

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310715
Inspection date	23 January 2008
Inspector	Elizabeth Margaret Grocott
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 outstanding. 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 1994 and lives with her husband and two children aged 10 and 13 in the Maghull area of Liverpool. The childminder lives in a bungalow and all rooms are used for childminding except two bedrooms and the office. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The childminder is registered to provide care for six children under eight years and is currently minding two children on a part time basis.

The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's good health is exceptionally well fostered through the careful attention the childminder gives to hygiene, nutrition and exercise. There is a picture displayed in the bathroom reminding children to wash their hands after using the toilet. When nappy changing is complete, the mat is cleaned with an antibacterial solution and hung up to dry. All areas are cleaned

before and after activities. Frequent washing and checking of toys helps to reduce the likelihood of cross infection. Children's health is further protected as the childminder has up to date training in first aid, written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice and permission from parents to administer medication. This means that accidents can be effectively dealt with by the childminder; if they are more serious then professional advice can be sought.

Children receive an excellent range of home cooked meals, which are both healthy and nutritious. They enjoy roast pork dinners, smoked haddock, vegetable casserole and braised steak. These meals are served with fresh vegetables and fresh fruit is offered regularly for snacks. The childminder negotiates arrangements for meals and drinks carefully and explains clearly to parents how she promotes healthy eating. Children are further encouraged in a healthy lifestyle through discussions and the colourful poster on display which helps them to learn the importance of eating five portions of fresh fruit or vegetables everyday. Children are regularly provided with fresh drinking water, fresh juices or milk to ensure they are hydrated which helps them to form good habits for the future.

Children's physical health is very well maintained and important to the childminder. Children enjoy regular physical activity because the childminder takes them to the local park where they run about in the fresh air and they play in the childminder's garden with balls, bicycles or skipping ropes. When the weather does not permit outdoor play they enjoy activities, collectively called brain gym, which exercise the brain.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, warm and very clean environment where their photographs are displayed on the wall giving them a sense of belonging. There is plenty of space for them to play and wander about safely under the watchful eye of the childminder. She has prepared a full risk assessment of both the indoor and outdoor area and makes sure that in all areas risks to children are minimised. Gates, socket covers, fireguards and safety catches are all used to protect children. The childminder has an excellent understanding of creating a balance between encouraging children's freedom and setting limits to maintain their safety. For example, a young child is watched carefully as he explores his environment and learns to pull himself to standing. Children regularly practise evacuating the house, in case a real emergency ever arises. This means they will know exactly what to do, and learn to keep themselves safe.

The childminder has prepared an excellent range of policies and procedures, which are shared with parents, to support her childminding practice. Children have access to a varied range of quality toys and resources, which are suitable for their ages and stages of development. The range of play equipment and furniture is in good, safe condition which children can choose from low-level storage.

Children's welfare is safeguarded through the childminder's clear understanding of her responsibilities towards protecting children from neglect or abuse. She has an expert knowledge of what would concern her, the possible indicators of abuse or neglect and the appropriate action to take at that time. This ensures children are protected very well.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are settled and relaxed as the childminder's friendly nature creates a warm and welcoming environment. They relish the company of a childminder who is kind, affectionate and clearly enjoys working alongside them. For instance, she sits with children and provides many meaningful opportunities for them to play. A young child puzzles as he tries to fit shapes through the relevant holes, with gentle encouragement he succeeds. Children delight when they are presented with water to play with, as they pour it from one container to another and manage to soak not only themselves but the childminder too. Children enjoy playing with unusual musical instruments from around the world including a rain stick, an ocarina and a pan pipe.

There is a plan for each child each day, derived from observations and assessments made using the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. The childminder proudly takes photographs of the children during their play to illustrate the milestones they reach. Children are constantly stimulated to build on their existing skills through the childminder's outstanding support. She continually chats to them as they play, asking questions appropriate to their level of understanding, so that their learning is extended. The childminder gives plenty of positive encouragement to children. Consequently, they feel very good about themselves from a very early age.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has significantly enhanced children's understanding of diversity by providing a range of interesting resources for them to learn from. For example, there are small cardboard figures with different skin tones to dress up, a range of dolls, music and books including a story about a Sikh boy and the Baisakhi festival. These resources are used to provide talking points and help children to understand and value similarities and differences. All children's individual needs are met exceptionally well. Although the childminder has not been asked to provide care for children with learning difficulties or disabilities, she has a superb awareness of the stages of child development. She is quickly able to recognise any delays in reaching milestones and ensures that all children in her care receive the best possible support in order to reach their full potential.

Children's behaviour is exemplary in response to the childminder's calm, positive handling of their behaviour. A written behaviour management policy is available and shared with parents so that expectations are clear. Simple house rules are shared with the children so that they know what is expected of them. Children regularly receive praise and encouragement, ensuring that they understand when they have done well. This builds their self-esteem. Strategies are appropriate and take account of the children's level of understanding.

The childminder works in very close partnership with parents. She encourages them to spend time with her, getting to know each other as they settle their child. They are kept up to date about their children's care and progress through detailed daily diaries supported by a range of photographic evidence. The parents are very well-informed as the childminder discusses her practice and has an extremely detailed information folder outlining her qualifications and giving details of her policies. The parents are extremely happy with the care and education that is provided. They describe the childminder as excellent, flexible, reliable and professional.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder is highly skilled and enthusiastic in her approach to her work. She endeavours to learn more and continues her professional development. This positively promotes children's care, learning, health, safety and welfare. Children spend their time purposefully and all activities are planned to maximise play, learning and development taking into account each child's individual needs. Highly effective organisation enables the childminder to play with the children and give them plenty of attention as domestic tasks, such as meals, are prepared before they arrive. The childminder places a strong emphasis on children's safety and she ensures that they do not come into contact with people who have not been appropriately vetted.

All regulatory documentation is well presented and meticulously recorded. Children's personal details and contracts with parents are reviewed regularly, to ensure that children are provided with care that is appropriate to their current requirements. All confidential information is stored safely away from the main area of care, respecting and protecting families. 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: develop her knowledge of child protection issues; write a complaints procedure and make it available for parents; ensure that parents are given regular updates on their child's progress; and obtain written permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

The childminder has reviewed all of her policies and procedures and a comprehensive complaints policy is available for parents to see as well as a complaints log. All parents have now given written permission to allow the childminder to seek medical advice or treatment in the case of an emergency. The childminder has attended child protection training which has given her an indepth knowledge of the subject. She is clearly able to act in children's best interests should the need arise. All children have daily written diaries and ongoing records of their achievements. These are shared with parents regularly.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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