



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY248214
Inspection date	24 January 2006
Inspector	Saida Cummings
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 2003. She lives with her husband, one adult child and two children aged 4 and 15 years. They live in a terraced house situated close to Worcester city centre. There are local shops, parks, playing fields, pre-schools and schools within walking distance.

The main areas used for childminding are situated on the ground floor, with sleeping and further bathroom facilities available on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play. Children are also taken on local visits and outings, including regular attendances at the local carer and toddler group. The family has no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time and is currently minding one child under five years. The childminder regularly attends the local childminding support group meetings and events.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have access to clean, well-maintained areas. Their health is promoted well as the childminder encourages them to begin to take responsibility of meeting their own health needs. They are developing an understanding of good personal hygiene, which includes regular hand washing, especially after outdoor play, toileting and before meals. Older children are able to independently visit the toilet with the childminder over-seeing them, gently reminding them to wash their hands. The risk of infection is reduced as the childminder follows the local health authority guidelines, and ensures all parents and carers are made aware that children are not cared for if they have an infectious illness. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with any accidents, and for administering medications if required. The childminder ensures she initially gathers appropriate information concerning children's health, allergies and medical history. However, the written parents' consents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment need improvement to ensure children's health and well-being is not compromised.

Children are starting to develop an awareness of healthy lifestyles as they participate in regular outdoor play which enables them to run, jump, pedal on bikes and develop their physical skills. Regular visits and outings are also incorporated into the planned activities which gives children the experience of going on local walks, such as visiting various parks and playing fields. Children also enjoy opportunities to move freely indoors and instigate their own physical play, such as using mats and cushions to hop, skip, jump and balance. Young children's needs are met as the childminder knows the children well and is aware of their individual health needs. For example when children are getting upset during play, the childminder recognises this is a sign that they are hungry and tired. She re-organises the routine so that children are able to eat any early lunch and then rest.

Children enjoy well organised mealtimes, which are also used as social times, with all the children sitting to eat together. They learn about healthy eating during snack and mealtimes when discussions are held about the types of food they eat and what is good for them. They assist with laying the table and discussions about the food they eat is encouraged to make them aware of healthy options. Children enjoy nutritious and healthy meals, which are discussed and planned with the parents and carers to ensure all their individual dietary needs and preferences are met. The childminder provides all the food and drink, but is flexible and gives parents and carers the choice to provide their own if they wish. Children have access to suitable drinks at all times, which are freshly prepared.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are able to access spacious indoor and outdoor areas, which are adapted for their use. The hall is used for children to extend their indoor physical and imaginary play. They are able to self-select from a wide variety of safe play equipment and resources, which are stored within the play rooms at floor level. All indoor and outdoor play equipment is sturdy and clean. The childminder includes cleaning and checking play equipment and toys as part of her daily routines.

Children are cared for in a clean, safe and family-friendly environment. The areas used by children are made safe by ensuring age-appropriate safety items are in place, such as use of safety gates, electrical socket covers, and use of child locks in low-level kitchen cupboards. Children are constantly supervised and taught safety as part of their everyday activities. This includes road safety when out walking, and not to climb onto furniture when indoors. Children also learn how to keep themselves safe through some of the play activities, such as when using the imaginary play equipment to make 'cups of tea and coffee', they are reminded 'not to drink it too fast as it is very hot'. They take part in regular emergency evacuation practises to ensure they are fully aware of the procedures.

Children are kept safe from harm as the childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. She has completed child protection training and is aware of the local Safeguarding Children's Board's guidelines, and the procedures to follow if there are any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children independently choose from a wide variety of interesting toys and materials, which they are able to easily access. They have access to a broad range of activities which are adapted depending on their ages and stages of development. Children's activities are well planned with different types of play timetabled into each session, which is adapted depending on their ages and stages of development. The childminder provides an interesting and stimulating balance of activities, allowing for more active play and relaxing sessions.

Children are happy and settled within the environment. They are very comfortable with the childminder and have built a trusting relationship. Their interest and involvement is encouraged by the consistent and positive adult interaction. Children are allowed time to explore ideas and use their imagination and the childminder assists by supplying appropriate resources. For example they enjoy using the home corner play equipment to 'pack a picnic' and the childminder assists by supplying a blanket for use as a 'picnic rug'. They are able to lay out their 'picnic' and happily sit on the floor to eat and hold a meaningful conversation.

