

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	301621
Inspection date	15 May 2007
Inspector	Rosemary Killackey

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 1996. She lives with her partner, adult son and two children aged five and 11 in an area of Darwen, Lancashire. 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 is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. There are currently seven children on roll. The childminder drives to the local schools to take and collect children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through daily routines. They are encouraged to wash their hands before eating food and after visiting the bathroom. The childminder further reduces the risk of cross-infection by ensuring noses are wiped when they begin to run and

that toys and equipment are kept clean. Parents are clear about her sick child policy and children with infections that could spread would be excluded.

Children experience a range of activities both inside and outside the childminder's home, all of which contribute to their good health and general well-being. For example, they enjoy fresh air and exercise when they play in the back garden, visit the park and activity centre. The childminder ensures that the children are happy and settled by making them feel part of the family and by having consistent daily routines for resting, playing, eating and sleeping in accordance with children's individual needs and parents' wishes.

Children benefit from a balanced diet, for example, pasta or macaroni cheese, followed by yoghurt and fruit. Water is readily available. Children begin to develop social skills during meal times, they sit together at the table and the childminder sits close by. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure that meals and snacks are suitable for the individual needs of each child; she records any allergies, likes and dislikes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in a warm, welcoming, child focused home environment. All safety equipment is in place or available. Children are able to move around the home and are able to choose what they want to play with from a range of age appropriate toys, which are stored in low level units. The risk of accidental injury is further minimised, for example, the childminder checks the safety of toys daily and she reminds children about the danger of throwing toys. However, ivy growing in the garden, low level glass in some adjoining doors and the absence of a smoke detector to the first floor compromise children's safety.

Children begin to develop an understanding of safety when out and about. The childminder teaches children about road safety and stranger danger by talking to them about how to cross the road and not to talk to strangers. They stay near the childminder when walking and hold hands or the pram. Children also learn about how to stay safe in the event of a fire, the childminder has a written evacuation plan and she practises this on a regular basis.

Children's safety is further protected by the childminder's understanding of safeguarding children. She is clear about her role in protecting children and knows who to contact if she has any concerns. Parents are informed about her duty to protect children at the beginning of a placement. Children's accidents are recorded and parents inform her if their child has an accident at home.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are comfortable, relaxed and settled in the childminder's home and are made to feel part of the family. The sharing of experiences as they talk and laugh together helps develop warm and caring relationships. For example, they talked about some recent photographs and they laughed as they remembered where they were and what they were doing at the time they were taken.

Children develop independence as they freely make choices about what toys they wish to play with and the childminder encourages them to do so. They play well together and form sound friendships. The children's individual needs are met, because the childminder knows what they

are interested in and provides toys and activities to meet those interests. For example, she knows they like to play with the prams and enjoy pushing the dolls prams around the room. The childminder promotes children's learning further through questioning. For example, when they played with a torch she asked what shape the light made when it shined against the child's leg and what happens when you move the torch nearer to the wall or away from the wall.

The childminder gives the children praise and encouragement, which results in them developing good self-esteem and confidence which increases their sense of belonging. They benefit from consistent routines all of which help the children to look forward to their day. They are confident, articulate children and enjoy their time spent with her. Although the childminder is providing some interesting and age-appropriate activities to promote children's learning, these are not yet linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework for any younger children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy the benefits of being cared for in a positive home environment, they are encouraged to behave well and develop respect for each other. Children learn to play harmoniously with each other by sharing and taking turns. They know what is expected of them with regard to good manners and behaviour. For example, when one child wanted the pram he was asked to wait till another child had finished playing with it and when another child was offered a tissue to wipe her nose she said 'thank you'.

Children are recognised as individuals and their differing needs are met. They are valued and treated with equal concern. The childminder encourages the children to learn about diversity and how to respect each other. For example, they talk about people's similarities and differences, and they play with some toys that reflect positive images of culture and gender.

Children's individual needs are met with respect for parents' wishes. This is supported by the professional partnership between parents and the childminder. The childminder provides parents with information at the end of each day, which ensures that they are well informed about their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of the childminder. They have sufficient space to play in comfort, both indoors and outdoors and are able to move around the childminder's home in a confident and secure manner. Space is well organised, which enables the children to choose from a range of toys and equipment with ease. The childminder uses her knowledge of the children's development to provide them with activities which stimulate their interest and help them to make progress.

All required documentation is in place and kept up to date. The documentation is clear and contributes to children's safety, care and general well-being. This is further enhanced by the childminder having several written policies, including behaviour management and equal opportunities and by her commitment to extend her childcare knowledge by attending many training courses. As a result, children's all round care is enhanced.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection several recommendations were made. In general, these were in relation to documentation. The childminder has since ensured that all documentation is up to date and reflects current legislation.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 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 that a smoke alarm, which conforms to BS EN safety standards, is fitted to the first floor
- ensure the ivy growing along the fence in the back garden and low level glass in the house is safe
- further enhance the quality of care provided by using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to guide the childminding practice.

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