



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY342834
Inspection date	29 December 2006
Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten
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 2006. She lives with her husband and school age child in Wistaston, Crewe. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools and toddler groups and takes children to local parks and farms. She is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and currently has three children on roll. One child was present during the inspection.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's physical health is good because the childminder teaches children to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating or cooking activities. She helps them to blow their

noses, to lie down cosily under a blanket on the sofa if they feel unwell and reminds them to cover their mouths when coughing. She has also obtained written permission from parents for children to have access to the fish and hamster which are hygienically kept as pets. The childminder is vigilant to prompt and assist pre-school and school age children so that they have quickly become independent in using liquid soap, managing the taps and drying their hands thoroughly on clean towels in the downstairs bathroom.

Children are increasingly independent in taking care of their own general health because the childminder teaches them to be aware of their bodies and how to look after them. For example, children frequently go for walks in all weathers, dressing accordingly. They use sun cream and hats when the summer sun is hot. They also put on their coats when it is wet or cold and use their wellies for wet activities, such as walking to school and going to parks or farms. In this way children enjoy plenty of fresh air and exercise on a daily basis.

The accommodation promotes children's health and emotional well-being very well because it is warm, clean, spacious and welcoming. Children know where things are and where to put their coats and shoes. They take off their outdoor shoes, put them on the stairs and go straight to the large lounge to play. The childminder provides security and a varied activity routine. She is well organised and very attentive, giving direction, reassurance and conversation which adds enormously to children's contentment and enjoyment. All play spaces and surfaces are extremely clean and tidy with clean towels and cloths used. Clean bedding and crockery are always used and equipment, such as potties, steps and toilet seat inserts are meticulously clean.

Children are protected from becoming ill through well understood procedures and records to ensure this. First aid supplies are ready to use and the childminder has recently obtained her first aid qualification. She has a good working knowledge of childhood illnesses and has obtained written parent consent for any emergency treatment, should this be needed. She has also obtained written parent permission for a number of named medications which may need to be used should a child become ill during the childminding day. This enables medication to be given following a simple telephone contact to a parent. In this way the child receives prompt assistance which is clearly according to parents' wishes.

Children have a varied, nutritious and balanced diet and learn about healthy eating because the childminder talks about this, tries to make it fun and encourages children to help prepare and eat good food. Sweets are never given, but biscuits are sometimes available and children do bake cakes. The childminder has a written menu to guide parents and prepares very healthy snacks and lunches, such as buttered toast, grapes, cheese, chicken, fish, roast beef, pasta and vegetables. Water is always available as children play and the childminder talks to children about the importance of healthy eating and encourages them to drink regularly.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming, secure and safe indoor environment. They enjoy free movement in the very large lounge and kitchen and have a good variety of floor and table top play space available to them at all times. All three exits are kept locked, but with accessible keys and all areas are kept very clean and clear of hazards, so that small children can move

about safely and freely. The childminder is committed to safety through thorough supervision, for example, taking pre-school children to the toilet and being outside with children as they use swings and slides. She has working smoke alarms and a fire blanket ready to use. She has also thought through and written plans for emergency evacuation from the house. However, she has not practised them to ensure that all children are familiar with what to do.

Children use a wide range of suitable and safe equipment and toys because the childminder selects and organises resources using her clear understanding of each child's needs and stage of development. Items are stored in boxes and are brought into the lounge where children can easily select from them and see what there is. In addition, the childminder makes sure that children can find something to do as soon as they arrive. For example, there are colouring kits, board games, musical toys and programmable toys which children present on the day of inspection enjoy using. Equipment and toys are kept very clean and in order, with children being involved in helping with this.

Children are safe as they move around the setting because safety equipment is in place and resources not in use are tidied away by everyone. Safety gates, fire guard, safety glass, socket covers and locks are in place and all dangerous items, such as cleaning materials and sharp knives are inaccessible. The childminder teaches children what not to touch and not to throw anything, indoors or out. Great care has been taken to ensure that the garden is completely secure and that all accessible glass is safety glass. In addition, water features have been made completely safe.

