



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY256263
Inspection date	19 December 2006
Inspector	Deborah Ball
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 and two children aged eight and six years, on the outskirts of Worcester City. The ground floor of the property is 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 minding three children under five. The childminder attends a local toddler group on a regular basis.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because the childminder follows highly effective procedures and practices, which meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. The exceptional support and guidance provided by the childminder helps children to gain an excellent understanding of hygiene issues and they show genuine enthusiasm to become increasingly independent in their personal care. Children learn to use the toilet and wash their hands on their own, aided with appropriate equipment and support from the childminder when necessary.

In order to further ensure that children's health is protected, the childminder is meticulous in providing a very clean and well-maintained care environment. She ensures that children's exposure to the risk of infection is minimised through her rigorous cleaning procedures. For example, the kitchen, bathroom and play areas, including the garden, are checked and cleaned before children arrive and the childminder ensures that there is always a good supply of wet wipes, kitchen roll and tissues available for use in attending to children's personal needs. Nappies are changed on individual vinyl changing mats, which are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray or wipes after each use to reduce the risk of contamination. The childminder's own hygiene practices are excellent, for example, she routinely washes her hands before preparing meals and after changing nappies. She also ensures that toys and equipment are kept clean and in good condition.

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. A well stocked first aid box is available to ensure children's well-being is safeguarded in the event of accidents. Children are suitably protected from infectious disease or illness because the childminder has regard to current health and hygiene guidelines. Information regarding infection control and the advised minimum exclusion periods is readily shared with parents.

Children develop very positive attitudes to exercise as they benefit from a wealth of opportunities to engage in physical activities. These include countryside walks, music and movement and visits to local parks. The garden provides an attractive and challenging area where children can explore, test and develop physical control of their bodies and muscles with an excellent range of outdoor activities and resources. Regular visits to the park and a soft play centre further improve children's physical skills as they develop their large muscle skills on apparatus suitable for their individual ages and stages of development. Younger children join in readily because the childminder has a good understanding of their developmental needs and provides activities that encourage them to acquire new skills.

Children are very well nourished and enjoy an excellent range of home-cooked, nutritious meals and snacks which include a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables. The children have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating because they are involved in activities such as planting tomatoes, lettuce, potatoes and carrots and harvest the produce to eat at meal times. Children are well-hydrated through the provision of fresh drinks, which are readily available

for them to access. Mealtimes are sociable occasions with the children and the childminder enjoying conversations around a kitchen table. Younger children are encouraged to feed themselves and good table manners are taught and praised. The childminder works in partnership with parents and keeps them well-informed about what their child has eaten during the day. The needs of children who have specific dietary requirements are respected and met diligently due to the childminder's knowledge and daily discussions with parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are able to play in a safe, secure and welcoming environment, where risks are identified by the childminder and minimised. For example, the fire is guarded, electrical sockets are protected and safety gates are in place. This means that children are able to move around safely, freely and independently. The garden is secure and the area in which the children play is safe and suitable for their use. Close supervision ensures children are kept safe at all times. The children are well supported in understanding how to keep themselves safe when out walking with the childminder and benefit from learning about the green cross code. All required fire safety precautions are in place and children understand what to do in the event of a fire as emergency evacuation procedures are regularly practised, taking into account patterns in children's attendance.

Children benefit from a very wide range of play equipment, which is appropriate for their individual ages and stages of development. Toys are carefully stored in a cupboard and in boxes that are at a low level, which encourages children to select and choose what they would like to play with, thus developing their independence. Younger children are well protected because the childminder is alert to equipment with small parts and closely supervises their use. Children are protected from harm as the childminder checks the equipment regularly and ensures that it is maintained in a good condition.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect because the childminder has an excellent professional understanding of child protection issues including the referral process, which is detailed in a written policy. This policy is shared with parents, which means that they fully understand her responsibility to report any concerns about their children should any concerns arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and settled in the childminder's care as she places their enjoyment and achievement at the heart of the service she provides. A close and caring relationship with the childminder increases each child's sense of trust and helps them develop a strong sense of self-worth. Children make excellent progress because the childminder recognises children's individual needs and the uniqueness of each child. She has an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development and is experienced in caring for children. A childcare approach based upon the 'Birth to three matters' framework is used in order to provide

stimulating developmental opportunities for younger children. For older children, due regard is paid to the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage of learning.

