



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	307802
Inspection date	17 May 2006
Inspector	Lesley Ormrod
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1993. She lives with her husband and another family member in Bolton le Sands, Lancashire. The childminder regularly works with other childminders. The whole of the ground floor and two rooms on the first floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is currently minding seven children under five years all day. The childminder drives to local schools to take and collect children.

The childminder supports children with special educational needs. She is an accredited member of the Bay Childminding Network. The childminder is currently in receipt of funding for nursery education for three and four-year-olds. She holds a recognised early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have their health needs competently met, as the childminder records detailed information from parents. They receive a high standard of health care, as there are good procedures for the administration of medication, first aid and emergency attention. Younger children's personal care routines are carried out using good hygiene procedures. Children have a good understanding of why looking after their teeth is important. They know that they brush their teeth after lunch. They have good personal care routines. Older children independently use the toilet and wash their hands afterwards. Their understanding of how their good personal care routines protect them from harm from germs is not always consistently fostered.

Children's dietary needs are known with good careful attention paid to checking what each child can eat. They enjoy a balanced variety of snacks that promotes their good health. Children enthusiastically discuss the tastes and textures of the different types of honey, as they spread their toast at snack time. They decide that the melon slices are refreshing as they are cool. Children readily help themselves to their individual accessible drinks when they decide they are thirsty. They know why it is important to balance treats, such as biscuits with healthier foods.

Children have very good, daily opportunities to be physically active as there is good planning for their physical development. They enjoy being active and eagerly go to play outside. Children have very good large motor skills, as they climb up the large apparatus and enjoy the fun of coming down the helter-skelter slide. Younger children make determined efforts to climb, use the roundabout and jump on the trampoline, with good support from the childminder. Older children have good small motor skills. They easily catch the small balls, as they spontaneously develop a catch game. Their understanding of how being physically active promotes their good health, and how their bodies feel after exercise is promoted in planned topics, although not consistently during the daily physical activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, welcoming environment, that has been competently risk assessed by the childminder to promote their safety as they play. They have safe access in the planned activities to a very good range of resources and equipment. Their safety is promoted through the good attention paid to regularly checking and cleaning toys and equipment. Children have good tidy-up routines, although their understanding of how this promotes their safety is not always consistently fostered. Children's safe access to a wider selection of the available resources, and sufficient resourced areas to develop their free play ideas is limited at present, owing to temporary restrictions on developing the existing layout of the premises.

Children's safe care is promoted, as there are good arrangements for daily risk assessing and making safe any aspects identified. They can safely move independently around the rooms through the good safety measures taken, such as finger guards on the doors. Their good

understanding of staying safe in an emergency is actively promoted. Children participate in regular fire drills. They confidently explain in detail what to do if the alarm triggers. Children know that they go outside, take a roll call and ring for the fire brigade. They learn how to stay safe when out and about as the childminder places high importance on teaching road safety skills. Their understanding of safe play is consistently encouraged in all situations. They know that knives are sharp and to be careful, as they spread their toast with honey.

Children are protected, as the childminder has a good knowledge of child protection procedures. The arrangements to protect children are fully shared with their parents, who receive a copy of the written procedures. Their well-being is closely monitored by the childminder through her good understanding of how to be vigilant, what to be aware of, and how to take action if necessary. Children are collected by authorised persons only, as the childminder has carefully set up tight, password procedures with their parents. All children know that they stay safe when out and about, by remaining within sight of the childminder at all times. Their wider understanding of how to protect themselves if they do not feel safe is not yet fully developed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and secure in their strong relationships with the childminder. They eagerly chat away about what they are doing as they enthusiastically play and learn. All children are confident to suggest activities and give their ideas about what they might do. Their play and developmental learning needs are recorded on their forms using parental information. Younger children's developmental progress is closely monitored through the effective use of child development checklists and reference booklets. Their next developmental steps to achieve are planned for by visually observing and assessing their achievements. Younger children access a well-planned curriculum based on topics and focussed activities that the childminder skilfully adapts to meet their developmental needs. They excitedly enjoy exploring the heuristic baskets. Younger children explore what they can do, such as making sounds with the excellent variety of metal objects. They enjoy experiencing the tactile experience of finding out what the natural items feel like when they touch their skin. Their very good progress is promoted by the childminder's effective use of the Birth to three matters framework materials.

