

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY251272
Inspection date	27 November 2007
Inspector	Jennie Lenton
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 satisfactory. 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 2002. She lives with her partner and her two sons aged 14 and 17 years old, in Werrington, Stoke-on-Trent. The family have a pet dog. The ground floor of the house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years of age. She currently has six children on roll. Children attend on a part-time basis. The childminder takes and collects children from schools and pre-schools in the vicinity. She regularly visits the local library and toddler group. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are warmly welcomed. The childminder is qualified to level 3 CACHE.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from cross-infection as the childminder has effective procedures and policies in place. Good standards of cleanliness are maintained throughout the home which

ensures that children are cared for in a safe and hygienic environment. There is a clear exclusion policy for sick children and any child who becomes ill at the setting is able to rest away from others while they wait for their parent to collect them from the premises. This ensures that the good health of all is maintained. There are clear routines which help children learn about how to keep themselves healthy. For example, younger children are reminded to wash their hands prior to eating and after visiting the toilet. Older children independently go and wash their hands as they understand the importance of personal hygiene.

Children are promptly and appropriately cared for should they have an accident at the home. The childminder understands the importance of accurately recording incidents and ensures any details are shared with parents. Children benefit as their welfare is promoted. There are suitable procedures in place for the safe administration of medicine. This helps protect children from the risk of over or under medicating.

The childminder works effectively with parents to meet each child's dietary needs and routines. She collates information regarding any allergies and takes account of these. She also incorporates the wishes of parents. For example, she provides snacks of fruit or homemade cakes and prepares food sent in from the child's home for meal times, in accordance with parents' wishes. Children are provided with access to a drink throughout the day. Therefore, they are well nourished and remain hydrated. Their health is further promoted by regular opportunities for active play. They regularly visit local play areas or walk in the local countryside. This enables them to develop their physical skills as they have fun playing on the equipment or running in the fresh air. Access to the childminder's spacious garden also provides daily opportunities to run and play as they enjoy relay races and ball games. This encourages a positive attitude towards exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel relaxed and content in the welcoming premises. The childminder provides a safe and secure environment where children have space to play and rest. The play equipment is well organised. Children can independently access most of the wide range of resources from safe, child-friendly, storage boxes and cupboards. All toys and equipment are of a good standard. They are developmentally appropriate which enhances children's welfare and enjoyment. The childminder has good awareness of hazards within the home and has sought to minimise these. For instance, using a stairgate to restrict access to the kitchen and minimise the potential for accidental injury.

Children are effectively kept safe as the premises are suitably locked to prevent children leaving unaccompanied or uninvited visitors from entering. Children are also well protected outside the home setting. The childminder ensures children's well-being on outings by using suitable equipment such as pushchairs and wrist restraints when walking. Children learn about keeping themselves safe as the childminder talks to them about road safety and 'keeping together'. The garden area is also generally free from hazards. For instance, the shed is kept locked and all garden tools are stored securely. However, there is some ivy which is accessible to children. This poses a risk.

The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of child protection and is clear about her responsibilities. She has a clear policy which is shared with parents. This ensures that any concerns regarding children's welfare can be appropriately discussed. The childminder has due regard for confidentiality and is aware of the procedure to pass concerns on to the correct authorities. Potentially, this safeguards a child from future harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. They have warm relationships with the childminder as they receive lots of attention and are treated with respect. The childminder listens attentively to them and respects their preferences as they choose what to play. This promotes children's self-esteem. Their play is enhanced as the childminder interacts with them and joins in their activities. For example, as babies pick up rattles and shake them the childminder encourages their development by providing other toys to stimulate and increase their co-ordination. Similarly, at Halloween, she dresses up with the children, enhancing their fun. The childminder plans a varied schedule so that children are always engaged in fruitful activity. She provides regular visits to local toddler groups and the library as well as outings to parks and walks in the countryside. This helps children to develop social skills as well as promoting their creative, physical and intellectual development.

The extensive resources provide a good level of challenge to all ages. Children have opportunities to dress up, paint and play imaginatively with toy cars and dolls. They also enjoy reading books, playing board games and building with construction toys. They explore their creative abilities as they put on plays for the childminder and their parents, singing and dancing with confidence. Through play, children learn to interact well as they develop a sense of right and wrong. The childminder encourages them to appreciate the needs of others by reminding them to share and take turns. Children play together harmoniously as they learn to show a mature respect for their surroundings and each other. As a result, they enjoy their time in a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are warmly welcomed as the childminder demonstrates sound awareness of equal opportunities and special needs. She is positive about helping all children to reach their full potential. The childminder discusses any issues with parents to ensure that children with additional needs are well supported and ensures they are fully included in activities. Therefore, children make good progress as they receive consistent support and stimulation.

The childminder aims to treat children with equal concern by responding to their individual needs and abilities. Parents complete a full contract which sets out care requirements and includes relevant contact numbers and consents for outings and medical treatment. There are daily opportunities to exchange information with the childminder. This ensures that any concerns or changes relating to the children can be quickly responded to. Children benefit as information is regularly shared to safeguard them from harm. For instance, the childminder agrees beforehand with parents if the children are to be collected by another friend or relative. Parents are also given questionnaires to enable them to express their feelings about the provision. These indicate a high level of satisfaction with the care provided.

Children interact well as the childminder successfully manages their behaviour. They learn to play together harmoniously as they respond to the childminder's consistent rules and boundaries. Any unwanted behaviour is calmly dealt with through age appropriate means such as distraction or reasoning. Where behaviour is problematic, the childminder works with parents to find the best way to respond to each child. For instance, introducing star charts or small rewards to encourage alternative ways of behaving. Positive actions are reinforced through the appropriate

use of praise and encouragement. The childminder also talks to older children about treating people with kindness. This ensures that children learn respect for each other and the wider community in a positive way which enhances their self-esteem.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder is well qualified and has completed all relevant courses. As a result, children are looked after by a competent carer. She has a generally sound understanding of the National Standards and is keen to develop her practice. She accesses additional training and collates relevant information relating to outcomes for children. Children benefit from her approach as she is committed to incorporating new research and learning. This enhances their care.

The childminder is clear about the role of Ofsted and aims to work in partnership with the regulator to ensure standards of care are maintained. She ensures that all records are available for inspection and seeks to comply precisely with all requirements. However, she has failed to notify Ofsted that a member of the household has reached an age where suitable checks are required. Potentially, this compromises children's welfare.

Documentation is of suitable standard and regularly reviewed. Records contain a sufficient level of detail and are appropriately maintained. For example, the daily register shows children's hours of attendance. These indicate that ratios are consistently adhered to. The childminder organises her time well to provide children with direct supervision throughout their time in her care. Children benefit as she plays alongside them, enhancing their play with her energy and sense of fun. The constant supervision also safeguards them from harm. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to develop knowledge of the new national guidance for child protection and obtain written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. The childminder has updated her child protection policy and displays a clear understanding of what to do if she had concerns about a child's welfare. She has also obtained parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for all children in her care. Consequently, children are now better protected from harm as a result of these measures.

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:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. 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 that the regulator is informed of any changes in the persons over the age of 16 working or living in the household and that suitable checks are carried out
- make sure that hazardous plants are removed or made inaccessible to children.

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