children's language and communication skills are considerably enhanced through the constant use of questions and answers, dialogue, songs and stories. Their development is progressed because the childminder knows the children exceedingly well, and uses intuition, experience and training to build on their learning. For example, she constantly observes their play and spots immediately when a new skill has been learned, such as twisting a knob on a toy or being able to accurately count objects to 20. She then provides activities which build on this skill and challenge the child to develop further. Children's social skills and knowledge and understanding are developed very well through their activities at toddler group. Such activities include making autumn leaf mobiles and outings to the shops to select items and understand how they are paid for.

Children are happy and settled in the stimulating environment where they enjoy an excellent range of toys and resources which help them to make active choices about their play. They enjoy a large variety of indoor and outdoor activities which provide challenge appropriate to their age and stage of development. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and well-being. They feel confident to express their thoughts and feelings, seek cuddles when they want them and sing and play by themselves because they feel secure. Children respond positively to the childminder's use of praise and encouragement and their reassurance and sense of self-worth is assured through cuddles and close, caring attention. This adds a great deal to children's outstanding enjoyment and achievement in the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder's longstanding relationship with the toddler group and other local childminders means that she knows many of the families involved and builds good social networks which benefit the children in her care. Children play confidently with their peers because they have many opportunities to meet with others through groups, at the park and when going to and from school. The childminder has a strong commitment to ensure all children are included and that any additional need is catered for. She works well with outside agencies, such as the speech therapist when children need extra support. Children's awareness of people's different backgrounds, race and cultures is promoted well because the childminder is conscious of the need to promote positive images in the play resources.

Children behave extremely well because the childminder sets a positive example, is consistent in her management and is quietly firm when necessary. Children respond very positively to praise and rewards, such as stickers. Parents are kept very well informed about how behaviour is managed or if there are any difficulties. Children receive good quality care because the childminder has very strong relationships with their parents. They work together to ensure that children are happy, settled and safe. Children's individual needs and preferences are well known because there is good quality communication with parents. Information about their children's development is shared very well through oral communication. However, the lack of any formal recording of observations means that the successes of children's development cannot always be reflected upon and shared with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a very high regard for children's well-being. She attends a good range of training events and a local focus group in order to provide a good standard of care. Good organisation and understanding of requirements promote and maintain children's health and safety. As a result, children make a positive contribution and, importantly, enjoy and achieve exceptionally well. All the required documentation is in place. It is well organised and accessible to parents while maintaining the confidentiality of individual children. The childminder organises the space very well and ensures toys and resources are fully accessible and meet children's needs, ages and abilities. This ensures that children enjoy coming to the setting because they know there is always something fun and interesting for them to do. Their interests and preferences are always catered for. Children benefit a great deal from the childminder's commitment, attention and dedication to ensuring they enjoy and achieve while in her care. 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 was asked to make arrangements for the children to practise the emergency escape plan. Older children in the setting have practised the plan. There are a good number of exit routes from the premises which the childminder uses to evacuate those children who are too young to understand emergency procedures.

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):

- develop further methods to better inform parents of their children's development.

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