Children's learning is promoted through everyday activities, such as recognising colours when crayoning, and counting different play objects during imaginary play. Their language development is encouraged through various activities, including reading stories, discussions, questioning, nursery rhymes, and making different sounds. Children of different ages enjoy story times where the younger children recognise the pictures, and the older children join in with the familiar outline of the stories. The childminder takes time to find out what interests each child, and builds on this information to plan and provide a variety of activities and opportunities to ensure their preferences are met.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are all treated equally and have equal access to resources and activities. The childminder ensures children are encouraged to make use of all the play equipment and activities available. Children are valued and respected, and the childminder is committed to ensuring all children feel secure and are included. She knows the children well and ensures they are provided with equality of opportunity. Children are given lots of individual attention and thoroughly enjoy good interaction with the childminder, which enables their individual needs to be met. They have access to a range of resources and activities to promote their awareness of diversity. The childminder understands special needs and demonstrates an awareness of being able to meet any specific requirements. Children are given time, resources and assistance to ensure their individual specific needs are met as required, such as taking part in quieter and more relaxing activities if children are sensitive or shy.

Children respond well to the childminder's approach to behaviour management. She creates an environment that encourages children to behave well. Children's positive behaviour is encouraged and praised, and they are taught to be polite and to give consideration to each other. Children are encouraged to share and take turns, such as when using the dressing up clothes, they take turns to be the 'princess'.

Children's individual needs are met as the childminder ensures full discussions are initially held with parents and carers and that she is able to meet all requirements as outlined. They are settled in on a gradual basis which is fully planned with the parents and carers to ensure enough time is allowed. This varies depending on the individual child's needs and how quickly they settle into their new environment. Parents and carers are kept well informed of their children's activities, any issues and the domestic routines.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in friendly and homely surroundings, and the childminder ensures she plans the childminding sessions to meet their individual needs and preferences. They are comfortable in the well resourced and organised environment which is made accessible and welcoming to them. They are able to freely move from the dining room to the lounge, and use the large hall to extend their play as required. Children are being extended and challenged in a safe and stimulating environment that develops their emotional, intellectual, physical and social skills. There are opportunities for children to be valued, cuddled, comforted and their individual needs and personalities are recognised and provided for.

Children have opportunities to regularly attend local carer and toddler groups, which enables them to meet and interact with different children of their own age group and to take part in large group activities. The childminder has developed relevant information which she shares with parents and carers to ensure they are made fully aware of all the childminding arrangements. The childminder has also developed a good system for recording and keeping appropriate records as required.

Children enjoy good interaction with the childminder as she ensures she organises her time during sessions to be able to adapt to their particular needs and routines. Their care and play needs are met by the childminder's effective organisation of the childminding sessions, and her commitment to ensure she keeps herself updated with current childminding issues. She is an active member of the local childminding group and regularly attends training events and meetings. Children benefit from the childminder's development as any new procedures or good practice is implemented into the care provided. Overall, 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 agreed to practise the emergency evacuation procedure, to develop the procedures for administering any medications, and to obtain parents' written consents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

Children now have the opportunity to regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure. This ensures they are made fully aware of the procedures and how to keep themselves safe.

The childminder has developed a system for keeping appropriate records for administering any medications. This includes obtaining prior written parents' consents and recording the required details when the medication is administered. This ensures children's health and well-being is not compromised.

Although the childminder has obtained parents' written consents for emergency treatment, these records are not clearly detailed. A further recommendation was agreed for the childminder to improve these to ensure children's health and well-being is not compromised.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, Ofsted has received one complaint relating to National Standard 2: Organisation, and National Standard 6: Safety. Concerns were raised regarding the provider's suitability with reference to training in first aid, supervision of children, the security of the setting, and safety of children to leave the property unsupervised.

Ofsted carried out an unannounced investigation visit on 12 October 2005, where two actions were raised in relation to National Standard 2; to provide evidence that the provider is reserved onto an appropriate first aid course and to update Ofsted once completed; and in relation to National Standard 6; to produce an action plan to show how children will be kept safe when accessing the rear yard and garden. The response to the actions are satisfactory. Ofsted are satisfied that the provider has taken appropriate steps to address the concerns raised and remains qualified for registration.

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

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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):

- improve the documentation to ensure this clearly details parents' written consents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

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