

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	307093
Inspection date	17 January 2008
Inspector	Jeanne Lesley Walsh

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 has been registered since 1996. She lives in the Romiley area of Stockport with her husband and one adult daughter. There are currently 12 children on roll, who attend at various times. The children have use of all the downstairs rooms, which includes the dedicated playroom/conservatory, lounge and kitchen/dining room and there is a rear garden for outdoor play. There is also a toilet on the ground floor.

Children are taken and collected from local schools and they visit several local children's activity groups and other places of interest, with parental consent. The childminder holds a recognised childcare qualification and is in the process of completing a level four childcare qualification. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and the local approved childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a well maintained and hygienic environment. They are protected from becoming ill because there is a sickness policy in place that is shared with parents. The childminder asks parents to phone before bringing a child who is unwell so that they can discuss any possible affects to other children. The policy includes information about exclusion periods for illnesses as well as written information about required procedures for the administration of medication. Appropriate records are kept of any medication given. There is a first aid box available and the childminder has completed first aid training and so is able to provide appropriate care in the event of an accident. Accident records are well maintained and are signed by parents and include details of any injuries a child may have on arrival at the setting. However, although a policy is in place, specific written consent is not obtained from parents to enable the childminder to seek emergency advice or treatment for children.

Children understand simple good health and hygiene practices because they follow good daily routines. Paper tissues are freely available for coughs and sneezes and after use children are encouraged to wash their hands. Nappy changing takes place in accordance with the child's individual needs. The childminder uses protective clothing when changing and cleans the changing mat after each use, to reduce the risk of cross-infection. She ensures the children are happy while they are being changed by singing to them and chatting to keep them amused and relaxed. The children independently wash their hands before snack using liquid soap and a step, so they can easily reach the sink, and they all have their own hand towel, which is washed daily. Children benefit from physical activity most days because they walk to school or the park. In the garden they climb on climbing frame, jump on trampoline and they visit local physical activity groups. When they are tired they can rest and sleep according to their needs. The childminder discusses preferred sleeping routines with parents and provides either a travel cot, sleep mats or push chair. Generally the accommodation promotes children's health and emotional well-being because it is well organised, clean and well maintained. It is child-centred so that children can play safely and comfortably.

Children are becoming aware of healthy eating through the daily menus for meals and snacks. Discussion confirms that the childminder prefers to provide mostly fresh foods and plenty of fruit and vegetables. At snack time the children are observed to have a choice of what they eat as they tuck into apples and raisins, with water to drink. Children are becoming aware of what foods are good for you when they are occasionally given a treat, such as a biscuit or chocolate. The older children remind the younger children that 'you can't have the treat until you have eaten your fruit because fruit is good for you'. Children share a good social occasion at meal-time. They eat together at the table or in a high chair and are learning good social skills as they are reminded to say thank you and to help each other. The children are also introduced to a range of different foods according to season and when they go shopping they talk about what is available. They experiment with different foods and talk about the different tastes and they get quite excited as they tell their parents what they have eaten.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. All areas are made suitable for their purpose and good space is available for children to play. The setting is child-centred

with suitable child size furniture, displays of children's work, low level coat pegs and appropriate equipment to assist with their safety and learning. An excellent variety of toys and activities is available and alternated regularly and checked daily for safety and hygiene. It is all easily accessible and carefully presented to capture children's imagination and inspire them to explore and investigate the environment. Children know they can ask for anything they want whether it is out on display or in the cupboard.

Children are protected because procedures are in place to ensure that risks are reduced. There are clearly defined procedures for the emergency evacuation of the building, which are displayed in the play room for parent's information. The childminder has also recently begun to practise fire drills at regular intervals so that children become familiar with the process. Smoke detectors are appropriately placed, plug sockets are protected and there is a fire blanket available in the kitchen. Other potential hazards are also suitably protected. The children help to tidy up and they know that they do this to avoid accidents that might occur if too much equipment is in the way. Children are secure and well supervised because they cannot let themselves in or out of the building and they know they do not answer the door.

Children are protected because the childminder understands her role in relation to child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures into place when necessary. She has completed Local Safeguarding Children Board training and she is aware of appropriate procedures to follow if she should have concerns. Parents complete a safeguarding children form that ensures that they are aware of the childminders responsibility with regard to child protection. Children are also becoming aware of keeping themselves safe. They are learning about road safety, how to use pelican crossings, traffic lights and the crossing patrol person and they wear their wrist bands. They know that they stay by the push chair and always in hearing and sight of the childminder. There are also clearly defined procedures available to be followed in the event of a child being lost or not collected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a homely and child-centred environment where they receive very good care and attention from the childminder. Their individual care needs are well provided for because the childminder discusses them with parents. She knows the children well and supports their individual development stages. For example, when one child began to try to take off its own boots and coat she purchased a doll with an assortment of fasteners, such as zips and buttons to help the child practise. The child can now undo the boots and manage the zip unaided and the doll is helping all the children. She also helps individual children with communication. Children who lack confidence and will only nod, are encouraged to talk because the childminder explains that she cannot hear a nod.

