



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY253993
Inspection date	17 January 2007
Inspector	Jane Muriel Laraman
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 was registered in 2003 and lives with her husband and two young children in a semi-detached house in Bridgnorth, Shropshire. She works with a part-time assistant, who is her mother. The whole of the house, with the exception of the childminder's bedroom, is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed outside play area.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under the age of eight years at any one time. There are currently seven children on roll, most of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children and attends local carer and toddler groups on a regular basis. She also takes the children to the local library, nearby parks, shops, leisure facilities and on countryside walks.

The family do not have any pets.

The childminder is able to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and the Shropshire Childminding Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home. They learn how to take care of their own personal needs and understand the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines. For example, they talk with the childminder about why they wash their hands before eating, after messy play and after using the toilet. They understand that these procedures help to stop germs spreading. The bathroom is arranged so that children can easily reach the basin to wash their hands. This enables them establish good habits from a young age.

Good quality documentation is maintained regarding the administration of medication and recording of accidents. Medications are stored safely and administered appropriately with all the required records in place. The childminder has a current first aid qualification and a well-stocked first aid box is available to ensure children's well-being is safeguarded in the event of accidents.

Parents currently provide most of the food for their children. The childminder works in partnership with them over children's food intake and keeps them informed about what their children have eaten during their time with her. Children are able to access additional fresh fruit and healthy snacks provided by the childminder and she has a very good knowledge of healthy eating principles. Children's welfare is safeguarded through the childminder using appropriate hygiene measures when handling food. Pre-prepared meals are re-heated, if necessary, to the correct temperature before being served to the children. Children are suitably hydrated as drinks are readily available for them to independently access throughout the day. Younger children are encouraged to feed themselves and they begin to learn about table manners as they enjoy the social experience of sharing mealtimes and conversations with the childminder and other children around a table.

The children enjoy regular opportunities to exercise and play outdoors in the fresh air. They go on walks, play in parks or on the local playing field to promote their physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to play in a home that is well-maintained and offers suitable space and a welcoming environment for them. Most safety risks have been identified and minimised and there are many suitable safety precautions in place. For example, electrical sockets are protected, smoke alarms and fire blankets are appropriately positioned, cleaning materials and medicines are inaccessible to children and safety gates are in place to prevent children from accessing the stairs. However, not all risks have been minimised and children's safety is not fully safeguarded. Some windows do not have safety locks and the front door is not kept locked, so

there is potential for children to leave the premises unsupervised if the childminder is momentarily distracted.

Children use suitable toys and equipment which are appropriate to their age and stage of development and conform to safety standards. The childminder carries out regular checks on items of equipment to ensure they remain suitable for the children to use safely. Older children are able to independently access their play equipment as it is stored within their reach. Babies and toddlers make choices from a variety of stimulating resources laid out attractively for them.

An emergency evacuation procedure has been considered and practised with the children to ensure that they are familiar with the need to leave the premises promptly in an emergency.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect. The childminder has a good understanding of her child protection responsibilities as she has attended relevant training. She is aware of the types and signs of abuse and has familiarised herself with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. As a result, she is fully aware of the procedures to follow should a concern arise and she has made parents aware of her responsibilities in relation to child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good balance of appropriate activities provided by the childminder. They are settled, happy and very comfortable in her care, as she interacts well with them. Children's independence and choice is encouraged whilst they develop and learn through the childminder's skilful and sensitive interaction. She uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework and younger children's needs are met well as she adapts different activities to ensure they are challenging and relate to children's developing abilities. Older children are able to access resources for themselves, use their initiative and make independent choices about their play and activities. They are confident to try to do things for themselves and also to seek the childminder's help.

Children's play is well supported through a good range of interesting toys, including lots of good quality technology toys such as a telephone, bubble-making machine, pop-up toys and musical toys. The young children are very adept at manipulating the technology toys and through their enjoyment of these toys they learn as they play, developing confidence, skills and imagination.

The childminder regularly takes children to local carer and toddler groups and they are able to develop their social skills and enjoy a wider range of toys when they attend. They also have the opportunity to run around and enjoy playing on larger equipment at local parks. Children are provided with times for quiet and more relaxed activities, for example, when they come home from a tiring day at school they can sit quietly and relax until they are ready to join in with more creative, demanding or imaginative play activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are secure and happy in the care of the childminder and their individual needs are identified through discussion with parents. Equipment is easily accessible to all the children and they are provided with good resources reflecting positive images of different cultures to help develop their understanding of diversity.

The opportunity to care for children with learning difficulties or disabilities would be viewed positively and the childminder would use her training and experience in childcare to work with their parents and other professionals to ensure children could receive appropriate care.

Children behave well because they know what is expected of them as the childminder sets appropriate and realistic boundaries. She manages behaviour positively through using praise and encouragement and she is consistent in her approach. This helps to promote children's welfare and they develop good levels of self-esteem.

Parents and the childminder have formed good working relationships. Daily exchanges of information ensure that parents are kept informed about their child's progress and the activities that they have enjoyed whilst in the childminder's care. Parents' views are sought and respected and care is provided for the children according to their wishes. The childminder has a written complaints policy, which she shares with parents. Although she is aware that complaints must be logged, there is no formal system in place to record complaints should any arise in the future.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the setting, achieve well and make progress because the childminder creates a well-organised environment, where they can have fun as they play and learn. She is a qualified childcare practitioner and uses her knowledge of child development to plan exciting and challenging activities. Children are well-supervised as they play and the childminder protects them from anyone who has not been vetted. She also has suitable arrangements in place with her assistant and other registered childminders to provide cover in the event of an emergency.

The childminder demonstrates a secure understanding of her role and responsibilities and has attended relevant training to support her work. She uses appropriate forms of record keeping and has procedures in place to promote the welfare, care and learning of children.

Parents are kept informed about the care and attention that their children receive because the childminder shows them some basic policies, procedures and other useful information, as well as talking to them regularly about their child's activities. This contributes to the continuity of children's care so that they feel secure.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, two actions were raised with regard to safety. The childminder agreed to make collected rain water safe and to ensure that children were protected from sharp implements. She now routinely pours rain water out of any containers in the garden, or stores it safely for watering plants, prior to children accessing the outdoor play areas. All sharp implements have been moved out of children's reach. As a result, children have been safely protected from these hazards.

There were also two recommendations made. The childminder agreed to improve health procedures by obtaining written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for their children. The childminder has ensured that she has this consent in place for all children. As a result, children would receive treatment promptly in the event of an emergency. She also agreed to ensure that her first aid certificate is available for inspection. Her certificate is now readily available to inspect and parents can be assured that any minor accidents can be dealt with appropriately as they can see that the childminder's first aid training is up-to-date.

Complaints since the last inspection

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.

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 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 a comprehensive risk assessment is carried out on a regular basis covering all areas of the property and take appropriate steps to ensure children's safety at all times
- devise a system in order to keep a record of complaints relating to the National Standards and any action taken
- review policies and procedures regularly to ensure that the information available within them remains up-to-date.

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