Younger children persist at their play for good periods of time. They concentrate intently as they eagerly explore in the garden to find mini-beasts. Their speech is developing very well and they can hold quite detailed conversations. Younger children discuss the 'Wizard of Oz' show, and make very good use of their recall skills with an excellent range of vocabulary. They describe how the scarecrow needs a brain and the tin man wants a heart. As they explore the mini-beast figures they recall the name chrysalis and know that a butterfly comes out. They are confident in their use of early number skills and accurately decide if they have one or two items. Younger children enthusiastically participate in the music session. They delightedly coordinate two hands to create rhythms with the shakers and make sounds by working out how to blow into the recorder. Younger children are mesmerised as they use the science equipment. They shine a torch at the mini beasts they found and excitedly chat about what they see. Younger children's opportunities to independently develop their free imaginative play are not fully promoted by the temporary layout of the rooms available. They are, however, encouraged

to develop their exploratory play, as the childminder consistently compensates for the restricted use of the rooms, by providing many changes of well-chosen resources throughout the day.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children receive a well thought out nursery education curriculum as the childminder has very good detailed planning systems. They enjoy a stimulating range of topics, such as opposites that the childminder expertly breaks down into focussed learning opportunities to promote children's good progress towards the early learning goals. Children's learning is actively promoted through very good direct teaching skills by the childminder. They are consistently encouraged to extend their learning as the childminder uses highly effective questioning skills. Children are consistently encouraged to try to achieve a task, before the childminder facilitates their achievement. They are actively encouraged to develop their independence skills, as they are praised for trying to put on their shoes and tie the laces. Children are consistently encouraged to learn new vocabulary, as the childminder clearly identifies key words to learn and reinforces their understanding in the activities. They can recall what they have learnt in context exceptionally well, such as the names of the mini-beasts. Children's next steps to learn are identified from the childminder's personal knowledge of what they have achieved. Their targeted learning is not yet fully informed by effectively collating the information from the many written observations made, into the next week's planning.

Children are confident speakers and are eager to talk about what they know, what they can do and describe their past experiences. They enthusiastically chat about putting the tent up as part of the camp on the beach that they created. Their writing skills are developing well and four-year-olds can write their names with recognisable letters. Children can recognise some initial letters as they enjoy games such as I spy. Their use of their skills in linking sounds to letters is not fully extended within the opportunities arising in daily activities and play. Children enjoy reading and readily ask for a favourite book, such as 'Not now, Bernard' at story-times. They use their good thinking skills to explain what they are doing, such as using a paper towel to cover up the jar of mini-beasts so they did not get cold. Children use number language confidently as they play and learn. They accurately count the number of wings and legs on the mini-beasts. Children use their good problem-solving skills to decide which shaped piece fits where, as they construct their mini-beast gliders. They can accurately name an exceptionally good range of shapes and colours, such as oval and indigo. Children participate in good focussed activities, such as woodwork to use their calculating skills, although they do not always extend their practical use of these skills within the daily opportunities arising. They use the language of measurement confidently, as they eagerly compare their height now with their previous growth records from being babies.

Children have exciting opportunities to learn about the world around them. They enthusiastically decide where to look in the garden to find mini-beasts. They are fascinated by watching the trail made by the snail across the black paper. Children are very competent in the use of science equipment, such as magnifiers and torches, as they intently examine the woodlice and beetles. They develop their skills in using technology, such as electronic learning games in focussed activities. Children concentrate intently to use the joystick to fly around the globe and discover different countries. Their wider use of everyday technology in their free play is not always

