

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY281353
Inspection date	26 October 2007
Inspector	Dianne Andrews
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 2004. She lives with her husband and three children aged 15, 11 and four years in the town of Oswestry in Shropshire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, which consists of a kitchen and dining room, lounge, play room, downstairs toilet and utility room. There is also a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The upstairs bedrooms are used infrequently. The childminder walks or uses a car to go to local schools to take and collect children. She attends local toddler groups and takes children on local outings, shopping and to parks.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is registered to care for five children and is currently minding four children, all on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and comfortable home where they happily play on the floor and move around with ease. Their good health is appropriately promoted in most areas, for

instance they are reminded to put their hand over their mouth when coughing to help prevent the spread of germs and are offered wet-wipes to clean their hands while eating sticky fruit. However, some routines are not consistently applied or effective in ensuring children are protected from infection; children do not always wash their hands before eating their snack of apples and oranges and the nappy changing procedures do not include the use of gloves or aprons, which is particularly pertinent as the childminder is caring for a number of young children and babies.

The childminder plans a varied menu, ensuring that children are provided with nutritious and balanced meals that appeal to them. They enjoy freshly prepared, home-cooked meals such as pasta bake, shepherd's pie and macaroni cheese and snacks such as breadsticks, fresh fruit and crackers. Drinks are offered regularly to ensure that children do not become thirsty.

Children have regular opportunities for active play to ensure that they make appropriate progress in their physical development and promote a positive sense of well-being. They enjoy use of the garden and develop confidence using the age-appropriate equipment available and playing games such as hopscotch. Weekly opportunities to swim at the local leisure centre have helped young children to make progress with walking and mobility skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a generally safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment. Their risk of accidental injury is lessened because the childminder has taken steps to reduce most hazards. Stairs are made inaccessible and sleeping children are monitored regularly through the use of an intercom and by physically checking, however, tie-backs which loop around the curtains pose a possible risk to children's safety. The childminder has considered an effective emergency evacuation procedure, which children enjoy practising with the help of a soft toy as the mascot. This helps them learn to keep themselves safe.

Children play, eat and sleep in a well-maintained premises and benefit from a range of suitable toys, furniture and resources which are safety checked prior to use. The effective organisation of toys and activities means children can move around safely and independently and make choices about their play from the resources available in the range of storage boxes around the play room.

The childminder's appropriate understanding of child protection procedures, in line with the local recommendations, ensures that children are protected from harm or neglect. She has attended training to ensure she fully understands her role in protecting children in her care, in order to safeguard their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, well settled and have very good relationships with the childminder who is sensitive and caring towards them. The childminder uses her knowledge of child development when planning a suitable range of activities, taking account of children's ages and interests, to encourage their progress in all areas.

The childminder involves herself in the children's play, chatting freely, asking questions, offering opportunities for them to make decisions, for instance asking them if they would prefer red or

green apples for snack time, and helping to develop their communication skills. Children enjoy playing imaginatively with a large box, creating a fire engine and playfully fighting a fire until it is extinguished. The childminder makes some use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and babies play with a range of age- appropriate toys. However, there are limited opportunities for this age group to explore natural materials in the environment to enable them to play imaginatively and develop their senses.

Children are given regular opportunities to socialise with their peers through regular attendance at toddler groups. They benefit from outings to local attractions such as a nearby castle where they feed the ducks and at leisure parks where they use the large equipment available, look at the animals and walk along the river.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder uses praise and encouragement to promote positive behaviour and gently reminds children about the 'house rules', for instance not to hurt one another, developing their understanding of right from wrong. Children are encouraged to play comfortably in each other's company and learn to take one another's needs into account as they are helped to begin to share and take turns in their play.

Children have many opportunities to learn about their local community when going out for walks and outings, for example to local farms and the nearby town centre. They take part in some activities, such as looking at holiday resorts they have been to, in order to encourage their experience of the wider world and have access to some resources that positively promote their understanding of similarities and differences in race. However, this is not extended to help them consider and value diversity in other areas such as gender and disability. Children's individual needs are met and any children with disabilities or learning difficulties are offered effective support to help them make progress.

The childminder enjoys good relationships with parents, which contributes to children's well-being in the setting. She actively seeks parent's views on their child's needs and interests in order to provide an effective care service and promote consistency. Parents have access to a prospectus, which helps them understand how the childminder operates and can see a range of photographs and artwork on display showing the activities their children have been involved in.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children are comfortable and feel secure in the well-ordered surroundings; the childminder only cares for two children at a time in order to offer good supervision and individual support. Children benefit from the satisfactory organisation of the care practice ensuring that their health, safety and well-being are met. The childminder has completed a sequence of courses, which have resulted in her achieving a recognised child care qualification. Children are well cared for in a setting where the childminder is committed to ongoing professional development in order to promote continual improvement.

The care service is underpinned by some policies and procedures, which are made available to parents. The required documents are in place and are stored in a confidential manner to promote children's welfare. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that toxic substances are inaccessible. This referred to the use of air fresheners, which were accessible in the bathroom area. These have now been removed to promote children's safety.

She was also asked to obtain parental consent for emergency medical treatment or advice. This has now been obtained to promote children's well-being.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 hygiene procedures are consistent and effective in promoting children's good health; this refers to hand washing routines and nappy changing procedures
- make curtain tie-backs 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