



## Inspection report for early years provision

|                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 315063         |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 15 March 2007  |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Sheila Iwaskow |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Childcare      |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](http://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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2000. She lives with her son, aged 14 years in the Birchwood area of Warrington.

The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding purposes; this comprises of the lounge, computer room and kitchen. There is a fully enclosed area at the rear of the property for outdoor play. The family have a dog. Support is given to children who have learning difficulties and disabilities.

There are currently four children on roll who attend on a variety of placements. She holds an appropriate early years qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean environment. They learn the importance of good hygiene through the daily routine of washing hands after toileting and before eating. A poster in the bathroom and worksheets from the internet help children to understand the underlying reasons for good hygiene practices. Good measures are taken regarding the exclusion of children who are ill, enabling the childminder to act in the best interests of all the children. The childminder is qualified in first aid and a first aid box is located in the kitchen, which ensures that any minor injuries are treated appropriately.

Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure that dietary needs are met. Sample menus are available for parents to view. Meals and snacks are balanced and nutritious, promoting children's physical growth and development. Children are provided with drinks with meals and snacks, however, they are unable to independently quench their thirst at other times as drinks are not freely available. Babies' bottles are kept in the fridge and when being fed babies are held closely and eye contact is maintained. This helps babies feel warm and secure. Individual routines with regard to established patterns for meal and sleep times are promoted and respected.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to engage in physical play outdoors. They enjoy the fresh air as they walk to and from the park. Playing outside provides children with the chance to develop their physical strength and gain control of their bodies as they ride on wheeled toys, crawl through the tunnel and play in the ball pool.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Positive steps are taken to keep children safe. Safety equipment, such as a fire blanket, cupboard locks and smoke alarms are securely in place. Good systems are in place for the safe collection of children at the end of the day and the childminder has carefully thought out fire evacuation plans. However, she does not practise these procedures with the children, which prevents them from being confident of knowing what to do or where to go in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation. Children are further protected because the childminder has up to date information on safeguarding children. A written child protection policy is in place and she is aware of indicators of abuse and who to contact if she is concerned.

Children access a range of toys which are plentiful, safe, clean and in good condition and meet the developmental needs of the children who attend. There is ample space for them to move around freely and play in comfort. Sleeping children are kept close by and checked on a regular basis. The house is warm and generally well maintained. Space is made available for children who want some time after school to do their homework or simply relax.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a supportive environment. The childminder's caring approach reassures them and helps them feel at ease. Babies freely give the childminder a cuddle and look towards her for support and reassurance. As a result, children are happy, confident and secure in her care.

Babies enjoy a range of toys which are colourful and make pleasant sounds. They smile with delight as they are bounced up and down on the childminder's knee and gaze in amazement as they watch the coloured balls in the rattle go round and round. Babies communicate well and confidently make their feeling known. The childminder interprets the meaning of their sounds as they express their wishes and desires.

The childminder provides children with a good range of creative activities which allows them to explore their senses and express themselves freely. For example, they make necklaces from pasta, manipulate play dough and cut and stick with scissors and glue. However, there is a lack of natural materials for babies to freely explore and develop their senses.

Older children enjoy competing against each other as they play board games and developing their skills on the computer. Playing with train sets and construction models with building blocks are popular activities, however, opportunities for children to develop their imaginative skills through role play are limited.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about the wider world as they celebrate cultural festivals, such as Chinese New Year, taste food from other countries and access a suitable range of resources depicting diversity. This means that the children are developing a positive attitude towards others. The individual needs, preferences and circumstances of the children are known and acted on by the childminder, ensuring that children's needs are met in practice. Children are taken to local toddler groups, which provides them with alternative play environments and allows them to socialise with other children. The childminder recognises the importance of providing a sharing and inclusive environment for children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

A behaviour management policy is in place and shared with parents. Sensible house rules, such as 'no hitting or hurting others' and 'no shouting' give children a perspective of what the childminder expects from them within her home. Minor altercations are dealt with in a positive and constructive manner, using strategies that are appropriate to the age and development of the child. Children's achievements are celebrated through praise and the use of stickers and reward certificates.

The childminder builds positive relationships with parents. Some written policies are available, which inform parents of the childminder's childcare practice. Written reports and verbal exchanges at the end of the day keeps parents informed of their children's routine and how

they have spent their day. Procedures are in place to record concerns expressed by parents, in line with changes to the National Standards.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children express themselves freely in the childminder's home. She organises her space to provide children with a balanced range of activities. The childminder recognises her responsibility to protect children from harm and ensures that children are supervised by her at all times. Systems are in place to settle in new children to make sure that they are happy in their new environment. The childminder's certificate is clearly displayed, which keeps parents fully informed of her conditions of registration. Evidence suggests that the childminder complies with her conditions of registration at all times.

Most documentation relating to the care of the children is in place and organised to reflect confidentiality. However, a minor omission has been identified; written consent from parents to seek emergency medical treatment is not in place for all the children in the childminder's care.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Following the last inspection the childminder agreed to meet three recommendations: to agree methods of behaviour management with parents; ensure that the family dog does not pose a risk to children's health; and make toys more accessible to the children.

All of these issues have now been addressed. Methods of behaviour management are discussed with parents at registration, ensuring consistency. Play materials are rotated to maintain stimulation and those available for the children are easily accessible, allowing them to make informed decisions about their play. The childminder recognises her responsibility to ensure that the dog is safe to be in the proximity of children. She ensures that feeding bowls in the kitchen are inaccessible to the children and there is a fenced off area in the garden where the dog plays. These measures taken ensures children's well-being and safety.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 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 satisfactory. 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 that fresh drinking water is available to children at all times
- practise fire evacuation procedures with the children
- increase younger children's access to natural materials and provide more resources that promote children's imaginative role-play
- seek written parental consent to administer emergency medical treatment for all minded children.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)