



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	315123
Inspection date	27 July 2006
Inspector	Sheila Iwaskow
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 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 since 1988. She lives with her husband and three adult children in Lymm, an area of Warrington

All of the ground floor areas of the property are used for childminding, with the exception of the ground floor bedroom. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The family have a dog.

There are currently five children on roll who attend on a variety of placements. The childminder offers care to older children before and after school. She is a member of the Warrington Childminder's Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are comfortable and cared for in a spotlessly clean home where effective hygiene routines are in place to protect children and minimise the risk of cross infection. The childminder is particularly vigilant in areas where the family dog has access. Children are beginning to learn about hygiene and personal care as they are encouraged to wash their hands after toileting and before eating. Simple explanations given by the childminder allow older children to understand the underlying concept of good hygiene practices. Good routines are in place for nappy changes. A written sick child policy is in place which excludes children who are ill from the setting. If a child becomes unwell whilst at the childminder's home, they are comforted and parents are contacted straight away. Children receive good levels of care if they have an accident as the childminder has a valid first aid certificate and a well stocked first aid box is within easy reach. Babies are able to feed and rest according to their needs, providing an environment that is secure and consistent with home.

An attractive outdoor play area in the back garden helps children develop a positive attitude towards physical exercise. Whilst playing outdoors children have fun as they jump on the trampoline, ride on a range of wheeled toys and play in the Wendy house. Such opportunities allow children to develop their gross motor skills and learn about positioning their bodies in different ways in a stimulating environment.

Effective systems are in place to record children's health and dietary needs which are considered when planning snacks. Pack lunches are stored in the fridge, ensuring children's health is not compromised. Children enjoy choosing from healthy options, such as fruit, raisins and crackers. Children follow sensible rules at snack times, such as sitting at the table whilst eating and not walking around with drinks in their hands. Children are well hydrated and have access to drinks at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have good freedom of movement with ample space where they can relax in comfort or take part in more active play. Rooms benefit from lots of natural sunlight and are well ventilated on hot sunny days, ensuring children's comfort. Children attending have access to a good range of resources which cover all areas of their development. Play materials are clean, well-maintained and rotated to maintain stimulation. Toys are laid out at the beginning of the day and are easily accessible to the children, allowing them to make choices and develop their independence. The childminder ensures that the toys that children play with are appropriate to their age and stage of development.

The childminder has taken all reasonable steps to ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. The childminder supervises the children well, enabling them to play independently and safely. She has taken action to ensure that most areas of house are safe. For example, she has smoke alarms on both floors of the house and a fire guard is securely in

place. She has clear systems in place of how to vacate the house in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation. However, she does not practice these procedures with the children, which compromises their safety. Furthermore, a drain in the back garden is not covered and is accessible to the children.

Children are protected because the childminder has a sound understanding of child protection issues and procedures, although existing injuries are not recorded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children smile happily and giggle in the childminder's home. They 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.

Children enjoy playing with a range of toys that are colourful and make pleasant sounds. They are learning to become competent language users as the childminder responds positively to children's chatter and repeats words to enhance their development. Listening skills are developing well as the childminder reads to the children, modelling how books should be held and talking to them about what they can see in the pictures. Children are beginning to learn that they are separate from others as they identify their nose and eyes as they play with the childminder. Mathematical concepts are explored as children count their toes, and identify the colours and names of shapes. Children are encouraged to explore sounds as they excitedly imitate the noise that elephants make. Role play in a variety of situations allow children to explore their own ideas as they dress up as a ballet dancer or Spider Man. A range of creative opportunities give children the chance to foster their fine motor skills and express themselves freely. Children enjoy visits to local amenities, which allows them to experience alternative play environment and socialise with other children.

The childminder has an awareness of the Birth to three matters framework, however, this needs to be further developed to ensure the needs of younger children are completely met.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder demonstrates a sound awareness of how to promote children's perception of diversity and their understanding of others. She uses resources and gives children the chance to taste food from other countries, increasing their awareness of the wider world. Visits to the shops and library help to develop children's knowledge of their local community and the diversity of the people who work and live there. Children are treated with equal concern and given a sense of belonging as the childminder values their likes and dislikes and responds to their individual needs in an appropriate manner. The childminder recognises that children with special needs should be welcomed into a sharing and inclusive environment.

Children are well behaved. Age appropriate strategies are used to manage behaviour and each child is treated with individual care and respect. Children's efforts praised and their contributions

valued, promoting their confidence and self esteem. The childminder encourages children to share and take turns as they play, helping them to develop a caring attitude towards others.

Children benefit from the close working relationship that exists between their parents and the childminder. A range of written policies keep them well informed about the provision and the childminder's child care practices. Verbal feedback keeps parents up-to-date about their children's day, and any other issues that may arise. Parents are made aware of the complaints procedure, however, systems are not in place to log and concerns expressed by parents. Letters from parents express their overall satisfaction with the service provided; they appreciate the 'friendly family environment' provided by the childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children express themselves freely in the childminder's friendly and well organised home. The environment is designed to provide children with a balanced range of learning opportunities. She is proactive in developing her child care practice and has attended additional training, thus ensuring that children receive the best possible care. There is a clear timetable in places which facilitates taking and collecting children from a local primary school. The childminder ensures that her certificate is clearly displayed, keeping parents fully informed of her conditions of registration.

Most documentation relating to the continuity of care for children is in place and up to date and organised to respect confidentiality. However, an omission has been identified; parents do not sign to acknowledge the medication that the childminder has given to their children. 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 agreed to address issues regarding the required adult-child ratios and the provision of activities for babies. The childminder now ensures that children are cared for within the required ratios and that a range of suitable activities is provided to meet the needs of younger children. These improvements mean that the needs of children are met.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report since 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

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):

- make the drain in the back garden inaccessible to children; practise fire evacuation procedures with the children and ensure that existing injuries are recorded
- continue to develop an awareness of the Birth to three matters framework
- ensure that parents sign to acknowledge medication given to their children and implement systems to log concerns or complaints made by parents in line with changes to the National Standards.

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