

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	316492
Inspection date	06 February 2008
Inspector	Gillian Patricia Bishop
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 was originally registered under the local authority in 1992 until the regulation transferred to Ofsted in 2001. She lives with her husband and teenage daughter in the Ramsbottom area of Bury. The conservatory and ground floor bathroom are used for childminding purposes. The first floor and the main lounge are not used. There is a safe and secure garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years. There are currently four children under five years on roll. All attend on a part time basis. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and she takes children to local toddler groups, one of which she runs.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and she receives support from local early years teams.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop an extremely positive approach to living a healthy lifestyle due to the excellent opportunities they have to explore the outdoors all year round. They frequently visit the childminders allotment in summer and winter which enables them to observe seasonal changes throughout the year. Children help to grow and tend plants and vegetables, such as cauliflowers, peas and herbs. They help to feed and care for, chickens and goats which ensures they develop an excellent understanding of how to handle and behave around small and large animals. They have observed the chicks from birth, watching how they grow and change over time, and they are particularly keen to collect their eggs to take back to the childminders house for lunch.

Children benefit from daily opportunities to play outdoors in the fresh air, alongside a programme of planned activities designed to challenge and support their physical development. The use of bikes for peddling, balls for throwing and catching and climbing apparatus, help children to develop a good sense of control and coordination over their bodies. Children regularly dance to music and they display a very early understanding of the necessity to take physical exercise, for example, a child makes dumbbells out of a construction set and encourages other children to lift them up and down.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted due to highly successful policies for health within the setting. This ensures children are well protected during hot weather and if they become poorly or have an accident. Young children display a very good understanding of how to look after their own personal needs by carrying tissues to keep their noses clean and by washing their hands before and after meals to prevent germs on their food.

Children display a strong interest and enjoyment of healthy foods as they learn where their food comes from, how it is grown and how it is cooked. This has encouraged children to eat foods such as eggs, which they have previously refused. Children relish meal times as they look forward to the childminders home cooked soups and meals. For example, children are keen to find out what they are having to lunch, only a short time after having their snack. The childminder provides children with a well balanced and nutritious menu, including a large proportion of vegetables they have grown at the allotment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are confident and well settled within the childminder's home. The conservatory has been developed into an exciting playroom with bright posters, pictures and photographs which create a welcoming and inviting environment for children. The indoor play space opens out directly onto the secure garden which allows children the freedom and choice of out or indoor play when weather permits. Children benefit from the very good range of toys, books and resources, most of which is easily accessible to enable children to be self sufficient in their play.

Children are generally well protected by the childminder's policies and procedures for safety, which ensures most potential hazards inside and outside the home are successfully minimised. For example, hazardous objects and substances are inaccessible to children and smoke alarms are maintained in good working order. A written emergency evacuation plan is in place and arrangements for car travel meet with requirements. For example, the childminder ensures

children are provided with appropriate car seats, she has relevant car insurance and she requests parental permission to transport children in her car. However, the home is not sufficiently secure as the main entrance is not always locked when the children are in the home.

Children develop an understanding of how to keep themselves safe because they follow house rules about where they can play and which areas are out of bounds. They play safely under the watchful eye of the childminder who reminds them not to climb on unsuitable furniture and who encourages them to pick toys up so they don't trip. The childminder has a clear understanding of current safeguarding procedures and this is supplemented by written guidance to parents about her legal responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident and they eagerly seek their childminders company and attention, for example, asking her for help, look at photographs and inviting her to 'get cooking' with them in the play kitchen. Children display a good familiarity with the daily routines because they ask if its tidy up time and lunch time. Children are very excited by some of these routines as they begin to discuss which colour cup or plate they will have at mealtimes. Children are becoming good communicators because they are consistently encouraged to talk about what they are doing and what they might do next. Children are constantly chattering and they frequently respond by asking questions of their own, for example, when can we play ball; where are the puppets?

Children enjoy a very good range of planned activities both in and outside the home such as painting, drawing and reading. Children particularly enjoy imaginative play with small world toys and their dolls, as they imitate familiar scenes and experiences such as, being mummy or daddy and attending to their babies. They plant seeds for the childminder's allotment and they frequently visit toddler groups where they can participate in large group activities, such as a beach party, complete with sand and water play.

The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of children's development and she makes some use of the Birth to three' matters framework for younger children. Which helps her to plan suitably challenging play opportunities in relation to their abilities and interests. She promotes the use of their natural senses by providing children with equipment to explore sound and texture, for example, a child plays with wooden musical instruments listening carefully to the variety of sounds they produce. Children are motivated, curious and eager to learn due the stimulating range of activities and the choices and decisions they are encouraged to make.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop close friendships within the setting as they often talk about children who are missing and who will come next. Children are therefore very excited when others arrive; greeting them with big smiles and eagerly helping them to remove their coats. Children show great concern for one another by offering to help put tissues in pockets and by inviting others into their games. Respect for one another is strongly instilled by the childminder, which ensures children are able to express their own feelings about what they are happy to do and what they are not. For example, one child being enthusiastically hugged by another is encouraged to ask the other child to stop if he does not like it. Children have access to a good range of books and

resources which positively reflect diversity within our society and they have exceptional opportunities to explore the natural world.

Children benefit from the childminders sensitive approach with regard to managing behaviour. She provides clear explanations about what is expected of children which helps them to develop a secure understanding of right and wrong. For example, children consistently say please and thank you to one another and they learn to share and take turns, allowing them to play cooperatively and fairly. The use of reward stickers and lots of praise successfully encourages children to be aware of their own behaviour. The childminder also provides them with appropriate strategies to help them cope with their developing emotions and frustrations, for example, by asking children to be calm, put toys down and take a moment to think about what is happening before they talk about an incident.

Parents benefit from good relationships with the childminder as a consequence of effective communication systems. Parents are very well advised about childminding practices because they have access to the written policies and procedures and information about their children's welfare is routinely reviewed. Parents highly value the care provided by the childminder and they state they have every confidence in her practice. They are provided with a detailed complaints statement which identifies Ofsted as the childcare regulator and a complaints recorded is in place. This policy positively encourages parents to share any concerns they may have, directly with the childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder demonstrates a commitment to continually develop her childcare practice to further enhance the provision for children. She regularly attends additional training in order to promote children's health, well-being and enjoyment. She has established a comprehensive range of written policies and procedures which provide parents with an accurate reflection of how children's welfare is promoted within the setting.

Children benefit from their carer's consistent support and reassurance which encourages them to actively seek her company and attention in order to make their needs known. The daily routines for activities, eating and rest create a sense of familiarity and security which children respond positively to. For example, children talk about toddler group when they are aware their usual routine has not been followed. Children are very relaxed, confident and happy in the home due to the secure relationships they have with their carer and other family members. Children enjoy a full range of experiences which incorporates the outdoors and social activities at groups and activity centres. The childminder is very effective in her organisation because activities and daily routines are well planned; as a consequence the days are busy and exciting, but they also run smoothly.

The childminder has a good understanding of the requirements of the National Standards which ensures all aspects of documentation are kept and maintained in line with regulations. Individual files for children's information ensure good confidentiality practices when sharing details with parents. Systems are in place to ensure that records are reviewed and updated with regard to children's needs and personal details.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection one recommendation was made in relation to first aid. The childminder has since sought advice from relevant agencies with regard to the contents she is required to have in her first aid box. She has purchased additional resources as recommended.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints to report that required the provider or Ofsted to take any actions 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 home remains secure at all times when minded children are being cared for.

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