



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	510853
Inspection date	10 January 2007
Inspector	Linda Tomkins
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 2001. She lives with her husband and one child aged seven years in Staffordshire. One first floor bedroom and the whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently caring for three children under five, one child is full-time and two are part-time. In addition, the childminder cares for five children aged between five and 10 years for various days before and after school. The childminder also cares for children who are placed for emergency care by the local authority. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and attends local pre-school groups. The family has a dog.

The childminder occasionally works with an assistant. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and the local childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very comfortable home where they are taught the importance of good health practice and personal care. They are supplied with towels and wipes which they are encouraged to access independently as they wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. The childminder gives high priority to helping children understand how and why they keep themselves clean through discussion about germs and ensuring they do not share potties and cosmetics. The family has a dog which the children have occasional access to but the dog is regularly wormed, vaccinated and well cared for.

There are good arrangements and written policies for protecting children from cross infection because the childminder does not care for sick or infectious children and ensures that written permission for seeking emergency treatment or advice is in place. This means that children will receive prompt medical treatment in an emergency. In addition, the childminder provides parents with written information on infectious diseases and the exclusion periods. Procedures for accidents and giving medication are good, they are clearly recorded and explained to parents when children are settled into the childminder's home. The childminder is well qualified to meet children's medical needs in the event of an accident.

The childminder demonstrates an extensive understanding of how children's health is promoted. Children are provided with a varied range of activities which contribute to their good health such as regular outside play in the garden and park and walks to and from school each day.

The childminder has a thorough understanding of healthy eating, including the need to have drinking water accessible at all times. The children have nutritious meals and snack times that are social occasions where children are encouraged to enjoy food such as rice and chopped vegetables, fresh fruit, toast and yoghurts. The childminder takes account of parents' wishes through discussions and children's individual records, to ensure she meets their dietary needs well and follows home routines.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a welcoming home with clear space for children to move around freely and independently. She has safety equipment and has devised an emergency evacuation plan which is regularly practised with all the minded children. This helps to keep children safe in an emergency situation. However, the double electrical sockets in the conservatory are not protected which poses a hazard to children.

Children independently select activities from a wide range of toys and equipment stored in drawers and containers in the playroom and conservatory. The childminder provides toys that are appropriate for the children's age and stage of development. The outside play area is fenced and provides a secure play space where children can play safely.

All the required procedures and equipment are in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. The childminder teaches children road safety, for example, older children understand they must form a line and wait at the kerb whilst the childminder checks the traffic and stands in the middle of the road to see them safely across. When out walking with younger children she ensures they understand that they must hold the childminder's hand and be securely strapped into the push-chair.

The childminder has procedures for ensuring children are protected. She understands her duty to protect children in her care and how to report concerns. There is a clear procedure for recording existing injuries that children have sustained before arriving at her home and her current written policy is undergoing a review to reflect recent changes to the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Older school-age children select and organise their own activities for the short periods of time they are with the childminder to suit their own likes and dislikes. They enjoy playing interactive computer games and relaxing whilst watching television after school.

The childminder organises her routines and activities to suit the younger children's level of development which allows children to develop their independence in the childminder's home. She discusses children's individual preferences with the children so that they have time to be active and rest. Children have regular opportunities for physical development as they frequently visit activity centres, play on large equipment in the garden and in local parks.

The childminder knows the children well and ensures her resources suit the age range of the children she cares for. They are presented at a low level to allow for choice of activity. For example, the older children use the conservatory and living room for art activities and television whilst younger children use the kitchen and playroom to explore and select activities such as dressing-up and role play with dolls and the play kitchen.

Older children's activities and achievements are shared verbally with parents when they are collected each day. Younger children's daily activities and progress are recorded in their daily record books which offer space for parents' comments. The childminder is experienced and has spent a number of years working and caring for children. She demonstrates a good understanding of how younger children learn and how older children value a degree of independence.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder and children interact together using good quality resources such as books, dolls and play figures with positive images of race, disability and gender. Children have a range of activities that promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity and understanding of others. For example, visits to various pre-school groups, shopping and outings.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. They receive individual attention and have conversations with the childminder who encourages them to freely express their views. Children are encouraged to behave well and make themselves at home to foster good levels of self-esteem and well-being. The childminder has a wide experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disability. She has a clear understanding of how to ensure children are fully supported and included in all activities to enhance their development and progress.

Parents are provided with written information on policies and procedures when they attend introductory visits prior to placing their child. The childminder makes verbal and written reports on the children's progress, development and achievements each day. She encourages the children to take examples of art work home, for example, recently the children visited a pottery where they painted pottery models to take home for parents. This ensures parents are involved and contributes to the quality of care their children receive.

The childminder is aware of the new complaints system and provides parents with a copy of the complaints pro-forma. However, the policy does not include current Ofsted contact details which means that parents cannot report their concerns to ensure their children's welfare is not compromised. The childminder offers flexible care to families and ensures the children's needs are met.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is experienced and well qualified to provide children with an interesting range of activities to develop children's skills and independence. She has a current first aid certificate and regularly attends training to continue to increase her knowledge of learning opportunities, for example, 'Birth to three matters'.

Clear written policies and procedures ensure that children are secure and relaxed in the child-centred environment. This means they are confident to initiate and extend their own learning and play. The well-organised environment provides clear space for children's free movement. Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote welfare, care and learning of minded children.

The childminder has good knowledge of required records and ensures that most are accurate and up-to-date, stored confidentially and available for parents. However, the record of children's daily attendance does not always show the actual hours of attendance. This has the potential to compromise children's safety during an emergency evacuation. Parents are regularly informed on their children's progress and activities during daily verbal exchange and through written records. This enables the childminder to monitor and evaluate the quality of her care and contributes to continuity in the children's care. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to become familiar with current Area Child Protection Procedures; devise and implement a system to record any incident of physical

restraint; and to ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

The childminder has attended training courses to extend and increase her knowledge and has a clear understanding of how to protect children in her care. The Area Child Protection Procedures have been reviewed and changed since the childminder's last inspection and this is reflected in this report. The childminder has records available to record any incidents of physical restraint but this recommendation referred to a child previously in her care. However the record book has been retained for future use. The children in the childminder's care benefit from an extensive range of good quality resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. The children enjoy discovering facts about other cultures and take part in activities to extend their understanding such as Mehndi hand painting.

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):

- ensure the electrical sockets in the conservatory do not pose a hazard to children
- ensure the complaints procedure contains the address and telephone number of the regulator
- ensure the daily record of attendance accurately records the hours of children's attendance.

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