

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	255719
Inspection date	11 September 2007
Inspector	Donna Stevens
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

the time of the inspection there were no children in receipt of nursery education. Ofsted judges that the provider remains suitable to provide nursery education.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged 14 and nine in a house in Stourbridge. There are shops and schools within easy walking distance. All areas of the property are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The family have tropical fish. The childminder is currently minding six children, all of whom attend a part-time basis. She runs a local activity group for minded children and regularly attends other local carer and toddler groups. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and a member of an approved childminding network. She is accredited to receive nursery education funding for three and four year olds.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is extremely well promoted because the childminder takes excellent steps to promote their good health, encourage good personal hygiene and prevent the spread of infection. Children are encouraged from a young age to wash their hands before eating, after nappy changing and toileting, after messy play and after playing outside. Children all have their own colour-coded towels to prevent the spread of infection. High quality written policies which are shared with parents support the very good procedures in place if children become unwell, need to be given medication or have an accident. High levels of hygiene are maintained during nappy changing and food preparation.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of food nutrition and helps children to become aware of food that is good for them and food that is nice to have as a treat. Children are provided with a wide variety of nutritious and filling snacks and meals and drinks are always available. They are encouraged to take part in food preparation tasks such as preparing fruit and helping to make toast and sandwiches. They also enjoy cooking activities where they learn how food changes when it is cooked or melted, for example by making cakes or jelly. The childminder regularly introduces children to new tastes such as mango or kiwi fruit and encourages them to help in the preparation. These experiences help children to develop a very positive attitude towards healthy eating and cooking.

Children have extensive opportunities for physical exercise. They make regular trips to different parks where they have space to run around, play ball games and use climbing equipment. Children also enjoy visits to soft play areas and at home take part in music sessions and play in the garden. The childminder helps the children to understand why exercise is important and the changes that occur in their bodies when they take part in physical activities. This encourages children to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle including regular exercise, rest and a healthy diet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are safe as a result of the childminder's superb awareness of health and safety and excellent steps are taken to minimise risks. Children are cared for in a very clean, well-maintained, safe and child-friendly home. The playroom is warm and welcoming with colourful posters on the wall and toys laid out on the floor. Children play with an extensive range of toys and equipment that are of a high standard and are checked as they are used to ensure that children can continue to play safely and independently with a wide range of resources. Toys and resources are stored at child height and children are encouraged to be independent and select their own equipment.

Children are extremely well supervised at home and on regular outings and visits. The childminder carries out regular risk assessments to ensure that a high level of safety is maintained in the home and garden. Emergency plans are in place should the childminder or one of the children

fall ill, have an accident or become lost. Children have very good opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe in the home as they practise the fire evacuation procedure and understand basic house rules such as not running in the home, climbing on furniture or throwing toys. On daily walks to school and through themes and projects children learn about road safety and the importance of staying close to an adult when away from the home.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of child protection and ensures that children's safety is of paramount concern. There is an up-to-date child protection policy which is in line with current guidance, is understood by the childminder and shared with parents. The childminder has attended several training courses and is fully aware of the types of abuse, signs to look for and the steps to take if she feels concerned about a child in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very well settled in the setting, are confident and happy. The childminder spends a great deal of time with the children supporting their play and encouraging them to learn new skills. The childminder uses the 'birth to three matters' framework to plan an excellent range of activities covering all areas of play and development. Children particularly enjoy messy play, for example, sitting in a plastic tray exploring spaghetti that has been dyed different colours. They are able to explore everyday items that are kept in the treasure box. A sensory area allows children to explore materials that feel and react differently. They use the lounge to develop holistic play where the childminder provides them with everyday objects such as cardboard boxes and large pom-poms. Opportunities for fun and learning are extended outside the home as children enjoy a variety of outings and visits to local parks, soft play areas and places of interest such as the safari park.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's personal, social and emotional development are well catered for and they are given opportunities to increase their independence as they are encouraged to take themselves to the toilet, put on their own coats and shoes and socialise with other children. Regular visits to local toddler and childminder groups provide opportunities for children to mix with other children and join in with group activities.

The children are developing their competencies well across the four aspects of communication, speaking, listening, reading and writing. The childminder takes time to engage in conversation with the children, questioning them and listening to their responses. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. During structured activities and free play they have lots of opportunities to develop writing skills and practise mark making. During a theme about Post Offices children wrote their own letters, placed them in envelopes and then went to the post office to buy stamps and post them to their home addresses. This helps children to begin to understand that writing has a purpose and is important in our everyday lives.

