



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310697
Inspection date	17 February 2006
Inspector	Frank William Kelly

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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1993. She is registered to care for five children at any one time and is currently minding six children who attend on a part time basis.

She lives with her husband and two children, one of whom is adult aged and the other 14 years old. They live in the Aintree Village area of Liverpool. The whole of the ground floor, a bathroom and a bedroom on the upper floor are used for minding the children. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder holds a level 3 childcare qualification. She takes the children to the

local library, toddler groups and other places of interest on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean and appropriately ventilated home. They are kept healthy and free from illness as the childminder implements good practice to help prevent the spread of infection. She cleans surfaces, washes hands before preparing drinks and snacks, and follows an effective procedure when changing nappies. Children are actively encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal hygiene, such as washing their hands before snacks or after visiting the toilet. Children's health is further protected as there are sound procedures, which are shared with parents, for when children become unwell or infectious. Children are kept comfortable until they can be collected. Parents are asked not bring children if they are unwell, to prevent infections being passed onto the other children. There is some information available about those diseases that require reporting to Ofsted.

Suitable recording systems for accidents and administration of medication have been established, which helps safeguard children's health and well-being. Written consent for the seeking of medical advice or treatment has also been sought.

Children benefit from a very healthy diet. The childminder gathers and uses useful information from parents in relation to children's likes, dislikes and any other dietary requirements. This means that children's individual dietary needs are catered for and met well. They eat nutritious, mainly freshly prepared meals and snacks, such as fresh fruit, carrot sticks, pasta, chicken and rice dishes. Children independently access their own cups when they are thirsty. They have frequent drinks to refresh and quench their thirst. Their good health is further maintained as the childminder does not give the children sweets or drinks that include additives or sugar.

Children's good access to a wide range of small and large equipment effectively develops their co-ordination and physical skills. They have ample space to move safely around the dining room and good opportunities to play in the kitchen with dough and other creative or tactile materials. There is a very good range of outdoor equipment for the children to play on. However, at present the garden is not suitable to play in whilst alterations to the home continue. To compensate for this, the childminder ensures that the children enjoy regular visits to the play park. Every day the children benefit from breathing fresh air as they walk to school and nursery. Younger children rest or sleep comfortably according to their needs and wishes of their parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and very well-maintained home. They move freely and safely between the living room and kitchen where hazards have been identified

and minimised. At present there is no safety gate fitted to the stairway. However, children are fully supervised when using the stairs, and young children hold the childminder's hand for safety. Arrangements for keeping children safe during alterations to the home have been appropriately implemented. Much of the work is completed when children are not present or the childminder makes arrangements to take the children out to further reduce risks. Children help themselves from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment, which are regularly checked for safety. These toys are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

The childminder has taken positive steps to prevent fire hazards. Smoke detectors and a fire blanket are in place, and a very well thought out emergency evacuation procedure has been prepared. However, this is not practised with the children, so it is unclear if children would be familiar with what to do in the event of an emergency. Children are learning about keeping themselves safe whilst out and about as the childminder talks to them about road safety.

Children's welfare is further promoted as the childminder maintains a current first aid certificate to ensure she has sufficient up-to-date knowledge to deal with minor accidents or emergencies. She has a satisfactory knowledge of child protection procedures and retains the required documentation in place to protect children. Consequently, children's safety, care and welfare is suitably promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and well-settled in this caring environment. They are confident and enjoy the individual attention provided by the childminder which is supported with plenty of cuddles, hugs and eye contact. Children communicate in any way they can. The older children chat about what they are doing or have been doing in school, whilst younger children babble and chatter continually as they go about their play. The childminder listens and values what they have to say. She responds and shows interest, encouraging them to extend their discussions further. This boosts their self-esteem and encourages children to practise and extend their language skills, enjoy their play and use their imagination.

Children enjoy a wide variety of well planned activities, which enable them to make good progress in all areas of their development. They enjoy many opportunities for social interaction with other children as they regularly attend toddler groups or meet up with other childminders for story time at the library. They are learning to be independent as they are given opportunities to help prepare their sandwiches at snack time or tidy away the toys before going out. They learn about numbers and colour during their daily routines as the childminder talks to them about what they see, such as how many and what colour the cars are.

Children learn well through play; they enjoy playing with a varied range of games, resources and toys which the childminder provides for them, many of which are easily accessible within the playroom as they are stored in low-level boxes. Children are familiar with what is available, have firm favourites and know that they can request additional items from the store cupboard should they wish. This promotes

their growing independence and helps them to make personal choices. Their creativity and tactile experiences are fostered well through the varied range of enjoyable activities, such as food tasting, baking, arts and crafts and play-dough. Older children relish their small world play. They spend prolonged periods working out routes and connecting the rail track how they want it, engaging adults only if they require assistance. They line up and sort the carriages into groups of different numbers and confidently count them for visitors when asked.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a good sense of belonging. They are relaxed and settled. They enjoy the company of the childminder. They receive lots of praise and encouragement and some of their art work is positively displayed on the walls, which actively promotes their self-esteem and confidence. The childminder is a good role model and understands children's individual needs and meets them well. Children behave well, with the childminder adopting appropriate strategies for promoting positive behaviour. She talks to the children about being kind to each other and sharing.

An adequate range of resources including some good quality books, reflect the diversity within today's society and help children gain an awareness of others similarities and differences. Interesting craft activities relating to cultural and social celebrations, such as making lanterns for Chinese New Year, are helping children develop a positive attitude to others. Children learn about their local community and the natural environment through regular outings to the park and post office. They talk with the childminder about the weather whilst walking to other local places of interest, such as the library.

Children's welfare and development is promoted in partnership with their parents. Daily verbal and written communication in the form of daily diaries is shared with the parents to ensure that children's individual needs are met.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and secure. They feel at home in the well organised environment and are able to freely express themselves in their surroundings. Children eagerly select their own resources, choose where to play and initiate different types of activities for example, setting up the rail track and engines. The childminder makes good use of the available space to provide a range of stimulating and interesting play opportunities. The daily routines are effective in practice and provide time for active and quiet sessions during the day. Children benefit from being cared for in small groups at any one time. This ensures that they receive and enjoy lots of individual attention whilst still having regular opportunities to play and socialise with other children during visits to playgroups and other local places of interest.

The childminder has undertaken various vocational training to increase her

knowledge and skills and implements this very well in practice to enhance the care provided to the children. She has some understanding of the Birth to Three framework, and a secure understanding of her responsibilities regarding the National Standards. All legally required documentation which contributes to the children's care and well-being is in place. Policies are shared with parents and a complaints procedure is in place. However, this does not include information relating to recent changes to legislation, such as maintaining a record of complaints or making this available to parents.

Overall, the needs of all the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the childminder should make toys and resources more easily accessible to the children, seek information about children's individual dietary needs and obtain information relating to diseases that require reporting to Ofsted.

The children's pleasure, learning and independence have been enhanced as the childminder now organises the toys and activities into several low-level storage boxes which are positioned in the main play room. Consequently children enjoy their play as they make independent choices about with what they wish to play with.

The childminder has taken positive steps to improve the children's health and well-being as she has obtained some information about infectious diseases which is shared with parents. An effective system for sharing information about the children's individual dietary needs has been established. The childminder considers this information when planning the children's meals and snacks, so that children's individual needs and preferences are effectively attended to.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?
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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):

- practise the emergency evacuation procedure with the children, so that they become familiar with what to do in the event of an emergency
- update procedures for the reporting of communicable diseases and complaints so that they fully reflect the recent changes to the National Standards
- increase understanding about how best to implement current child care initiatives in practice, such as Birth to Three Matters.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk