

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	306861
Inspection date	27 February 2008
Inspector	Christine Myerscough

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 1987. She lives with her husband in a house in Stockport.

The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house, apart from the living room is used for childminding. Children also have access to two of the bedrooms upstairs for sleeping purposes. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. There are currently eight children on roll. The childminder regularly works with her husband, who acts as an assistant.

The childminder has a cat. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well protected. The childminder maintains very good standards of cleanliness across her home. There is a separate hygienic area for nappy changing, which respects children's right to privacy and children have flannels labelled with their name to minimise the risk of cross-contamination. On outings, the childminder also carries an anti-bacterial hand gel for

children to use, when needed. A clear sick child policy, which is shared with parents, protects children from the spread of infection.

Children are well nourished and speak highly of the childminder's meals. They look forward to their favourite dishes, such as spaghetti bolognaise and become excited at the arrival of their yoghurt. Foods which contain high levels of fat, salt and additives are avoided to help protect children's health. Meal times are a relaxed occasion and children take their time to savour their food. They develop good levels of independence as they competently feed themselves. Through topic work, children learn about the importance of healthy eating and produce colourful displays, which represent their thoughts and ideas. A sample menu is available so parents have a clear understanding of the sorts of food on offer to their children. Children keep well refreshed as they have good access to drinking water from a water cooling dispenser in the hall.

Children actively participate in a good range of activities, which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. The childminder's well-equipped garden provides children with good opportunities to develop their physical skills as they play with balls, bikes and hoops. Children experience the elements as they go out on walks in all weathers wearing protective clothing, such as Wellington boots. Trips to local parks enable children to exercise their bodies and they enjoy picnics outdoors in the fresh air. Children's well-being is assured as they have time to rest as well as be active. The childminder organises the environment well so children can sleep peacefully and undisturbed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright and homely environment. There are child-friendly posters on display on the walls, and the childminder maintains her home in a good state of repair and decoration to create inviting surroundings. Children play with a good range of quality equipment and resources, which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Toys are clean, well-maintained and comply with safety standards, which minimises risks to the children.

Effective practices prevent accidental injury to children. For example, children are well supervised by the childminder to keep them free from harm. There are safety measures in place, such as locks on low-level cupboards and smoke detectors are checked on a regular basis. Children take part in evacuation drills every three months to become aware and familiar with safe practices. They avoid dangers outdoors as the childminder teaches road safety and children learn about safe places to cross the road. On outings, the childminder carries her mobile phone with parents contact details, and there are clear written procedures to enable the childminder to respond swiftly if a child becomes separated from her care.

Children's welfare is well safeguarded. The childminder has a clear understanding of the procedures to follow with regard to child protection. She has attended training on safeguarding children to keep abreast of current issues. The necessary contact details are readily accessible to enable her to respond quickly in the event of identifying a concern. A safeguarding children statement is shared and signed by parents so they are fully aware of the childminder's role and responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very well cared for in a positive and nurturing environment. They benefit from familiar routines and a relaxed atmosphere, which enables them to settle in quickly. The

childminder's caring approach and cheerful manner reassures children and encourages them to be good humoured and self-assured. This builds children's confidence and trust and, as a result, they are very happy and smile often as they play.

Children express themselves freely and play purposefully. They develop a positive disposition to learning as the childminder plays closely with them. This supports their overall development well. Children are independent and make confident choices in their play. As they successfully complete floor puzzles, they demonstrate good levels of concentration and become excited by their achievements. Children develop good skills in construction, and successfully build impressive and inventive models and structures. They are patient as they teach their friends the rules of games, and play fairly as they remind one another when it is their turn with the dominoes. Children thoroughly enjoy playing imaginatively and create their own storylines as they build a rocket and take it on a journey to the moon to meet aliens. Activities, such as junk modelling, appeal to children's interests and they skilfully use a range of materials to produce a wonderful giant.

Children's communication skills are very well supported through good quality interactions. The childminder spends time interacting with children and consistently talks to them to encourage their language and understanding. She shows interest in what children are doing and listens attentively to what children are saying, responding positively to their questions. As a result, children are keen to engage with the childminder and become very confident communicators.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children from a range of backgrounds are warmly welcomed and treated with equal concern. A welcome poster in different languages is displayed on the play room door so everyone feels important and valued. The childminder's written policy on equal opportunities outlines how she actively promotes anti-discriminatory practice with children. Children access play resources reflecting diversity to help them gain an awareness of similarities and differences. They taste food from other cultures and make cards as they take part in activities linked to various festivals. The childminder has a positive attitude towards inclusion and recognises the importance of working with parents to meet children's individual requirements.

Parents are made aware of the management of children's behaviour through discussion and the childminder's policy statement. Children are well behaved. They feel totally at ease in their surroundings as the childminder creates a harmonious environment that promotes respectful relationships. Children demonstrate very good manners as they ask the childminder's permission before they leave the dinner table, and consistently say please and thank you. Regular use of praise from the childminder boosts their self-esteem and helps them to feel good about themselves.

Children benefit from consistency of care because the childminder establishes good relationships with parents, and works closely with them to ensure she follows their wishes. Parents gain a good understanding about the service on offer, as the childminder shares a welcome handbook and written policies about her childcare practices. A daily diary is maintained for younger children and keeps parents well informed regarding their child's day, sleeping patterns and food intake. However, in the event of a complaint from a parent, the childminder does not have a system in place to record complaints, which could result in concerns regarding the welfare and safety of children not being fully resolved.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy playing in a dedicated play room, where they feel at home and confidently initiate their own play. The childminder is well organised, therefore children feel secure in her company and home. She works well alongside her assistant, who effectively supports her to ensure children's needs are successfully met. There is a good balance of activities, both in the childminder's home and the local community, to stimulate children's interests. For example, children attend local toddler groups, which broaden their learning experiences and helps them to become sociable as they meet other children.

The childminder is well qualified and experienced in childcare. She holds a Cache level 3 Diploma in Nursery Nursing, and has a positive attitude towards her ongoing professional development. Since the last inspection the childminder has undertaken further training on subjects, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She is currently attending a course in order to gain a Diploma in Home Based Childcare and keeps abreast of changes in childcare practices through reading relevant literature. First aid training is kept up-to-date to enable the childminder to administer treatment, if necessary, to maintain children's welfare. This supports the continuous development of her childminding practice.

Good regard is given to the National Standards to ensure outcomes for children are positive. Records and documentation are very well organised in separate files to ensure the smooth running of the childminder's business. A range of policies and procedures support and enhance her work to provide an efficient service to contribute to children's health, safety and well-being. Many letters of thanks from parents show their appreciation of the childminder's services. The childminder's shares these with all parents to provide extra reassurance in confirming her suitability to 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 childminder agreed to ensure records relating to healthcare matters and children's attendance are in order. Parents now give their written consent for the childminder to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. The childminder has a clear understanding of the required detail to include in the accident record. The record of attendance for children clearly indicates their arrival and departure times on a daily basis. This ensures effective record keeping to keep children safe.

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

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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):

- introduce a system for recording complaints, to be shared with parents.

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