

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY253112
Inspection date	12 April 2007
Inspector	Shami Kumar
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 has been registered since 2003. She lives with her partner and three children aged 15, 12 and six months of age. The family live in a semi-detached house in Exhall, Bedworth. The property is within walking distance of local shops and amenities. The whole of the ground floor only is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder has a pet dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight at any one time. She is currently caring for seven children of whom five are under eight years of age. All children attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She takes the children to the park, shops, town and the local parent and toddler group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are healthy due to the good hygiene practices followed by the childminder. She teaches the children the importance of hand washing routines and provides the necessary equipment they need to wash their hands independently. The childminder raises children's awareness of hygiene practices by reminding them to wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating, and after playing outdoors. Good arrangements are in place to prevent infection through cross-contamination. For example, the childminder cleans with anti-bacterial spray and wipes and ensures that effective hygienic practices are used for nappy changing. She involves the children in cleaning routines as they help her to polish and wash small items. Babies are changed regularly in order to ensure they feel comfortable and to meet their physical needs. Children's health and safety is protected as they are never left unsupervised with the dog.

Children's health is promoted by a comprehensive written sickness policy and procedure which ensures that children do not attend when they are ill. The childminder has good knowledge of first aid and the contents of the first aid box is fully stocked. Children are fully protected in the event of an emergency, as the childminder has written consent from parents for seeking emergency medical treatment or advice for all children. All relevant documentation regarding accidents is in place and she has appropriate permission regarding the administration of medication.

The childminder caters effectively for children's individual dietary needs, likes and dislikes by liaising closely with parents. Children enjoy a good variety of nutritionally balanced meals and snacks, consisting of home cooked food, fresh vegetables and fruit. This helps them to develop good eating habits. Young babies thrive as they are held comfortably when feeding and their nutritional and emotional needs are met. Food brought from home is stored, prepared and served appropriately. Any special dietary requirements or allergies are discussed before care begins and recorded on children's records. Children have regular access to drinks throughout the day which ensure that they are well hydrated. The childminder takes care to ensure she carefully follows sleeping routines for babies and is well aware of how they best settle to sleep.

Children experience a good range of activities that contribute to their good health and they benefit from regular fresh air and exercise. For example, visits to the park, school and nursery runs, going into town and physical play in the garden. They develop their self-confidence and co-ordination as they climb, ride wheeled toys, kick balls, throw and catch frisbees and use sit and ride toys. Children also make good use of the outdoor role play equipment to promote their imagination. For example they use tents, the play kitchen, dolls and prams to play families. Their physical health is further encouraged as the children enjoy music and dance activities within the home.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment that is safe and secure. They play in a homely and cheerful environment where they safely access resources on their own. The organisation of toys and resources means children can move around the house and garden safely and independently. The childminder has a good understanding of how to keep children safe and secure whilst they are in her care. For example, low level glass conforms to safety standards,

electrical sockets are protected and stair gates are used in certain areas to prevent children having access. She has appropriate fire equipment such as a fire blanket and smoke detectors which are regularly checked to ensure they are in good working order. Children are well protected in the event of a fire because the childminder ensures she practises fire drills. She talks to the children about where they need to go to stay safe, not taking anything with them and encourages the older children to help with the younger ones. Children are always in sight or hearing of the childminder.

Children use a wide range of well-maintained, good quality toys, books and play materials suitable for their age and stage of development. The needs of the babies and young children are well met because a range of suitable sensory toys are available. This encourages them to explore safely, and appropriate equipment is used to support their needs. The childminder keeps a check on the condition of the equipment, keeping it clean and safe for the children's and babies' use. Children learn good safety procedures when going on outings. For example, younger children are encouraged to hold onto the buggy, wear reins or wrist straps whichever is appropriate to their needs. The childminder teaches the older children to stop at the kerb and uses the green cross code. Appropriate car seats and booster seats are used to transport children in a vehicle and written consent is obtained from parents. However, children are not fully protected as her new vehicle insurance does not cover her for business use.

Children's well-being is consistently supported as the childminder has a sound knowledge of child protection issues. She has a good understanding of recognising suspicious signs and symptoms and is aware of referral procedures and her responsibilities in relation to them. The childminder attends relevant training courses and has a commitment to safeguarding children's welfare and has a policy to support her practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the childminder's home. They are happy, relaxed and settled in the childminder's comfortable home. Children initiate much of their play as resources are accessible and therefore promotes their awareness of positive choices and increases their confidence and learning. They achieve well because the childminder uses her knowledge of child development to provide good quality care. They make positive relationships with the childminder as she acknowledges and nurtures babies and young children. She provides good support and play experiences such as musical and sensory toys. She responds actively to babies when they are babbling, crying or smiling by using excellent eye contact, vocalising and facial expression.

Children experience a warm, caring relationship with the childminder. She shows value in what they say and do and she involves herself and interacts appropriately to support their learning. Children have good opportunities to develop their understanding as the childminder extends their learning at every opportunity. For example, children learn different colours, shapes and count objects using everyday situations. She helps the children with pre-writing skills and to recognise their names and letters. She questions the children appropriately to encourage them to think. For example, she asks them what the different characters are doing in the story book. Children of different ages relate well to each other and enjoy playing and participating in activities which the childminder has planned for them as well as when they have free choice of activities and games. They acquire new knowledge and skills through satisfactory first-hand experiences such painting, making models from play dough and experimenting with sand and water play. Children learn about change as they plant sunflower seeds, runner beans and watch

them grow. Older children are well supported as they have access to a the computer to gain information. They also have a range of board games and complete activities such dot to dot and word searches.