Children are cared for in a very well organised and stimulating environment. They show interest in what they do because activities are well organised and well resourced. They acquire new knowledge and skills because they are encouraged to explore, experiment and investigate. They make choices for themselves and the activities are often child lead. When several older children decide they want to make some crystals, the childminder helps them plan what resources they need. They choose their stones, which they hang inside glass jars, some in water others definitely not in water. Each day they check to see if there are any changes. They are experimenting and making decisions for themselves and the childminder enables them to do this and supports their ideas and enthusiasm.

All the children are currently involved in a project relating to road safety and they are busy cutting shapes of traffic lights, zebra crossings, and cars to stick on their road safety pictures. The childminder talks to them about the crossing patrol person and they refer to their road safety books looking at road signs, cyclists and safe places to cross the road. While they are cutting one child is upset because the other child has ripped the paper. The childminder explains that the child is only just learning and experimenting with the scissors and knows that we do not normally tear the paper. The childminder allows the children to find out for themselves, experiment and make mistakes. The children's activity is further supported through play with jigsaw puzzles of the school bus, crossing patrol and traffic lights.

The childminder is enthusiastic and consistently talks, explains and discusses with the children. She reads stories, supports their ideas and extends their learning, they respond and interact well. She is beginning to keep observations of children and has done this to observe specific problems or issues. She plans her daily activities according to the children she minds. Planning links to individual observations for all children and the Birth to three matters framework.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met because they are discussed with parents. They are provided with a wide range of activities and resources both inside and outside the home, which begin increasing their awareness of diversity and an understanding of others. They celebrate different festivals, such as Divali and Christmas and while they are busy reading a book about food, they see a picture of some pumpkins and remember that they had pumpkins when they celebrated Halloween. They have constant access to a range of good resources including books about different cultures and religions, dressing up clothes and small world play. Good use is made of local amenities, such as their visits to local toddler groups, the network group where they work on themes, Chester Zoo and The Science and Industry Museum. They use the buses and the trains as well as walking. This is helping children to develop a sense of belonging and start to become aware of their local community and the wider society we live in. All children are helped to join in, take responsibility and play a productive part in the setting because the childminder is aware of issues surrounding the care of children with disability or learning difficulties. She is interested in completing training to help her provide appropriate care and will work with other agencies if required.

Children behave well and are starting to learn about right and wrong as the childminder demonstrates a positive approach to behaviour management. She is clearly aware of different ages and stages of development and she adapts her approach appropriately. The children are starting to consider the feelings of others through their play. While playing a computer game one child is angry when the other one wins. The childminder gently explains, through discussion and by using a book about manners, how the other child may have felt about the angry behaviour. She reminds the child that next time it would be nicer to be pleased for the winner and say congratulations. The childminder is firm but fair and is a positive role model for the children and they are learning to be calm, relaxed and to be kind to each other. Children are observed to behave very well in the setting and they are happy and confident.

The childminder states that it is important to have a good relationship with parents so that appropriate information can be shared about the child. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress through daily discussion. The childminder keeps daily diaries for two way communication with parents, which provide information of the child's day. She is very aware of the importance of confidentiality and her policy supports this. The childminder always makes

herself available to the parents and always tries to be flexible and friendly. The parents show their appreciation of the setting and the childminder through cards and references and are very happy with the care provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are happy and settled in a warm and stimulating environment. Activities are very well organised so that children have sufficient space and can play in comfort. They are encouraged to make independent choices and initiate their own play. The childminder supports their ideas and provides the resources to help them to achieve. This promotes children's confidence and boosts their self-esteem.

The childminder is committed to developing her own knowledge and skills through attending additional training courses. This is helping her to improve her childcare skills and the service she provides. Children enjoy receiving lots of encouragement and attention from the childminder. She maintains appropriate adult child ratios and the children benefit from having their individual needs met. Their care is agreed with parents through regular discussions and written contracts and their welfare is well supported through good practice, policies and procedures. Most required documentation is in place and available for inspection. The children are cared for in a secure environment where they can develop and achieve at their own pace. 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 was asked to provide a suitable range of natural and sensory materials, in order to meet the developmental needs of babies.

Photographic evidence shows that all the children are involved in sensory play at local children's activity groups. The childminder has provided a treasure basket for babies and the children also explore a range of natural materials in the setting including shells, fir cones and sand. All these activities are helping to promote children's sensory 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 permission from parents to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment that may be required in the future

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