The children are introduced to mathematical concepts in all areas of play and daily life. For example children will count as they go up and down the stairs, count objects they have seen whilst out and about, and look at concepts like more than and less than through counting

rhymes and games. They learn about weight and measure as they take part in cooking activities. When making sandwiches they talk about different shapes that sandwiches can be and the concept of cutting items in half and into quarters. These activities provide children with opportunities to learn basic mathematical skills.

Children are able to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through access to a range of toys and equipment depicting positive images and projects that introduce them to other ways of life. They look at basic scientific experiments like what happens to ice cubes when they are warmed and how cubes of jelly melt when warm water is poured on them. As they walk to and from school each day and visit local parks they talk about the weather and the changes to the environment around them with the seasons. The childminder also encourages them to understand a sense of time by talking about things that have happened in the past and things that are going to happen in the future. They use a good range of construction toys to develop their design and building skills including everyday objects such as cardboard boxes and tubes. They have opportunities to learn about information technology as they play simple games on the computer and use other electronic toys.

Children have good opportunities to develop their creative skills. Structured art and craft activities are planned frequently but children are also able to request resources as and when they choose and are encouraged to use their own ideas to produce pictures and collages. Children enjoy role-play, for example, extending the letter writing activity to play at Post Offices and play with dolls and other home corner equipment. Children enjoy regular music activities where they sing songs and play musical instruments.

The range of activities and resources allows children to make good progress in all areas of learning. The childminder talks to parents before children start to gain an understanding of children's skills, abilities and interests and uses this in planning appropriate activities. Small numbers of funded children usually no more than one or two allows her to tailor her plans very specifically and concentrate on areas of learning where children may need added support and opportunities as well as building on their interests and strengths. There are effective procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those who have English as an additional language.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are highly valued as individuals and the childminder tailors the daily routine to ensure that each child's needs are met. A high priority is given to providing opportunities for children to learn about other cultures and ways of life through access to an extensive range of toys and equipment that depict positive images of gender, culture, race and disability. Activities and themes provide children with the opportunity to explore diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. For example, they currently have a box of toys from the network toy library which help children to understand about how traveller families live.

Children behave extremely well. They are encouraged to understand right from wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and age-appropriate methods which are used to manage behaviour. For younger children the childminder uses explanations and repeated positive reinforcement

to encourage them to share toys, be kind and play well alongside each other. As children become older they have timeout to provide them with reflection time to think about the consequences of their actions and why their behaviour was inappropriate. Children are encouraged to share, take turns and cooperate in their play and are continuously praised for doing so.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children benefit from the close communication between parents and the childminder. Time is taken at the end of each day to share with parents what their children has been doing while at the childminders. Parents are provided with a prospectus detailing the care that is provided and the training the childminder has undertaken. They also receive information on both the birth to three framework and foundation stage. Children have individual files containing details of their developmental progress and these include photographs to enable parents to see how their children have achieved their goals. Parents are given the opportunity to provide feedback through questionnaires. They receive a copy of all the written policies and sign to confirm that they have read and understood the level of care being provided.

The children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children receive excellent care and enjoy a very good variety of well-planned activities and play opportunities both in and out of the home. This is because the childminder is well qualified and is continuously attending training to keep up-to-date with current practice and to enable her to provide outstanding opportunities for the children in her care.

Children benefit because the childminder is exceptionally well-organised and plans days so there is a range of activities and opportunities for the children both in and out of the home, as well as time for rest and sleep. The play space is well laid out to ensure that children can access toys independently. Children receive a high level of individual attention, comfort and support from the childminder. The childminder's management of nursery education effectively monitors and develops the provision to ensure that children are able to make good progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder plans activities around children's individual abilities, interests and areas of learning where they need support. She works with parents to establish children's starting points and provide written assessment records of when children have achieved developmental goals. She now plans to further improve this area of practice.

Children's individual welfare, care and learning needs are very well met because of a high-quality supporting documentation kept. All required records are of an excellent standard, kept up-to-date, confidentially stored and available to share with parents. Policies and procedures have been carefully thought out with children's safety, well-being and enjoyment being of paramount importance and reflect the superb quality childcare that is provided. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to record fire evacuation drills. She now keeps detailed records of drills including details of time and date, children present and how long it took to exit the property.

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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue with plans to further develop the recording of children's progress

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