extended. Children's opportunities to fully develop their free imaginative play ideas through access to a wider selection of resourced areas is not yet fully facilitated. They enjoy being creative and eagerly draw freely on the easels. Children enthusiastically chat about their ideas as they create their drawings. They describe in detail how they made their snail houses by folding paper and cutting out items, such as a bed to stick inside.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have good opportunities to learn about their own and others' cultures and traditions. They participate in planned activities to celebrate Christmas, Chinese New Year and Divali. Their experience of hearing other languages is fostered as the childminder introduces them to French. They are encouraged to chat about aspects of the countries that they have visited. Their individual needs are discussed in very good detail with their parents. All children are encouraged to achieve their potential as the childminder places the highest importance on treating every child with equal concern. Children show good care and concern for each other. They are encouraged to value each other's achievements and help each other. Children have very good self-esteem and proudly chat about their achievements. They are confident in the setting and play equally with each other. Boys and girls share in the woodworking activity and role play domestic tasks, such as polishing. Children have good opportunities to develop their ideas and make their play choices within the planned activities for the day. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children with a special educational need have their needs met, as the childminder closely monitors each child's development. Their needs are competently managed through the childminder's close consultation with their parents about any further advice or support needed. Children's behaviour is managed competently, as the childminder effectively uses appropriate strategies. They are guided calmly and consistently to respond to the childminder's expectations of desired behaviours. The arrangements to manage children's behaviour are discussed in detail with their parents, who receive a copy of the written policy. Their work is celebrated and displayed.

The arrangements for children's care are shared in very good detail with parents, who are given copies of the policies and procedures. The information given about the childcare includes a written complaints policy with the format to record any complaints. Very good detail about each child's day is shared with parents at the daily handovers. The quality of the childcare is assessed by parents, as the childminder actively seeks their comments. Children's care is considered to be outstanding by parents, who praise the invaluable advice, support and the stimulating activities that are provided. The parent-partnership is satisfactory as the childminder is developing strategies to promote the shared learning with parents to support the nursery education. Children's progress is recorded in a well-written report, although the arrangements to report progress to parents and discuss assessments and target setting are not yet fully established. The system to regularly share and collect information about children's achievements to inform the planning to meet each child's next steps to learn, has just commenced during inspection. Information about the curriculum planned for children's learning is not yet shared with parents. Children's participation in topics is shared with parents through requests, such

as wearing specific coloured items as they learn their colour names. Their learning is not yet extended through suggesting activities for home-links to facilitate their parents' shared involvement.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children settle confidently at the setting as the childminder has given good thought to providing good quality care and education. They are cared for by a childminder who is meticulous in ensuring that there is no access to children by non-vetted persons. The good arrangements for children's care are detailed in the comprehensive policies file. Children receive a high level of attention, as the childminder works very effectively with her co-childminder to promote each child's progress. Leadership and management are good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals through the childminder's effective planning and teaching strategies. The quality of children's learning is good, as the quality of the childminder's teaching is monitored regularly, and judged good by the Bay Childminding Network coordinator. The curriculum provided for children is consistently enhanced as the childminder makes very good use of skills and information gained from the regular training courses attended.

The provision for children is regularly assessed by the childminder, who has accurately identified strengths and weaknesses. The opportunities for children to freely develop their imaginative play ideas, by providing a wider range of accessible resources and play areas are clearly identified in the childminder's development plan for the premises. The arrangements for children's care include very good practices for the retention of documentation after children have left. All records for registered children are in very good order and fully shared with their parents.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection made recommendations for the childminder to have regard to recording the emergency evacuation practises, and including a statement about handling allegations in the child protection procedure. The arrangements for children's safe care have been improved, as emergency evacuations are recorded. Children are protected, as the childminder advises parents what to do if they have a child protection concern.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- continue to develop the opportunities for children to safely make their free play choices by reviewing the accessibility of the extensive range of resources and equipment
- enhance the opportunities for children to further extend their imaginative ideas by extending the resourced areas of free play choices available.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- extend the short term planning to make more effective use of the observations made, in the identification of what each child needs to learn next
- extend the arrangements to share children's progress with their parents by regularly meeting to discuss the written progress reports and assessments, and regularly collect and share information about children's achievements to inform their next steps to learn.

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