Children are kept safe on outings because the childminder is highly vigilant whether on foot or in a vehicle. The childminder demonstrates a practical approach to safety outside on the roads and pre-school children know that they must hold hands unless they are strapped in the buggy. The childminder makes sure seat belts are on, uses reins and booster seats appropriately, talks to children about dangers on the road and explains the need for safety seats, adhering to recent legislation. Children are also safe in an emergency because the childminder has prepared a small red wallet kept with her at all times. This explains that she is a childminder, gives essential information and contact numbers for every child by first names only and also gives contact details for her husband and back-up childminder. Similarly, these same contact details are all logged into her mobile phone which is with her at all times. The childminder has also obtained suitable materials with which to teach children about the dangers of fire.

Children are well protected from abuse because the childminder has a good understanding of her role in child protection and is confident that she is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. She knows what to do if an allegation of abuse is made against her and she has undertaken recent child protection training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and secure and are making positive relationships from the outset because the childminder actively encourages them to share and cooperate together. She plays on the floor, at the table and outside with them to facilitate this and is highly skilled at keeping children motivated and interested. For example, eight and five-year-olds play simple board

games, paint, colour and make things with support and help from the childminder. In this way they take turns, learn to cope with winning and losing and are developing their artistic and small motor skills well.

Children respond well and show interest in what they do because the childminder is skilled and enthusiastic as she presents a wealth of activity ideas which captivate children's interest. For example, children excitedly choose to play a new board game or prepare to create their 'snow dome' kits when she asks them what they would like to do next. They also happily sit with her to look at books or simply to talk about family, school or holiday experiences. The childminder joins in with all activities and asks relevant questions to extend the children's enjoyment and learning. For example, she asks the children about what their paintings are of and who they are going to give them to. Younger children make scrapbooks of their play experiences and stick in their photos, pictures and any tickets or things they have found whilst out on nature walks. In this way, their development and experiences are charted for their parents to see.

The childminder has the 'Birth to three matters' framework materials but has not yet incorporated the ideas and structure of this into her work with pre-school children. However, she is successful in her efforts to ensure that children learn through the variety of social and play experiences which she enjoys providing. Little television is watched, but plenty of role play activities are used to enhance children's understanding of domestic and family life. For example, children use the toy kitchen range to cook meals and make cups of tea and they play shops with the pretend food and shopping basket. The childminder capitalises upon the children's imagination and asks them about what they do at home and what they can do for themselves. Her personal knowledge of each child's likes and dislikes and her understanding of each child's emotional and learning needs means that she can question, challenge and support each one to help them develop as competent learners.

Children quickly develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem because the childminder gives them choices and opportunities to talk, take part and be independent within a clear written routine for each day. For example, children can choose to rest quietly on the sofa if they are feeling unwell or sit at the small table to colour. Most days they socialise with their friends at toddler groups or go on trips with other childminders to soft play centres, gardens, parks or farms. The childminder always gives them options and never insists that they do an activity which she has chosen. She then talks with them and helps them to remember and consolidate things that they have enjoyed doing this morning or recently as well as planning for this afternoon. This means that children have a good sense of time and know what is happening next.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children in the setting have quickly developed a good sense of belonging and feel secure because the childminder fully includes them in all aspects of domestic life. She talks to them openly and gives honest and appropriate answers to all questions. She helps children to talk about their families and is forging close relationships with parents. These relationships are supported at the outset by written aims and objectives which are shared with parents, informing them that the childminder aims to 'bring out the best in every child and ensure that they develop

good well-being at the same time as needing discipline, respect and appreciation of other people's belongings'. This means that children are confident that all the adults involved in their care are communicating well and concentrating upon their welfare.

Incorporated into every day activities, such as playing board games or tidying up, is a clear sense that all routines are learning experiences where children can learn how to care for one another, their things and the world around them. This is achieved by the kind and proactive approach of the childminder as she talks, questions and involves the children throughout the day, teaching them good manners and encouraging them to play fair and be gracious in defeat as well as success. She never forgets to praise children and thank them for helping and cooperating and as a result, they help to tidy away, treat toys and equipment well, use good manners and play nicely with other children both at the house and when they are out.

