

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	322645
Inspection date	18 February 2008
Inspector	Susan Janet Lee
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 registered in 2001. She lives with her two children aged 12 and 13 in a semi detached bungalow in Leigh. The childminder's mother is an assistant who supports the childminder with the care of the children. The childminder has a childcare qualification.

The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding purposes and an enclosed garden at the rear of the property is available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently caring for five children. She is able to take and collect children from the local primary school and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in well maintained premises. They stay healthy because the childminder exercises good hygiene practices to minimise the risk of cross infection. The children learn

about hygiene practices and personal care routines as they wash their hands and brush their teeth at appropriate times of the day. A poster is displayed in the bathroom reminding the children to wash their hands after using the toilet. The first aid box is well stocked ensuring accidents can be dealt with quickly and effectively.

The children are well nourished and develop an understanding of healthy eating because the childminder provides a menu that is well balanced and wholesome. Snacks include lots of fresh fruit and meals are home cooked and include a variety of dishes and vegetables to aid children's growth and development. The children grow tomatoes and have fun baking fruit scones, pizzas and cake to accompany their meals. Snack time is a relaxed, enjoyable occasion. The children are able to chat with the childminder and eat at their own pace.

Very young children are able to move around freely to practise their large physical skills, such as sitting, stretching and walking. The childminder follows the youngest children's individual sleep and meal routines, providing a secure and familiar environment. They benefit from lots of eye contact and positive interaction during personal care routines, such as nappy changing. The children have lots of opportunities to enjoy and develop their physical skills. They play in the garden, visit a soft play centre and the park and go swimming. All such activities contribute to the children's good health and physical development. The children play in the garden. They are warmly dressed as it is cold outdoors. They learn about their bodies and develop control and coordination as they play on sit and ride toys and tricycles. Photographic documentation shows the children involved in many outdoor play activities. The photographs show the children having fun playing in the snow. They make snowballs, go sledging and look at a spider's web that is covered in frost. They balance on a rope bridge in the park and visit a local farm where they feed the animals.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and homely environment. Children's artwork, photographs and information for parents is displayed, making the environment bright, stimulating and informative for the children and their parents. The children benefit from a dedicated playroom that is well equipped with furniture and resources. There is a good selection of equipment and furniture available allowing babies and older children to play, rest and eat in comfort. The childminder provides an extensive range of resources to meet the needs of the children being cared for. The childminder uses the local library and swaps toys with other childminders, providing variety and enhancing children's play experiences. The childminder checks resources on a regular basis and the children help to clean the toys. All items are of good quality and appear in a safe and clean condition.

The childminder has developed comprehensive risk assessments which are observed at all times. She has a good understanding of the importance of safety. All reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that the environment in which children are cared for is safe and secure. Sleeping children are well protected as the childminder checks them on a regular basis to ensure they are safe and snug. The childminder and the assistant supervise the children well enabling them to extend their play safely and independently. The childminder encourages children's understanding in keeping themselves safe. The children practise the evacuation procedure on a regular basis to help them develop an awareness of what to do in the event of an emergency, such as a fire. The children learn how to cross the road safely and are aware of the boundaries when they visit the park.

The childminder keeps children safe on outings. She completes a risk assessment before the trip takes place and takes a first aid box, a mobile telephone with children's contact details, identity bracelets for the children, drinks and spare clothes to cover any eventuality.

All required documentation is in place and the childminder has a secure understanding of child protection matters and procedures, ensuring that children's welfare is effectively safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder has attended training in relation to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She has a good understanding of the framework and plans and provides a wide range of interesting activities to help the children develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. The children also benefit from activities outside the home as the childminder utilises local amenities, such as the park, farm, museums, swimming pool and parent toddler group. These activities help to widen children's experiences and give them opportunities to socialise with their peers.

The childminder observes the children at play and uses this information to chart children's developmental progress and also to plan activities to meet their individual needs, although, systems regarding planning are still in their early stages. The children have developmental records and memory books which also include examples of their artwork and photographs to illustrate their progress and enjoyment.

The childminder dedicates much time playing with the children and sits at the same level as the children as they play. The childminder shares warm relationships with the children, who are happy, relaxed and secure in her care. She has a good understanding of children's individual needs and meets these needs well.

Babies have access to a wide range of resources that are colourful, tactile and that make noises, helping them to use their senses to explore. They begin to find a voice and begin to listen and respond as the childminder nurtures their attempts to communicate. She listens intently when babies babble and she responds in gentle tones, helping to reinforce early speech patterns.

The children enjoy being creative as they draw and paint pictures. They explore sound when they play with musical instruments. The children make connections as they play with puzzles. They develop their fine manipulative skills and hand eye coordination as they look for similarities and then rotate the pieces to fit into the space. Older children recall their past experiences as they enjoy looking at photographs and talk about a recent visit to the park.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a fully inclusive environment and helps the children to make a positive contribution and to reach their potential. The children learn about their local community through trips out to local amenities. They have access to a wide range of toys that reflect diversity, helping them to develop their understanding of the wider world. The children also celebrate their own and other festivals, such as Chinese New Year, helping them to value each other's similarities and differences and develop respect for other people's cultures and traditions. The childminder demonstrates a positive attitude towards children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The childminder is consistent in her approach to managing children's behaviour, giving the children a clear message. She acts as a positive role model to the children. She is calm and sensitive, uses 'please' and 'thank you' and encourages the children to share, helping them to develop an understanding of what is expected of them. The children receive lots of encouragement and praise and this helps to develop their confidence and self-esteem. The children develop a good sense of belonging. On arrival, they enter with ease and go happily to play. They are able to make decisions as they choose what to play with. The children show care and concern for other living things as they feed the animals at the farm and grow and water their own plants. They share warm relationships with other members of the childminder's family. The children clearly enjoy their time with the childminder and they thrive on her interaction and attention.

The childminder has developed a portfolio which includes written policies and procedures. This is shown and discussed with parents at the initial meeting, helping to forge good working relationships and a shared understanding from an early stage. The childminder encourages a gradual settling in period to help the children feel secure. Effective systems are in place to keep parents fully informed about their children's daily routines and activities. The childminder has developed a questionnaire which parents complete to help her monitor the service she provides. These show that parents are very happy with the service provided, levels of care and activities afforded. Parents also comment that they feel the childminder is kind, thoughtful and they have every confidence in her caring for their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is a committed and enthusiastic childcare practitioner. She has high regard for children's well-being as she attends training to further develop her childcare practices. The childminder has a valid first aid certificate ensuring she has up to date knowledge of what to do in the event of an accident or minor injury.

The record of children's attendance is up to date and shows that ratios are maintained to promote children's care, learning and play. The childminder's assistant is fully aware of her role and she has also attended a variety of training courses. The childminder organises space, time and resources effectively to meet children's needs and to provide good care and support to the children.

The childminder has developed a portfolio that includes written policies and procedures. These work well in practice to positively promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. All required documentation is in place. These are well organised and stored securely to maintain confidentiality.

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 recommendations were agreed in relation to documentation and legislation. The childminder has developed a sick children's policy, ensuring effective measures are in place when children are ill. She has also developed her understanding of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and how this legislation applies to practice.

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 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 systems in relation to planning.

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