



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY339249
Inspection date	08 December 2006
Inspector	Patricia Webb

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 has been registered since 2006. She lives with her husband and two children aged six and nine years. They live in Wolverhampton in the West Midlands. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding including the toilet facilities. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time and is currently caring for five children, some of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The family has two pet rabbits which are kept in a secure hutch in the garden.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing an awareness of following a healthy lifestyle. They engage in robust physical activity regularly to develop large muscles both in the childminder's home and on outings to local parks and nature reserves. They enjoy using natural resources such as trees and static-like slides and swings to build their confidence and take on new challenges. Finer manipulative skills are honed through the use of materials such as play dough and using scissors and paintbrushes with increasing dexterity.

They benefit very positively from the childminder's clear commitment to providing a healthy and nutritious diet. They relish the home-cooked meals prepared carefully by the childminder who uses her skills and well-practised routines from her experiences in catering to ensure that the required food hygiene rules are closely followed. This ensures that risks to children of food spoilage are significantly reduced. For example, she checks and records temperatures of the refrigerator and freezer and uses a commercial calibrated probe to ensure that any hot food served is heated to the approved temperature to reduce the risk of food poisoning. Children's specific dietary needs are discussed with parents and recorded for referral. Great care is taken to work closely with parents in this matter, particularly when preparing first solids for young babies.

Children's health and well-being are effectively fostered through the use of familiar hygiene routines. The childminder is aware of beginning this at an early stage to ensure that such information is ingrained in the children's routines. For example, when preparing a young baby for having lunch, she talks as she wipes the baby's hands explaining why she is doing it. Older children have attractive signs and pictures displayed to reinforce the hand washing routines and all the necessary requisites are provided to develop independence in their personal care including brushing teeth if parents request this. Accidents and the administration of medication are handled well although some minor tumbles are not always recorded such as if a baby overbalances when developing very early walking skills. This hinders how parents are made aware of such incidents although verbal discussion does take place.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into a cosy, child-friendly home where they have ample room to move actively and take rest as they wish. They delight in accessing the playroom and relaxing in the lounge, depending on what activities they wish to participate in. The home is clean, safe and well maintained offering a family focused environment where children can be at ease in the familiar routines. They have easy access to a wide range of well presented resources and equipment. This encourages independence as they make choices about their play from resources that are clean, safe and suitable for their ages and stages of development.

Regular checks are carried out around the home to minimise risk and hazards to children. Safety gates and cupboard locks are in place to significantly reduce the risk of injury. Children are

becoming aware of their own safety as the childminder takes time to explain why they need to wear the correct restraints in the car, wear safety reins in the highchair and take care when crossing the road. Emergency evacuation procedures have been drafted and posters are in place adjacent to all points of exit on the ground floor ensuring that adults are aware of the routines in such a situation for the safety of the children. The electricity junction box in the playroom is in the process of being boxed in and some wiring is visible creating a hazard for older children. The childminder is aware of this and supervises children closely when they are in this room until such time as the work is completed.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded as the childminder is fully aware of child protection issues. Having attended training she is aware of the signs and symptoms that may give cause for concern and ensures that parents are informed of her duty of care to act in the best interest of the child at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

A caring environment is provided for children who enter happily and settle to their chosen activities with ease. Time is taken to prepare well for each day's activities and the various children attending. For example, when caring for a young baby for most of the day, the childminder prepares suitable toys and activities to promote overall development and ensure that the child is happily engaged and occupied. She is consistent and diligent when checking on a sleeping child to lessen the risk of any distress there may be on waking, greeting the baby with gentle talking and warm smiles.

Care is taken to offer appropriate support when a baby is developing crawling and early walking skills. Moveable toys and musical items are used to encourage the development of head and neck muscles, body control and their senses. The childminder offers close contact with lots of cuddles and quiet conversation to help settle children. She understands the importance of close relationships for babies and how changing the tone of her voice and using different facial expressions can effectively capture a baby's attention. For example, lots of chuckles and laughter follow when she sings songs such as 'The wheels on the bus' and uses a soft toy to gently tickle the baby.

Older children participate in exciting and varied activities such as cooking, dressing up and creating their 'monsters' in play dough. The childminder offers proper utensils for cookery such as the hand-held food mixer, supervising very carefully and teaching children how to use the equipment with care. Children use such everyday activities to reinforce their knowledge of early numeracy as they count the cake cases and weigh ingredients.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected by the childminder. She takes time to discuss individual needs with parents endeavouring, wherever possible, to keep daily routines similar to their family routines. She is gaining skills in developing effective communication with children and

families where English is an additional language. Further strategies such as asking for familiar words in the child's home language are being developed. Tactics such as this serve to develop a child's self esteem and help them to settle in a strange and unfamiliar environment when they first attend. Children are becoming aware of the diversity of the world around them as they access posters, dolls from different ethnic groups and dressing up clothes freely.

Although there are currently no children attending with learning difficulties or disabilities the childminder is aware of the need to work closely with parents and other agencies to provide consistency in children's routines. She is aware that her knowledge and understanding of offering this level of service are limited hindering how the needs of individual children would be effectively identified and addressed.

Children behave well and are beginning to understand the simple 'house rules' employed. There is a behaviour policy in place emphasising the positive behaviour desired and explaining the varied strategies used. Most times, the childminder uses distraction and refocusing to change the behaviour, encouraging older children to apologise if they are of an age and maturity to understand the consequences of their actions on others.

Children benefit from the positive relationship the childminder develops with parents. Detailed policies and a portfolio of the service she offers are used to promote discussions with parents, explain why certain levels of information are required and sets out the expectations on both sides. This helps to develop a strong sense of mutual trust assuring parents of the time and attention their children receive in her care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well supported in their play and learning by the childminder who is caring, enthusiastic and committed to the children she minds. She knows each child well and helps them to feel settled, secure and confident. She uses her time well to provide a flexible approach to their activities encouraging child-initiated play whilst also providing opportunities for them to rest and relax as their needs dictate.

Parents are shown a comprehensive portfolio of policies and procedures outlining her daily practices. This includes information regarding her commitment to ensuring the children are protected as all adults in the home have undergone suitable checks and a complete record of the daily attendance of each child is carefully maintained.

All of the legally required documentation is in place including all the necessary information for the effective care of the children and the management of the service. This ensures that children's welfare is effectively promoted.

Overall, the needs of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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:

The quality and standards of the care are good. 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 all accidents, however minor, are recorded
- ensure that hazards to children are minimised with particular regard to the electrical wiring box in the playroom
- develop knowledge and understanding regarding the care of children with learning difficulties or disabilities

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