Children develop their investigation and creative skills through activities such as sticking, gluing, constructing with natural materials, and baking cakes and cookies. Their imagination is well promoted as they engage in interesting role play situations. They dress up and pretend to be Cinderella, a princess and play doctors and nurses. They settle well because the childminder is attentive and responsive to their needs. Children respond well to the childminder who gets down to their level, and follows their lead. She extends children's learning and thinking by challenging them appropriately and encouraging them to have fun. The childminder's good use of language raises children's levels of self-esteem, confidence and independence. The children show excellent concentration skills as they complete various puzzles and look at story books. The developmental needs of the babies are well promoted as there is a range of stimulating equipment within their environment that encourages them to learn as they explore. For example, the childminder provides appropriate activity centres and encourages them with their crawling and standing skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

A good partnership with parents contributes to children's well-being. The childminder takes positive steps to ensure that parents are kept well informed about daily routines and activities. She takes time out to discuss their progress and development with parents at the end of the day. These exchanges provide opportunities for children to have consistent and stable arrangements. A well presented portfolio of information is provided for parents, including written policies and procedures. This provides a successful base for parents to make informed decisions about their childcare arrangements.

Children feel a strong sense of belonging as the childminder understands their differing needs such as routines. The children enjoy coming, they have in their own individual cups in the setting and often bring their own toys to play with. Children benefit from being cared for as individuals with their needs being discussed carefully with parents before childminding starts. The childminder tries to ensure through the written details provided and from her own observations that she is aware of the level of care each child requires. Babies form a secure, trusting relationship with the childminder as she responds to their needs. For example, being aware that the baby is hungry, wants to stand on her knee, or wants a cuddle. Children are encouraged to show and discuss their feelings which helps their confidence and understanding of others. Although the childminder has little experience of providing care for children having identified special needs, she is aware of children's developmental stages. Therefore, she feels able to approach parents if she is concerned about children's progress.

Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the local community through visits to the park, the shops, school runs and through a range of resources. The children chat about what they see when they are on walks in the local area and discuss issues about a range of aspects. These include feeding the ducks, picking leaves to make collages and watching the different birds through the window. Children begin to learn about differences within society as they have access to a good range of resources that reflect diversity. These include puzzles, books, dolls, dressing up clothes and play figures. Children's knowledge and attitudes of the wider community is also promoted as the childminder discusses different countries with them.

They make cards and lanterns to celebrate cultural festivals and look at flags belonging to different countries.

Children behave extremely well and play together harmoniously. They are calm, settled and are well occupied. The childminder acts as a good role model to the children. She treats children with courtesy and respect. The children are well mannered, confident and know what is expected of them. As a result older children show consideration for the babies as they ensure they are comfortable as they play and talk and respond to them. They learn to care for, and respect, each other through childminder's effective use of praise, encouragement and explanation which develop children's self-esteem. For example, taking turns, why they are not able to play ball games indoors, and why they must not run around inside. She is consistent in her approach and uses appropriate methods of dealing with any incidents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare is well supported as a result of being cared for in a secure, comfortable and safe family environment. They are able to move around freely and make choices. The childminder ensures ratios are well met and that her day is organised to offer children a good level of attention and support. The childminder is conscientious and has a high regard for the well-being of the children in her care. Children's care is enhanced by the efficient and effective organisation of the space available in the house and garden. Children can easily access many of the toys and resources and the childminder's home is ready for the children as they arrive each morning.

The childminder is pro-active in completing relevant training, which helps her improve her knowledge and support of childcare practices. She has regard for developments in early years and has attended training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework and safeguarding children. All the required documentation and record-keeping is well-maintained and shared with parents. She organises her paperwork effectively to ensure it is confidential but readily available. Children's welfare, care and learning is promoted by written policies and procedures which guide the childminder in her daily practice.

Children have very good levels of continuity in care because the childminder regularly shares information with parents. Parents are informed of the childminder's practice and procedures through effective written policies and procedures and discussion. Parents are happy with the care and support their child receives and the children enjoy coming.

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 was required to ensure that gas appliances were safe and the safety of children when using the high chair. She was asked to maintain the registration system well and to obtain written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. She was asked to increase her knowledge of the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation made against herself or a family member. She was also required to increase resources that reflect images of equality.

Since the last inspection ensures that all gas appliances are checked annually and a certificate is maintained. She now makes sure that children are always strapped in the high chair. She has amended her registration system to include additional hours of children attending as required.

She has increased her knowledge of the procedures to followed in the event of any allegations by attending a relevant course. She has now purchased resources that reflect positive images such as dressing up clothes, books, puzzles, play figures and also makes use of the toy library. She now has written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment for all minded children. These aspects which have now been addressed has improved the care, safety and welfare of children.

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 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 that any vehicle to transport children has appropriate insurance

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