Children are becoming aware of wider society because they talk with the childminder about their home life, nursery or school life and the wider world. The childminder is interested and helps children make links between parts of their experience. For example, they talk about their parents, their friends at pre-school and what activities they are doing there. They also talk about their feelings and why there are consistent rules wherever they go so that pre-school children can try to make sense of their world. For example, children know that it is not acceptable to jump on furniture, throw objects, deliberately break toys or speak abusively to others. Instead, children are encouraged to share, take turns and help each other.

Children have sufficient opportunities to consider and value diversity because the childminder has an open approach to equal opportunities issues. She presents positive images of race, gender and disability through resources, such as dolls, dressing up and books. In addition, she has theme days when children can try cooking, craft, role play and dressing up activities relating to various festivals and cultures. Children have contact with families from various races and some who have particular learning and physical disabilities. This enables children to become familiar with, and understand, diversity.

Children receive good support to behave well because the childminder is always calm, vigilant and consistent in her approach. She listens to children, is in tune with their mood and talks to them about what is happening and what their activity choices are. Her portfolio information explains what behaviour is not allowed and explains that positive behaviour management is used as much as possible. The childminder gives praise and encouragement when children respond to her and conform, for example, when a five-year-old understands and accepts that she has not won a game this time. The childminder knows when children need to have a separate or quieter activity and is always ready to read a story or find individual things for different children to do. For example, one goes into the kitchen to make her 'snow dome' while the other lies on the sofa because she is feeling unwell. Documentation supports consistency about behaviour management if necessary because the childminder records any incidents of unwanted behaviour and any injuries which children come with. This has not been used thus far because the childminder has behaviour boundaries which are consistent with children's own homes and maintains good verbal liaison with parents.

Children's needs are met well through good partnership with parents. The childminder is open and communicative with parents and spends time giving and receiving effective verbal feedback

from them. She shows new parents her portfolio information, including how to contact Ofsted, her certificates from training courses and her activity plans. She is also creating scrapbooks containing written, picture and object evidence of children's progress for families to see for themselves. Some evidence of parents' impressions is also available through recent references seen by the inspector. These state that the childminder has a common sense approach, treats the children as she would her own, is fair, honest, trustworthy, reliable and supportive, teaches good manners and assists in potty training.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a consistently high regard for the well-being of all children and builds upon her knowledge and experience over time. She has attended required training for childminding, including first aid and is shortly undertaking further courses on food hygiene, story sacks and the Foundation Stage. She has evaluated the quality of her own provision under the five outcomes for children and is aiming high in her provision of childcare. Vetting procedures were undertaken by Ofsted when the childminder registered and the childminder displays her and her husband's Criminal Records Bureau disclosures as evidence of suitability.

The childminder has a clear sense of purpose and direction and uses her time and resources very well to support children's care, learning and play. She manages the daily routine, utilising written activity plans, menus and timetables for the week, so that she knows exactly who is coming and when, and where they are going. This ensures that all children have their individual needs met, are well stimulated and have her attention for the maximum amount of time possible. For example, toddlers enjoy visits to the park, toddler groups and music groups, as well as reading, dressing up, construction, art, role play, craft and small world activities at the childminder's home.

Procedures work well in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. For example, all necessary parent agreements, child details and records of accidents, medication and incidents are kept with each child's record or in suitable record books. There is a portfolio display book containing certificates, policies and useful information which give parents a flavour of the childminder's approach and responsibilities. This includes menus and details of the childminder's emergency arrangements. In addition, the daily register is always completed as children arrive and depart, which ensures children's safety in the event of an emergency. Information about how to contact Ofsted is freely available and the certificate of registration is displayed to reassure parents even further.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- practice the emergency escape plan
- make use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan the activities and routine offered to children in this age range.

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