

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	322755
Inspection date	07 January 2008
Inspector	Angela Rowley
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 in 1991. She lives with her husband and two adult-aged children in Lowton, Greater Manchester. The ground floor lounge/dining room is used for childminding and the bathroom on the first floor.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. She is currently minding two children under five years during the day and two children over five years before and after school. Additionally, there are a number of children over eight years of age who attend before and after school on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA). She is accredited as having achieved the NCMA's quality assurance award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has developed some clear procedures to ensure that children's health and medical needs are met. Children are protected from illness and infection by adopting suitable hygiene practices along with written procedures, such as the exclusion of children when infectious. The childminder clearly knows about and responds to individual health needs and uses suitable recording methods to safely manage medicines and minor accidents. General first aid knowledge is current; however, the requirements relating to the National Standards are not met because there has been a small gap between the expiry and renewal date of the childminder's prescribed first aid training.

Children's good health is effectively fostered through the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. All children are enabled to explore different tastes when they do food tasting activities and they enjoy eating fruit as snacks. They are able to respond to their own bodies by accessing drinks from their own individually coloured sports bottle, whenever they are thirsty. Children benefit from daily walks into the local community, including visits to soft play provisions and activity groups, such as 'physi-bodies'. Opportunities to encourage physical exercise are extended as they play sports day activities and access some outdoor play at the childminder's home.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children appear 'at home' and operate freely within the childminder's lounge and dining area. This is made stimulating and welcoming through the provision of colourful children's posters, displays of their artwork and photographs, which gives them a sense of belonging. An extensive range of toys, much of which is stored on open shelving, allows children to make independent choices.

Potential hazards within the premises have clearly been identified and minimised, which helps keep children safe. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves safe through a range of books, discussions and sensitive reminders during routine parts of the day. For example, finding a safe place to cross the road on the way to school. They regularly practise emergency evacuations in the childminder's home, although the childminder's current planning of this does not ensure that all children have taken part. Suitable fire prevention equipment is in place, although the fire blanket is not fitted, which hinders its effectiveness in an emergency.

Children's welfare is clearly prioritised. The childminder has a good understanding of her responsibilities and clearly knows what to do in the event of concerns. A comprehensive written policy and reference information is in place, which guides her practice regarding possible indicators of abuse or neglect. She has attended training and provides information to parents regarding her responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy close, nurturing relationships with the childminder, who dedicates her time to playing and talking with them. As a result, she knows them very well and promotes their individual needs and development. The children are settled and happy in the friendly atmosphere

created in her home. The youngest are becoming skilful communicators at an early stage, aided by the close and 'conversation rich' relationships. The childminder is calm and kind in her approach and offers lots of positive praise and physical contact by means of hugs and cuddles.

Children are provided with a good range of age-appropriate activities which enable them to learn new skills, such as sorting shapes and colours. Resources are arranged accessibly, which enables children to make their own choices and develop independence. Children develop creativity as they are given time to explore and experiment with craft items, such as paint. They explore and develop interest in their surroundings when they are provided with activities which stimulate their senses and imagination, for example, the interest boxes. The childminder makes good use of local amenities to widen children's experiences.

Children make very good progress as the childminder is using relevant guidance to help her assess their current level of understanding and introduce age-appropriate activities to extend their interest and their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder knows each child very well and responds quickly to their individual needs and interests. They are secure in her care as they follow consistent routines with which they are very familiar. Children play with a suitable range of toys which help raise their awareness of the wider world. The childminder manages her time well so that children's individual development is promoted and she works very closely with parents in planning to respond to any learning difficulties.

Expectations for children's behaviour are delivered in a clear and positive way and so all children are aware of right and wrong. Their behaviour is good. They are happy, confident and are learning good manners. Children play cooperatively as the childminder models respectful interaction and they know what is expected of them because they make and display the rules of the house. Their self-esteem is good as the childminder offers the children lots of praise in order to encourage positive behaviour along with reward charts as incentives.

Continuity of care for families is good as the childminder has developed secure relationships with parents over an extended period of time and cares for several siblings and extended family members. Daily verbal and written diary exchanges ensure that details regarding children's routines and continually changing needs are known and met. A comprehensive range of written information is provided including a basic framework for policy and practice, contractual agreements and written permissions which facilitate working in partnership.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is enhanced by the childminder's good organisation. They feel at home and at ease in a relaxed home where there is lots of space to play in comfort, with resources being effectively organised to promote their independence. The childminder uses her knowledge and experience well in caring for the children. They benefit from her conscientious approach as she develops ideas through her training and service development, such as by working towards and achieving quality assurance accreditation. A good range of short courses have been attended, which enhances the quality of care children receive, although the childminder has allowed her

prescribed first aid certificate to lapse. Children are suitably supported as their hours of attendance are appropriately organised.

All required documentation is in place. It is appropriately completed and well organised, with confidentiality being respected. Additional records, such as policies and procedures, clearly demonstrate how the childminder aims towards quality practice and manages her provision effectively. The certificate of registration is clearly displayed for parents to see.

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 it was recommended that the childminder extend her medicine records, also considering confidentiality, and improve nappy changing routines.

Both these issues have been suitably addressed. The safe administration of medicines has improved because the childminder now records what is required of her and what medicines she has given, which is checked and signed for by parents. Her new recording system has built-in confidentiality procedures. In relation to nappy changing, the childminder has improved hygiene considerations by providing and using a changing mat and relevant equipment to help prevent the spread of infection.

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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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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):

- improve the arrangements for ensuring that an appropriate first aid qualification is maintained at all times
- further improve fire safety arrangements by fitting the fire blanket in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and by planning the emergency evacuation practices more rigorously.

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