



Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	223454
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Deborah Ball
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 1994. She lives with her husband and one adult child in Pencoyd, Herefordshire. The whole of the ground floor and one first floor bedroom is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding six children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The family has a dog and a cat.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and homely environment where they learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned daily routines and learning from example. The children are encouraged to wash their hands regularly after messy play, before eating and after using the toilet. Good quality documentation is maintained regarding the administration of medication and recording of accidents. A well stocked first aid box is available to ensure children's well-being is safeguarded in the event of accidents. However, children's health is potentially compromised as parents do not give written consent for the childminder to request emergency medical treatment for their child. Children are suitably protected from infectious diseases because the childminder has regard to current health and hygiene guidelines and excludes children from the provision if they are ill. Information regarding infection control and the advised minimum exclusion periods is readily shared with parents.

The children enjoy good opportunities to experience physical activity and develop their skills. Their development is encouraged and promoted through regular physical play, both indoors and outside in the fresh air. Children enjoy nature walks in the surrounding countryside, experiencing the fresh air and changing seasons. The garden provides an attractive area where children can play and develop their physical skills on a daily basis. There is a very good range of outdoor equipment to provide challenge for all children. Children enjoy playing on the swings and slides, using push-along toys, playing on ride-on toys and practising their ball control and throwing and catching skills. Younger children join in readily because the childminder has a good understanding of their developmental needs and provides activities that encourage them to acquire new skills.

Children are well nourished. Parents provide pre-prepared meals for their children, which the childminder stores appropriately in the fridge before use. These meals are warmed in the microwave and are heat tested before being offered to the children. Children are suitably hydrated as drinks are readily available for them to independently access throughout the day and younger children are regularly reminded to have a drink. Meal and snack times are sociable occasions where children sit together with the childminder and enjoy the food and each other's company. The childminder works in partnership with parents over the children's individual likes and dislikes and keeps the parents well informed about the quantity of food that their child has eaten each day. Younger children are encouraged to practise feeding themselves to develop their social and self-care skills.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children feel very secure in a welcoming, homely environment that the childminder makes sure is safe and very clean. A good range of stimulating and appropriate activities are prepared for the children before they arrive each morning. Children have sufficient space to play freely with the activities and resources and can have active, energetic times as well as calm, restful times. Activities and resources are well presented at children's level, so they are accessible. The

childminder ensures that all equipment and toys are safe, by checking that they conform to safety standards and that they are appropriate for the ages of children she is looking after.

In addition to daily visual risk assessments and checks, the childminder further ensures children's safety through the provision of appropriate safety equipment. For example, safety gates are in place to prevent children from accessing the stairs and entering the kitchen. All required fire safety precautions are in place and an emergency evacuation procedure has been considered in order to safeguard children in the event of a fire. As a result of the childminder's vigilance and attention to safety matters any potential hazards or risks are identified and minimised.

Children are well protected because the childminder has a clear understanding of the child protection procedures and is fully aware of her role and responsibility to protect the children in her care. The childminder is aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and has a professional reference guide to help her act correctly when necessary.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The children enjoy a wide range of activities which promote their development and encourage a good disposition towards learning. They have fun and are challenged and stimulated by the activities and resources that are available to them and spend time concentrating on their chosen activity. The children are happy, settled and comfortable in their environment and confidently seek the support of the childminder for comfort and cuddles. They benefit from the childminder's loving and caring approach to the care of the children and her interaction and involvement in activities.

Younger children are well cared for because the childminder has a good understanding of their individual needs, knows each child's current stage of development and how to move them forward with their learning. The childminder provides a wide variety of stimulating activities in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. For example, she constantly talks to them, shows them new things and talks to the children as she joins in with their play. The children explore a box full of age-appropriate toys and delight in what they find inside. They play with dough, construction materials, musical instruments and sound toys. Older children are developing increasing independence. They are able to access resources for themselves, use their initiative and make independent choices about their play and activities. The children enjoy painting, listening to stories, playing games, completing jigsaw puzzles and cooking. The childminder ensures that children are engaged in their activities and asks them questions that extend their experiences and learning.

Children's individual needs, likes and dislikes are well catered for because the childminder has taken the time to get to know the children in her care. The childminder knows and understands children's individual needs and preferences over such things as favourite toys and comforters. As a result children develop close relationships and a sense of trust. Children learn about the local community as they enjoy walks around the hamlet and surrounding countryside picking fruits such as strawberries, raspberries and blackcurrants and observing a range of animals such as pigs, horses and lambs.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and are happy and settled in the childminder's care. The children's individual needs are well met because the childminder has a clear understanding of the care that they require. Children have limited opportunities to gain a positive view of the wider world or to increase their understanding of other cultures because the childminder has few resources available and has not yet planned relevant activities. The opportunity to care for a child with learning difficulties and/or disabilities would be viewed positively and the childminder would work with the parents and other professionals to ensure the child received appropriate care.

The children are well behaved and play harmoniously together. A sensitive and consistent approach to behaviour management ensures children know what is expected of them, while praise and constant support gives them confidence to try new things and helps them develop self-esteem.

The parents and the childminder have formed good working relationships. Daily exchanges of information ensure that parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and the service provided. Children are cared for in accordance with their parent's wishes.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's good organisation and her commitment to providing a warm, caring and stimulating environment. She organises her time well, playing with the children and providing warm comfort and cuddles whenever required. The bright and colourful playroom is well laid out and attractively presented. Toys and resources are readily available, creating an inviting environment for children, who quickly settle and become absorbed in their play. The childminder continues to develop her knowledge of childcare through occasional short training courses, such as first aid and policy writing. This ensures that she is aware of current good practice and professional advice.

The vast majority of the required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and effectively maintained. However, the childminder has not secured written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Documents are carefully stored, well-organised and effectively maintained. They are regularly reviewed and are only accessed by the childminder, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained. 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 agreed to ensure the first aid box is fully equipped and to improve opportunities for children to access resources promoting positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability.

The childminder has made good progress in addressing the recommendations made. A well stocked first aid box is available to ensure children's well-being is safeguarded in the event of accidents. The children now have more access to toys and resources that promote positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. However, there is still not a vast range available and therefore remains an area for continued development.

### **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):

- obtain written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment in an emergency
- continue to extend the range of resources and activities that positively represent diversity in society.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)