



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	318415
Inspection date	19 February 2007
Inspector	Carla Owen
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 has been registered since 1997. She lives with her husband and three daughters aged 15 years, 13 years and 10 years. They live in a house in Sale with shops, parks, preschools and schools within walking distance. The through lounge is used for childminding and is divided into a quiet area and a creative area. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

There are three children on roll who attend on a full time basis.

The childminder has an National Vocational Qualification Level 3 in childcare and attends local toddler and childminder groups on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a clean and homely environment. The childminder adopts good health and hygiene practices as children are consistently learning the importance of personal hygiene. They understand why they need to wash their hands at appropriate times of the day and are provided with individual hand towels to prevent the risk of cross-infection. Good nappy changing routines are followed as part of the daily routine and children are able to rest according to their needs, thus providing an environment consistent with home.

Written menus indicate that children benefit from a nutritious, well balanced diet of home-made hot and cold meals, healthy snacks of fresh fruit, raisins and yoghurt, which helps promote their growth and development. The childminder regularly introduces children to new fruit and vegetables to promote a healthy diet. Children sit together and chat at mealtimes, thus developing their social skills, and at times they help to prepare their own snacks. Information is obtained from parents about children's dietary requirements and allergies, and permission is obtained for seeking emergency medical treatment, ensuring children's health is protected. There is an effective, clearly written sick child policy, which is shared with parents and excludes any children who are ill, which prevents the spread of infection.

Children enjoy a warm, supportive relationship with the childminder. Flexible routines allow children to pursue their interests and they are becoming aware of their own needs, such as time for rest or drink. Children's physical development is well promoted as the childminder provides a range of equipment which challenge children, such as different sized climbing frames to develop their climbing skills and threading to develop their hand eye coordination. Children go on regular walks in the park where they benefit from fresh air and gain an appreciation of their local environment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a welcoming and friendly environment. On arrival, children hang up their coats on their individually labelled pegs and settle into an activity of their choice. The childminder has clearly given thought to the physical environment ensuring it is inviting for children. Colourful, child-sized tables and chairs are used to promote children's independence and space is arranged to allow children an area for play and an area for resting. Most resources are accessible to children and are regularly changed to ensure children are continuously stimulated in their play. Notice boards are thoughtfully placed around the room displaying photographs of children playing, which they enjoy looking at in their own time. Children's independence is fostered as they access a varied range of good quality resources and equipment, which meet safety standards and are developmentally appropriate.

The childminder adopts effective procedures to ensure children are kept safe. The premises and outside area is checked regularly to ensure any potential hazards are minimised, and toys are checked on a regular basis to ensure children's safety whilst playing. Entrances and exits

to the premises are secure and the childminder makes use of different safety equipment, such as safety gates and high chairs, to reduce the risk of accidents. Children are protected on outings as the childminder has obtained written permission to transport children; all vehicle documentation is in place and appropriate car seats are used. The childminder has devised an effective emergency evacuation plan, which is clearly displayed in the kitchen. Regular drills are carried out and recorded,

ensuring children know what to do in the event of an emergency.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder demonstrates a very good understanding of child protection. She has a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse. There is a written procedure in place, which includes phone numbers of the appropriate agencies and the steps to follow should she have any concerns about a child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from familiar routines which help them feel secure. They are happy and comfortable within the setting and quickly become engrossed in activities, for example, children choose to play with play dough; they sit for a long period of time and have fun cutting out different shapes and rolling the brightly coloured dough using a variety of different tools. When asked 'what are you making?', a child replies 'a pig'.

The childminder plans activities according to the children's interests. Weekly written plans are produced and assessments are made of the older children to determine their level of development. These are shared with parents, thus keeping them regularly informed of their children's progress. Worksheets are sent home on a weekly basis for children to practice activities they have done in the week, such as letter formations or colouring. This helps to reinforce their learning and allows parents to view their children's progress first hand. The childminder is familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and is beginning to use this when planning activities for children, however, this is not yet fully implemented in practice.

