

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	308660
Inspection date	08 May 2007
Inspector	Mary Wignall

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 lives in a village in the Fylde area of Lancashire. She has been registered since 1998. She lives with her husband and four children, three of whom are aged under eight years of age. She uses the whole of her ground floor and a front and rear garden for childminding. She currently has seven children on roll. Family pets include a dog, cats and rabbits.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children learn good personal hygiene procedures as the childminder encourages them to follow good routines. For instance, she makes sure the children wash their hands appropriately and regularly talks to the children about the need to be clean. The children learn by the childminder's good example. She maintains the home in a clean condition and wipes surfaces before being used for snacks. The children enjoy having the family pets around the home. The childminder has made sure all animals are safe and well for the children to be near by regular checks and vaccinations at the vets. She makes sure they know and understand the need to

wash their hands after touching the family pets. The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of the need for vigilance and disinfecting areas used by the pets.

The childminder has agreements with the parents not to look after children with infectious diseases or symptoms of them. This protects the children from cross infection. She provides the parents with valuable information about childhood and infectious diseases to ensure the children's health is protected. Documentation is in place to obtain relevant information and consents from parents to ensure they are fully informed of her procedures to work in partnership to promote the children's health. A policy not to care for children who are sick protects the children from cross infection.

The children have good opportunities for regular physical activities to support their physical development. The childminder has well equipped, well planned, garden areas for both younger and older children to enjoy. She has climbing equipment and fun outdoor toys and games for the children to use which promotes their all round development. She has two outdoor play areas which enable the younger children to have maximum use and benefit from the outdoor space. The childminder has what she calls her 'barn area' which is used for indoor play when they are unable to go outdoors. This area is separate from their main indoor play areas and provides a different environment for the children to play with different, larger items of toys.

The children learn about healthy eating and living by the childminder's clear understanding and commitment to healthy eating. The childminder provides a sample menu of well balanced meals with good use of fruit and vegetables. She plans her food preparation well in advance to avoid it taking time away from the children. The children are offered a good range of fruit throughout the day and are introduced to new ways of eating them to develop their interest and excitement of them. They watch as the fruit peeler is used expertly to core and peel an apple. They enjoy eating the coil of apple it produces and nibble with interest at the long strip of peel. As a result, the children are well nourished and enjoy their food.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment in which potential risks have been identified and minimised. The children and parents can see displays and posters of interest to them making them feel welcome at the setting. For instance, the children can see posters about colours, numbers or rhymes. The parents can see the registration certificate display and some of their children's art work on display. The childminder has created a homely, stimulating environment with photographs of children, her own and some minded children, creating a homely environment. The premises are, in part, adjoining to her neighbour's premises, the neighbours being members of her extended family. There is access from the neighbour's premises into the area the childminder calls her 'barn area'. The childminder explains this access can be secured, although, it was not during the time of the inspection.

The children use suitable and safe equipment as the childminder provides a very wide range of good quality toys and equipment. The childminder has made good use of separate storage areas and different spaces for different activities to enable children of all ages to play with their toys in safety. For instance, the hall area has a computer and games for older children and is used to store toys with small pieces. The safe storage of toys means that children can safely access toys suitable for them to play with. As a result, the children can make choices in their play activities and find the toys interesting and exciting.

The children learn to keep themselves safe as the childminder naturally explains and involves them in everyday activities and preparations. For example, she asks them to mind the step pointing out a potential stepping hazard, makes sure they know to stay within agreed boundaries, and explains why toys and equipment should be played with appropriately. Safety equipment is used well to protect the children. For instance, gates and locks prevent unwanted access to hazardous areas or items. A fire blanket and smoke alarms are used in conjunction with fire drills to ensure the children are safe and confident about what to do in an emergency.

The children are protected by the childminder's good understanding of child protection. Parents receive a detailed child protection policy which demonstrates the childminder's clear understanding and commitment to protecting the children. They each sign and keep a copy of the policy to ensure partnership and consistency in the protection of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident as the childminder naturally talks to the children at every opportunity. She lets them know what is happening, asks their opinions and includes them in preparations for activities. For instance, she asks the children what they want to play with, making suggestions and listening to theirs. The children are confident, able to express their views and make decisions. As a result, the children are fully engaged in their activities and are gaining good self-esteem.

The children enjoy a broad range of activities as the childminder plans well. She plans activities for all the children based on themes, such as the seasons or mini-beasts. She plans activities for all ages of children from building a bug box for older children to drawing and collages for younger children. The childminder encourages the children's imagination well. She has a wide range of dressing up clothes and role play toys. She asks the children to use their imagination in thinking about what shapes or reused safe materials they could use to make a model caterpillar. Photographs of the children show them having fun in a wide range of activities using all their senses. For instance, they show the children catching crabs, enjoying picnics, dressing up, or enjoying time with their friends. The childminder is enthusiastic about their activities, making best use of all her premises and the local environment. She has a good understanding of introducing appropriate challenges for the children to use their imagination or mathematical skills in everyday activities, such as counting, role play, or sharing ideas.

The childminder sets a good example relating to the children with politeness. The children are gently encouraged to use 'please' and 'thank you'. As a result, they know the importance of good manners. The positive relationships shared by the children and the childminder create a positive atmosphere for play and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder works effectively with the parents to meet the needs of the children. She has established procedures for the parents to complete all relevant documentation about their children before they start. As a result, she gets very useful information about the children's needs and preferences to enable her to plan individual care for each of the children. She is aware some children may have either learning difficulties or disabilities and has good systems in place to work with parents to meet individual needs. Good settling in routines mean the parents and children have visited the setting prior to starting. As a result, the children settle quickly into her care and are relaxed and comfortable in her home.

The children develop good self-esteem and respect for others. The childminder sets a good example in her interaction with the children. She talks to the children with respect responding when they speak to her and giving plenty of eye contact. The children get on well together. They wait for each other to wake up, anticipating the games they will play together. They share the toys and games well starting their own game of dominoes as they return to the playroom after their snack.

The children learn about the wider world as they play with a range of good quality toys that reflect diversity. The childminder plans activities that broaden the children's experiences. For instance, they acknowledge different cultural festivals. The children learn about their own community in local walks or day trips.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a clear understanding of the National Standards. She has ensured all persons living or working at the premises over the age of 16 years have completed the required suitability checks and has evidence available for inspection.

The childminder's premises are, in part, adjoining to her neighbour's premises, the neighbours being members of her extended family. The neighbours have access to the rear garden and the play area the childminder calls her 'barn area' as the access is not secured. The childminder has considered the need for relevant checks, although, these have not yet been completed.

The childminder has a clear understanding of child protection with effective procedures to inform parents of her commitment and responsibility to protect children. Space and resources are used well to support the care and learning of the children. The children move with confidence around the premises which the childminder has planned well to ensure all children have maximum, safe, use of the space available. The childminder has effective documentation and implements procedures well to support the care and welfare of the children. All documentation maintains confidentiality and is retained for the required time.

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 it was agreed to put the sick children policy in writing. The policy is now in writing and all parents receive a copy of all the policies and sign to acknowledge and agree them. This ensures the children's health is fully promoted in partnership with the parents.

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):

- ensure the premises are secure
- ensure that all persons over the age of 16 years regularly present in the premises undergo checks.

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