

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY275858
Inspection date	21 June 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 outstanding. 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 four children in a detached house in a village situated on the outskirts of Worcester City. She works with two part-time assistants, one is her mother, the other is her husband. The whole of the house 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 when working alone. When working with an assistant she may care for six children under the age of eight years at any one time.

The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children and she drives to local carer and toddler groups to enable children to attend on a regular basis. She also takes the children to the local library, nearby parks, shops, leisure facilities and on countryside walks. The family has one rabbit and two guinea pigs as pets.

The childminder is able to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and the Worcestershire Childminding Network. The childminder has recently completed the NCMA 'Quality First' quality assurance programme and she has the NVQ Level 3 qualification in Childcare, Learning and Development.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is extremely well promoted because the childminder follows highly effective hygiene procedures and practices, which meet their physical, nutritional and healthcare 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. Children are encouraged to understand how and why they keep themselves clean through regular explanations, visual prompts, topic work or through reading story books.

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 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 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 visits to local parks, countryside walks, music and movement and walking daily to and from school. 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.

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. They begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet and older children are actively involved in helping to plan the menu and they sometimes assist with the preparation and cooking of the meals. Children are well-hydrated through the provision of fresh drinks, which are readily available for them to access. They enjoy using the built-in water dispenser of the fridge to obtain chilled refreshment. 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 outstanding.

Children are able to play in a safe, secure and welcoming environment, where appropriate safety precautions have been taken. For example, electrical sockets are protected and safety gates are in place. The childminder has conducted and recorded a thorough risk assessment of the indoor and outdoor environment and she has taken all reasonable steps to minimise identified risks. This means that children are able to move around safely, freely and independently. 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 walk-in 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. Children are protected from harm as the childminder checks the equipment regularly and ensures that it is maintained in an excellent condition.

Children are very involved in learning about their own safety and are developing a good understanding of the importance of staying safe. For example, children know that they need to sit carefully on their chairs whilst sitting at the kitchen table. They also help to tidy up their toys to prevent tripping over them. The childminder has a very good understanding of fire safety procedures and ensures that the children practise fire drills, so that they know exactly what to do in an emergency situation. The children are also taught how to keep themselves safe when on outings, as they learn about road safety, which heightens their awareness of the need to be vigilant and careful.

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 of all ages have excellent opportunities to participate in a wide variety of activities that captivate and sustain their interest and effectively promote their learning and developmental progress. They are able to choose from an excellent range of resources that are well-organised to encourage independent selection. Excellent use is made of natural and commercially produced materials to extend children's learning experiences. For example, they enjoy exploring different textures with play dough and sand and they produce imaginative, colourful artwork using a varied range of collage and creative materials.

A childcare approach based upon the 'Birth to three matters' framework is used in order to provide stimulating developmental opportunities for younger children. Their play is exceptionally well supported by the childminder as they enjoy exploring interesting resources, including lots of good quality technology toys such as a telephone, interactive puzzles, 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 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 and they make excellent developmental progress in all areas of learning. Older children are given opportunities to make free choices about the types of activities they want to take part in and they are confident to develop their own games and ideas. They have immense fun in the setting and are eager to participate in planned or unplanned activities. Arts and crafts, completing puzzles, participating in board games, imaginative role play and cooking activities are all enjoyed. Children savour the results of their efforts as they eat the tasty biscuits or cakes they have decorated and they are also happy to wash up the cooking utensils that they have used in the process. Activities are adapted to meet individual developmental stages and all children are able to participate at their own level.

Children have regular opportunities to socialise with other children through attendance at local pre-school groups, dance and movement classes and other interesting leisure events. They visit model farms, local places of interest and also have the opportunity to run around and enjoy playing on larger equipment at local parks.