Children are engaged in a range of appropriate activities which they clearly enjoy, such as crafts, singing and role play. Children enjoy baking fairy cakes and biscuits. At music time they sing along to familiar songs, and experiment with different sounds as they play with musical instruments. Their imaginative skills are enhanced as they dress up and play shop, and play with a range of small world toys, such as trains sets and the farmyard. Children's language development is promoted through communicating during role play and through the use of flash cards, this develops new vocabulary. Children have fun counting and singing number rhymes which enhances their mathematical development, and they have access to treasure baskets to enhance their sensory experiences. A wide range of books are available to children, which they enjoy looking through in their own time. They also attend the local library regularly which provides links with the community, where they choose a book to bring back with them, thus promoting a positive attitude towards reading. Babies enjoy the colours and sounds of a variety of toys which they explore with interest. They receive lots of cuddles from the childminder which increases their sense of well-being. A mirror is available for babies to look at themselves, which develops their self awareness.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's clear understanding of cultural diversity and the importance of raising children's awareness of the wider world. A wide range of experiences, such as celebrating religious festivals and a variety of resources which reflect positive images of race, culture, gender and disability, allow children to appreciate the diverse society in which they live. The childminder demonstrates a good knowledge of issues relating to learning difficulties and disabilities. She ensures she is aware of children's individual needs by liaising closely with parents and recording such information. The childminder is happy to take on children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and understands the importance of adapting activities and the environment to ensure all children feel included.

The childminder adopts effective strategies to promote positive behaviour, all of which are detailed in the behaviour management policy. The childminder has attended training in this area; she uses techniques, such as distraction for younger children and explanations for older children to ensure they have a clear understanding of what is acceptable behaviour. As a result, children are very well behaved. They receive appropriate support and are able to approach the childminder when they feel upset.

The childminder has a very good partnership with parents and children clearly benefit from this secure, trusting three way relationship. Informal chats at the beginning and end of each day, and a daily record book ensures parents are kept fully up to date with the care provided for their children. Parental questionnaires are available for parents to freely comment on the quality of service offered to them by the childminder. Words such as 'exceptional', 'happy' and 'settled' clearly demonstrate their delight with this service. A booklet containing all policies and procedures are provided for parents, keeping them fully informed on the childminder's practice. The childminder also has a procedure in place to appropriately respond to and log any complaints.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder is highly committed to providing a successful service where children are able to learn, develop and flourish. She is conscientious, extremely well organised and has a high regard for the well-being of all children in her care. She demonstrates an extremely positive attitude to improving her practice through gaining qualifications such as NVQ Level 3 in Childcare and Education, as well as attending training courses to improve the quality of care she offers.

The childminder understands the importance of maintaining ratios at all times and looks after a small number of children to ensure all are provided with individual and equal care and attention. Photos of children and their achievements are beautifully displayed around the rooms, which helps them feel a sense of belonging and pride, and areas of play are very well organised to promote children's independence. The childminder works very closely with the local development worker to keep up to date with current events and to monitor and improve her childcare practices.

Documentation is exceptional. The childminder keeps files detailing her understanding of the National Standards and what action she has taken to ensure those standards are met. Clearly written policies and procedures are in place which underpin the care she offers and are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. These are shared with parents and a signature obtained to ensure they have been understood. All documentation is well maintained, detailed, confidential and clearly organised to ensure easy access to relevant information. The childminder takes a proactive approach to children's records through updating them regularly throughout the year. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

During the last inspection the childminder was requested to improve child protection procedures and procedures for administering medication. The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of child protection and has a clear procedure in place for reporting concerns. A record is kept of medication which has been administered, which includes a signature from parents granting permission. Therefore, the childminder has successfully met the recommendations raised during the previous inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider of 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 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):

- continue to develop the implementation of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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