Through receiving excellent levels of support, sensitive care and attention from the childminder, children develop confidence and self-esteem. The childminder ensures that each child's routines, likes, dislikes, comforters and so on are fully discussed with parents prior to the child's first attendance. This ensures continuity of care and helps children to settle securely in the childminder's home.

Children eagerly engage in meaningful activities and play opportunities which enhance their individual learning and skills. Their curiosity is captivated and nurtured by the childminder as they excitedly participate in planned activities. The children demonstrate high levels of concentration and are confident enough to develop their own games and ideas. Children enjoy independent access to an extensive range of age-appropriate toys and equipment that promotes their early learning and development. For example, books, arts and crafts, construction toys, small world play, puzzles and imaginative role play resources. Activities are adapted to meet individual development stages to ensure that all children are able to participate at their own level. The childminder is attentive to children's individual needs and tailors the daily routine to ensure that their needs are well met. The children benefit from the childminder's enthusiasm, involvement and interaction in their play. High quality adult-child interactions are extremely supportive of children's communication skills. The childminder encourages conversation and develops children's communication skills when she asks them questions to encourage and extend their thinking.

Children benefit from a range of activities outside of the home. They regularly visit the library and make effective use of local facilities, such as toddler groups and music sessions. Children explore the outdoor environment. The children enjoy planting fruit and vegetables in the allotment and watch with interest as they grow. Children relish visits to the local park and soft play facilities and enjoy the opportunity for physical activity and being outside in the fresh air.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal concern and have good access to equipment and activities, with the childminder encouraging them to make full use of all the play resources available. Children are valued and respected and the childminder is committed to ensuring all children feel a sense of belonging through being included. The childminder knows the children very well and ensures that their individual needs are met. They are given lots of individual attention and enjoy excellent interactions with her, which develops their confidence and self-esteem.

Children have access to a good range of toys and resources which promote their awareness of diversity and so observe many images reflecting other people living in the wider world. The childminder understands special needs and demonstrates an awareness of being able to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The opportunity to care for a child with learning difficulties or disabilities is viewed positively and the childminder is able to work with parents and other professionals to ensure children receive appropriate care.

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

The childminder has established good partnerships with parents and carers, which contributes significantly to children's care, well-being and feelings of security within the setting. The childminder actively seeks parents' views about their child's needs and interests before the child starts at the setting and on a regular basis throughout their time there. The childminder exchanges written and verbal information with each parent every day to discuss their child's care, learning and development and provide the opportunity to highlight any concerns.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge of childcare, her experience and ongoing commitment to developing and enhancing her practice through attending further training. The childminder regularly evaluates and monitors the quality of her provision, as she strives to improve the care and education for the children in her care. All required documentation that contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and regularly reviewed. Confidentiality is rigorously maintained, whilst ensuring that parents are well informed. However, children's welfare is compromised because the registration certificate is not displayed for parents and carers to view at all times.

The children benefit greatly from a calm and well organised homely environment in which they thrive and are eager to learn and play. The childminder has very good organisational skills and the environment is well organised both indoors and outdoors to maximise play opportunities for children. The children feel at home and at ease in the well organised environment. They know the daily routine and are confident to initiate their own play and learning as well as to join in planned activities. The required ratios are maintained, and children often receive one-to-one adult support which promotes their care and welfare and ensures their needs are met effectively.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by well organised documentation. The childminder has produced many well thought out policies and procedures to support her very good childcare practice. Children's parents are provided with attractive and detailed written information, which includes the range of policies and procedures, information about the service provided and the childminders certificates of qualifications and training. The childminder is meticulous in her record keeping. All records are stored confidentially and are only accessed by the childminder. 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 obtain written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and to update children's medical history information. The children's safety and welfare is now further promoted as their medical history

information has been updated and permission for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment is in place for all 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:

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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):

- comply with conditions of registration with regard to displaying the certificate.

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