



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	304063
Inspection date	25 April 2006
Inspector	Elaine Murray

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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1987. She lives with her two children aged 13 and 17 years in Neston, Wirral. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding six children on a part time basis. The childminder occasionally works with an assistant. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent/toddler group. The family has a dog and two cats.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn to follow good hygiene practices due to the childminder's positive encouragement. Children wash hands at appropriate times of the day and clean their teeth after meals. Younger children's rest and sleep needs are met, helping to promote their good health. Children's health is protected with regard to pets. For example, the childminder ensures that animal feeding bowls are not accessible to children and that the pet dog does not use the outdoor garden area. The childminder's clear sickness policy protects children from the spread of infection.

Children develop physical skills as the childminder provides a good range of activities to promote this. They enjoy energetic play indoors as they play skittles and join in exercises to music. Children learn to enjoy physical exercise and develop control of their bodies as they use the equipment in the garden for play and regularly visit the local park. Children learn to develop a healthy lifestyle as they walk to school and back.

The childminder has a good understanding of healthy eating which helps to ensure that children enjoy nutritious and healthy snacks and meals. Fruit is always available and meals are cooked using fresh ingredients. The childminder seeks to present food in an attractive or creative way to encourage children to try different foods and eat healthily. This helps to ensure that children have a balanced diet. Older children can access drinking water freely and younger children are offered water regularly. This helps to promote children's good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and stimulating environment. The playroom is bright and attractive, with photographs of the children and examples of their work on display. This fosters children's sense of security and belonging. Children's independence is promoted as they confidently select from the many resources available in tubs or low-level drawers. There is a broad range of good quality toys and equipment which are suitable for different ages and abilities. This helps to meet children's needs effectively.

The childminder takes positive steps to keep children safe indoors and on outings. Children are well supervised at all times and the childminder explains why certain actions are dangerous. For example, she discusses with children why they should not climb on furniture. Children also learn to protect themselves in the event of a fire or emergency. The childminder arranges for the fire safety officer to visit and takes note of any recommendations made. She has produced a fire evacuation plan and practises it with the children, ensuring they understand the procedures to be followed.

Children are well protected and the childminder has a clear understanding of child protection issues. She is familiar with the procedures to be followed if concerns are raised and has relevant guidance and contact numbers.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have positive relationships with the childminder and are content. The childminder shows warmth and understanding and knows the children well. Babies are cuddled, talked to and offered praise and encouragement. This positive interaction helps to promote children's confidence and self-esteem. The childminder has a good awareness of children's stages of development, but has not yet begun to use the Birth to three matters framework to further develop her practice.

The childminder provides a varied day, including outings which helps to promote children's all-round development. Children show interest and involvement as they play with dolls, books and dressing up clothes. The childminder interacts well with the children, questioning them to develop learning. Children enjoy activities such as painting, craft and playing with musical instruments. The childminder encourages older children to take part in activities based on themes, such as the seasons, helping to sustain their interest and promote learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and included due to the childminder's positive approach. The childminder provides resources which promote a positive view of the wider community and diversity and so helps to develop children's awareness and understanding. This awareness is also developed through activities such as tasting food from different countries.

Children are well behaved. The childminder has a calm manner. She speaks positively to children using praise and encouragement effectively to celebrate their efforts and achievements. As a consequence, children are confident and display high self-esteem. Children are also rewarded using stickers, further helping to build their confidence and promote good behaviour.

Children benefit from the positive partnership the childminder has established with parents. The childminder requests information about children's health and interests when they start. This helps to ensure that the parents and childminder are working together to meet children's needs. The childminder shares information about children's experiences and development through informal talks with parents. Helpful information, such as menus and the childminder's complaints procedure, are on display for parents to see. These measures also help to ensure that children's needs are effectively met.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a soundly organised environment. Space and resources are used to create a safe environment where children can play. The childminder ensures that the children have sufficient space in order to play in comfort and organises her resources to promote children's independence. All records and documentation are in place and meet the required standard. This contributes to continuity of care for children. The childminder has many years experience of caring for children, which has a positive effect on the quality of care offered. Children are protected as the childminder ensures that relevant checks are carried out on all adults living or regularly visiting the premises.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the childminder was required to ensure that any vehicle used to transport children had appropriate insurance cover. The required insurance cover is now in place.

Complaints since the last inspection

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.

Ofsted received concerns in relation to National Standard 2 Organisation and National Standard 6 Safety. The provider was asked to provide an investigation response regarding the concerns raised. Ofsted are satisfied the provider remains qualified for registration. The provider has kept a record of this complaint.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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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):

- plan and provide activities to help children's development in line with the aspects and approach described in the DfES publication *Birth to three matters*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk