

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	306175
Inspection date	05 July 2007
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 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 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged eight and 11 in Bebington in Wirral. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. 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 and is currently minding four children on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler groups and park. The family has a pet dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder takes care to protect children from possible health risks by ensuring that her home is clean and that the pet dog is well cared for. Children are developing an awareness of simple hygiene procedures, such as hand washing at appropriate times. The childminder protects children from the risk of cross contamination by providing individual towels for hand drying.

Children are protected from the risk of food contamination because the childminder has recently completed food hygiene and handling training to ensure appropriate procedures are in place. The childminder's clear written sickness policy is shared with parents and helps to protect children from the spread of infection. The policy is implemented if children are unwell, the children are made comfortable and parents are contacted. The list of communicable illnesses is available for reference and the childminder is aware of the procedure to follow if children contract one of these illnesses, to safeguard all the children in her care from infection. Children learn to enjoy physical exercise as they make regular use of the local park to run and use large equipment. They also develop a healthy lifestyle as they walk to school and back and take part in regular outings.

The childminder provides nutritious snacks and meals, including fresh fruit daily. Fresh drinking water is always available to children. These measures promote children's good health. The childminder is aware of children's individual dietary requirements and ensures these are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides children with a welcoming, comfortable environment. Children's art work is displayed on the playroom walls and toys are visible on entry. Space is appropriately used to provide areas where children can rest, relax or pursue more robust activities. Children are able to access a broad range of toys which are appropriate to their stage of development.

The childminder has taken measures to minimise risks and hazards within and outside the home. The premises are secure and hazardous substances are kept out of children's reach. The childminder assesses risks to children's safety and acts accordingly. For example, due to a recent home extension, the step into the garden is currently unsafe, so children are not using the area until this hazard has been rectified. The childminder has a clear fire evacuation procedure which is practised with the children, developing their knowledge of how to protect themselves from harm.

The childminder has a satisfactory knowledge of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. She is familiar with the procedures to follow if concerns are raised and has the relevant guidance and contact numbers. This means that children are appropriately protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder fosters relaxed and warm relationships with the children. Children are valued and their needs for comfort and cuddles are met. Her positive interaction helps to promote children's confidence and self-esteem. Children are content in her care. The childminder provides a varied range of activities which promote children's all round development. Children enjoy playing with musical instruments, taking part in craft and baking activities and sharing books. They are confident to choose their own activities. Children are encouraged to think and their learning is extended through the childminder's good interaction and effective questioning. Whilst playing with paper and crayons, younger children are encouraged to name colours and communicate their ideas. Their language skills are promoted well as the childminder talks clearly to them as they play with construction toys and look at books, encouraging them to respond and develop vocabulary. Children also take part in regular outings, for example, to the library or museum to broaden their experiences and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are treated with equal concern. All children are able to participate in the activities offered which helps to promote their self-esteem and sense of belonging. They have access to a limited selection of resources to increase their awareness of differences in people and cultures in the wider community and around the world. Children behave well as the childminder gives them plenty of praise and support for their efforts and achievements. She has clear ground rules and children respond well to her positive approach.

The childminder has established positive relationships with parents. She requests information about children when the placement begins and obtains relevant parental permissions. This information is used to help meet children's needs appropriately. Her written policies and procedures are shared with parents, helping to inform them about her service. However, the complaints procedure has not been amended in line with changes to the National Standards. A regular sharing of information between the childminder and parents through informal talks helps to ensure that children's needs are appropriately met.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder holds a childcare qualification and has several years experience of caring for children. This has a positive effect on the quality of care offered. The childminder does not care for the full capacity of children at all times. As a result, children receive a good level of support and interaction to feel secure and confident. Children are able to access toys and make choices in their learning due to the childminder's appropriate organisation. This contributes to developing children's independence and helps to ensure that their needs are met. The day's activities are organised to provide opportunities and experiences both inside and outdoors. Local facilities are appropriately used with visits to toddler groups, the library, and play areas.

The childminder has clear written policies which are shared with parents and used to promote children's welfare, care and learning. Records are in place, ensuring continuity of care for children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the quality and standards of care was judged as inadequate. The childminder was required to: comply with the conditions of registration; take action to minimise risks in relation to the fire evacuation procedure, the fireguard not being secured, access to the stairs, computer lead and water in the garden; obtain written permission from parents before administering medication to children and request written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice and treatment and ensure that all records relating to childminding activities are in place.

The childminder has met all of these requirements, with positive effect on children's welfare, safety and learning.

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 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):

- increase the range of resources to develop children's understanding of differences in people and cultures in the wider community and around the world
- amend the complaint policy in line with changes to the National Standards.

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