

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY288962
Inspection date	19 February 2008
Inspector	John Vernon
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 2004. She lives with her husband, adult daughter and son aged 16 years in an area of Stoke-on-Trent. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed yard available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding two children under five on a full-time basis and four children over five before and after school. The family have four cats.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children have very good opportunities to be active. Inspired by training received from the British Heart Foundation, the childminder regularly plans physical fun and games to enable all children to run around and be active. In particular, during sunny days children enjoy sports

days with obstacle races. Additionally, all children walk back and forth to school each day. There is a good range of age-appropriate outdoor equipment and children increase their physical control and balance through daily routines and activities.

The individual dietary needs of the children are met appropriately. The childminder has attended a food hygiene course and has a very good knowledge of healthy foods. She has a good knowledge of food labelling and of the importance of limiting children's intake of additional salts and sugars. She provides for children nutritious snacks and encourages them to eat healthily by offering a variety of different fresh fruits and vegetables including plums, grapes, carrots, melon and strawberries. Within the childminder's home there are colourful charts and posters which provide a constant reminder to both children and parents of the benefits and importance of eating a balanced, healthy diet. Snacktime is treated as a social time when the children, the childminder and her assistant chat and discuss their day. Adults enjoy the same snack as the children and engage the children in discussion about where different fruits and vegetables are found or grown. Children have individual water bottles which are within easy reach should they require a drink so they do not become dehydrated. Consequently, children are provided with excellent opportunities to learn about the benefits of an active, healthy lifestyle.

The childminder acts as a positive role model and during daily routines, develops children's understanding and awareness of good health and hygiene. For example, children are encouraged to wash hands after messy play, before eating and after visiting the toilet. The childminder reminds the children to cover their mouth when they cough. Consequently, the possibility of the spread of infection is minimised. Equally, children have individual toothbrushes at the childminder's home. This enables them to brush their teeth after every meal and also offer to the childminder an opportunity to ensure the children are brushing their teeth correctly to maintain healthy teeth and gums.

There is a first aid box available to support children's health needs. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and documentation required to protect the good health of children is in place, including permission to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment. Regular and effective cleaning routines ensure that the areas used by the children are hygienic and free from germs to maintain their good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a safe environment. The childminder has completed risk assessment training and as a consequence hazards are identified and minimised. The home is well maintained and well-organised, this means that children can move around easily and independently. Children have free access to the ground floor area and are able to crawl, walk, learn and play. There is a varied range of toys and resources available to stimulate a wide range of play activity and opportunities.

The childminder has invited the local fire service to her home and taken advice about fire safety. Children have a full understanding of what to do in the event of an emergency, as they have practised, with the childminder, the drill to follow. Consequently, in the event of an emergency, children can safely evacuate the home and stay safe.

Children recently attended a 'Road and Traffic Safety' day organised by the local authority. With the childminder, they have learnt about the importance of 'Be seen. Be safe' and of finding a suitable and safe place to cross the road. As a consequence, children are developing their

understanding of how to stay safe when away from the setting. Whilst out walking, children are encouraged to hold hands with the childminder, to keep away from the kerb and to stop, look and listen before crossing the road. Thus overall, they are developing a greater awareness of their own personal safety.

The childminder likes to take the children out on trips. When away from her home she puts in place a number of measures to ensure the children's continued wellbeing. For example, she carries both the telephone numbers of the parents of children in her care in her own mobile phone and also carries other written details about the children should an emergency arise. Also, prior to leaving the setting each child is given a wrist band which includes the childminder's name and telephone number as a measure to protect the welfare of the children should they become separated from the main group. The childminder also carries a contact card detailing her name, profession and details of whom to contact should she become unwell. The childminder ensures the vehicle used to transport children is properly maintained and that she has a valid licence and appropriate insurance. The provider has written permission from parents to transport children in a vehicle. All children are restrained in an appropriate care seat or seat belt to ensure their safety.

The childminder has recently completed specific training about child protection. At inspection she demonstrated a very good knowledge of what to do if she was concerned that a child was being abused or neglected and of the procedure to follow to report any concerns. Consequently, ensuring that children are appropriately protected from harm and neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have good opportunities to enjoy and achieve as the childminder has a good understanding of how children learn and develop through play. Children enjoying a mix of free and adult-led play whilst at the childminder's home, including baking, drawing, sticking and gluing and painting. Children clearly enjoy their time in the care of the childminder as they benefit from warm and friendly interaction. The childminder uses her experience and understanding of the needs of young children to provide a good range of experiences which appeal to their interests and enables them to have fun. Recently children particularly enjoyed making pancakes to celebrate the start of Lent. She takes the time to listen and find out what interests the children and plans some activities accordingly. The childminder is keen to engage in play with the children. She uses opportunities to further children's understanding of the wider world as these naturally arise, for example, whilst sharing and reading stories or whilst out on visits to the local shops or park.

At inspection children had fun playing doctors and nurses with the childminder whilst sitting on the carpet together. They laughed together whilst trying to tie bandages and secure arm slings both on dolls and each other. Trips out to local places of interest provide children with opportunities to explore and have fun, outside of their immediate environment. On nature walks to the local park, children collect leaves and feathers which they later use to incorporate into art work. These planned activities enable children to ask questions and to make greater sense of the world and their surroundings. Skills and concepts are developed through routines, conversation and questioning and as result, overall, children develop well. However, the childminder does not consistently plan for all children's learning. Therefore all learning outcomes for children are not always fully developed.

Children have suitable opportunities to enjoy play outdoors and have access to a fully enclosed yard. Equally, they have access to a good range of outdoor equipment to ensure that their needs are met.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Many letters of thanks praise the care and attention given to children in the childminder's care. In particular, one letter compliments the childminder upon her 'warm-hearted personality, support and professionalism', whilst another letter comments upon the childminder 'being fair and treating all the children as individuals' stating that they are happy to recommend her service to other parents. Clearly children benefit from the childminder's friendly disposition. She is enthusiastic and keen to work with parents to ensure the most appropriate care for the children.

Children are valued, respected as individuals and their self-esteem is boosted by praise and encouragement when they achieve different tasks and behave well. They understand behaviour boundaries as the childminder has established clear ground rules. Inappropriate behaviour is challenged and the childminder uses a range of strategies to manage behaviour sensitively. Children make themselves at home and are self-assured in deciding what to do. They take turns, share and demonstrate care for each other and play amicably.

The childminder has a good understanding of the importance of building positive relationships with parents and consequently relevant information is shared both verbally and within day diaries to ensure consistency of care. The childminder has a good understanding of children with additional needs, learning difficulties and/or disabilities, thus ensuring inclusion for all children.

All children are valued for their individuality and uniqueness. Children, along with the childminder, recently attended an 'Equality Day' organised by the local authority. The day enabled children to learn more about different people and places and offered to them opportunities to try and taste foods from around the world including Jamaican Jerk Fish Stew. Activities offered on the day and enjoyed by the children included Morris Dancing, Menhendi pattern making, pot throwing and Dwvali pattern making. At the childminder's home, children share stories read by the childminder from other cultures such as 'The runaway Chappattii' and 'Rhana and Krishna celebrate the festival of Holi'. Consequently, children develop a positive attitude and awareness of different people and places throughout the world.

A positive relationship with parents is actively promoted, with the childminder spending time with both children and parents to get to know them and gain their trust. Written information about the childminding service is displayed and shown to parents to enable all individual needs to be met. The childminder has amassed a good range of leaflets and information for parents about such matters as weaning, healthy eating, toilet training, the local parent partnership service and the local Early Years Inclusion Service. All this helps to ensure a valuable and valued exchange of positive and useful information for the benefit of all children, child carers and parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a good knowledge of the National Standards. In turn, together with her assistant, they have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities as registered carers.

The childminder and her assistant are professional, knowledgeable and work 'hand in glove' together as a team, with parents, for the benefit of each child. The children's needs, routines and behaviour are discussed, as appropriate, on a regular basis with parents thus contributing to the continuity of the children's care.

The children are comfortable and feel secure in a child focussed, well-organised environment. This means they are confident and able to initiate their own play, are well occupied and able to extend their own play and learning. Written policies and appropriate documentation is in place to support the work of the childminder. Documents are stored securely and safely in order to ensure children's privacy.

Training is seen by the childminder as very valuable and an important way of developing her knowledge and expertise in the care of young children. She is currently studying for the NVQ Level 3 in Early Years Care and Education and since the last inspection, has completed a suitable range of course which benefit and promote the wellbeing of all children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association, which positively benefits children, as it helps to keep her abreast of the very latest developments in early years care.

The childminder does maintain an accurate record of attendance. The childminder ensures that all adults living in the household are vetted and that no unvetted individuals are left alone with the children. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, to improve standards of care, the following recommendation was raised to obtain, for reference, a copy of the Disability Discrimination Act leaflet. The childminder has obtained a copy of the Disability Discrimination Act leaflet and has attended training to further develop her knowledge of the care of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. As a consequence, the individual needs of all children are suitably met.

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.

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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):

- develop planning and increase adult-led play opportunities to further promote children's all round learning and development.

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