The childminder is experienced in childcare and understands how children learn and develop, so their personal, social, emotional and intellectual needs are fostered exceptionally well. Daily routines are planned flexibly to ensure that children have a balance of active and quiet times during the day, in accordance with their own needs and interests. They are very well-motivated and initiate some of their own activities and begin to gain independence because of the way the childminder organises the space, resources and equipment. The childminder talks and listens to children and gives them plenty of encouragement as they develop their early communication and mathematical skills. Children are encouraged to ask lots of questions and learn to develop their natural curiosity. They confidently approach the childminder because her demeanour is calm and she acts as an excellent role model. The childminder interacts with the children well and builds very strong relationships with them, so they feel valued and able to share opinions, ideas and experiences with her. This genuinely warm, responsive interaction boosts children's confidence and contributes to their well-being.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are welcomed into a stimulating, child-friendly environment and enjoy an atmosphere where they can develop a very strong sense of belonging and self-worth. They are valued for who they are and made to feel that they matter and this develops their self-esteem. The childminder effectively plans and facilitates their care, play and learning and she ensures that all their individual needs are met. An extensive and purposeful range of activities and resources are provided and used to promote a positive view of the wider community. Consequently, children's awareness and understanding of diversity in society is increased. Children particularly enjoy using reference books that reflect equal opportunities concepts to increase their knowledge of cultures and the world. They learn about how people celebrate different cultural festivals such as Diwali and they develop respect for others as they enjoy their learning. They have had many opportunities to taste different foods from around the world and to dress up in multicultural clothing. The childminder has developed a written equal opportunities policy that underpins the excellent practice that is demonstrated in the setting.

Children with learning difficulties or physical disabilities can readily be supported and fully included in the life of the setting. The childminder uses her experience as a childcare practitioner

to develop a partnership with parents and other professionals to identify and meet the individual needs of all children.

Children learn to act positively and take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour because they have been involved in developing house and safety rules and so they feel that their views are valued. Children show care and concern for each other and play together harmoniously. They behave very well and respond to the childminder's highly effective strategies to manage their behaviour. Children are spoken to in a calm, positive and sensitive manner. From an early age, all children have their efforts and achievements recognised, praised and encouraged by the childminder. As a result, they learn right from wrong and feel valued and rewarded for their consistently good behaviour.

The childminder has established excellent partnerships with parents, which significantly contributes to children's care, feelings of security and well-being within the setting. She exchanges written and verbal information about their children on a daily basis with them, so that she can be fully aware of the children's changing needs and parents' wishes. The childminder is able to respond appropriately and swiftly to any concerns or queries raised by parents and they are able to discuss the service and all aspects of their child's care and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit considerably from the childminder's excellent knowledge of childcare, her experience and ongoing commitment to enhancing and developing her practice through relevant training and participation in a quality assurance scheme. The childminder is professionally qualified and continuously evaluates the quality of her provision in order to improve the care and education offered to the children she childminds. All the required documentation that contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and regularly reviewed.

Parents are kept very well informed about the care and attention that their children receive because the childminder talks to them regularly about their child's activities, provides them with detailed written information and shows them her policies, procedures, training certificates and other useful information. This contributes to the continuity of children's care so that they feel secure. Confidentiality is effectively maintained and children's records are stored securely.

Children are nurtured and appropriately challenged in the homely, well-organised and stimulating environment and as a result develop their emotional, intellectual, physical and social skills very well. They become confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning as they are very secure and settled. The rooms available ensure children are able to move around safely and develop their independence as they freely choose their own activities and make selections from the easily accessible toys and equipment. Children are very well supervised as they play and the childminder protects them from anyone who has not been vetted. The children receive excellent support, lots of individual attention and reassurance from the childminder and her assistants, when present, and as a result are happy and enjoy their time in the setting.

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 given two recommendations. She agreed to develop a system for recording any incidents and to ensure parents' signatures were obtained on any

recordings. Since then, she has implemented the use of the NCMA accident and incident recording book. Information has been appropriately recorded and parents have signed the book to acknowledge any recording relating to their child. This means that they have been kept fully informed of any incidents and are able to discuss any concerns about their child with the childminder. The second recommendation was to develop the registration system to include all adults caring for children. The childminder has since included the attendance times of both of her assistants on the register that she keeps. As a result, parents are fully aware of who has been responsible for the care of their children whilst attending the provision.

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 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 QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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