

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	501122
Inspection date	24 October 2007
Inspector	Jane Pamela Berry

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 2000. She lives with her partner and two daughters in the Heywood area of Rochdale.

The family live in an extended semi-detached house, where all areas on the ground floor are used for childminding purposes. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered for six children at any one time. There are currently seven children under eight years on roll, some of whom attend part-time. Two older children also attend the provision.

The children are escorted to a local playgroup, toddler sessions, visits to the library and various Sure Start activities on a regular basis. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children delight in taking part in regular play opportunities in the garden, at the park and during outings to places of interest. They benefit from fresh air as they play robust games in the garden with an extensive range of outdoor toys. Children enjoy learning to climb as they develop physical skills and confidence on the slide and the trampoline.

Children are fully protected from the risk of illness and infection through a clear, written sickness policy. The policy is shown to parents and includes useful information on common childhood illnesses and exclusion times. The childminder promotes good hygiene practices with the children at all times. The children enjoy and understand simple routines, which are made interesting as they learn how to stop germs from spreading. Children's health is further protected through the childminder's clear understanding of their health needs and highly effective procedures. Appropriate and detailed records of accidents are held, however, for some of the children written consent for the childminder to seek emergency medical treatment has not been obtained. This was due to transferring records across and was simply an oversight. Robust medication records are maintained, which help to safeguard the welfare of children.

Effective arrangements for food and drink are made in consultation with parents to meet children's individual requirements. Sample menus are displayed for parents in a file, which show healthy meal and snack options. This is followed up with daily reports showing what children have done and how well they have eaten that day. Children are well hydrated and develop their personal independence as they have ready access to drinks. The childminder encourages children to try new tastes and textures and this meets their dietary requirements very well, for example, plenty of fresh fruit being readily available.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are very happy and secure as they are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. Space is used effectively to plan for varied activities. The main play area is bright and attractive to children, with pictures and posters displayed to promote their learning, and enhance their self-esteem. Children are familiar with the environment and move around with confidence. They make choices as they have independent access to clearly organised toys, which are age-appropriate and well maintained.

Children feel safe in the home as the childminder takes effective measures to minimise most hazards and to prevent accidents. She demonstrates a clear awareness of safety issues and has a written emergency evacuation plan. However, this is not practised regularly enough to ensure all children to know what to do in an emergency situation. The childminder makes routine risk assessments as children develop, which ensures that areas continue to be safe for children of all ages. She is well qualified to administer basic first aid to children if they have an accident.

Children's welfare is safeguarded through the childminder's clear understanding of safeguarding issues. A policy statement is used to inform parents of the procedures and her responsibilities to protect children. The childminder attends appropriate training to ensure that her knowledge is kept up-to-date.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have warm and affectionate relationships with the childminder and are developing well socially as a result of being with her and the other children. They benefit greatly from varied activities, which are interesting and effectively promote their overall development. For example, they count readily, listen to music and dance. They enjoy varied messy activities that allow them to express their ideas, such as painting and sticking leaves.

The children enjoy listening and interact well during stories, recognising familiar characters and objects in books. They are learning the skills of socialisation, their vocabulary is increasing and most importantly they feel loved and valued, as an individual in their own right. This is evident as the children smile and seek her company. The children are well stimulated in their play and are making sound progress with their learning and development. The children use a wide range of materials as they play and explore their environment. Children enjoy baking, for example, they sometimes make jelly and flapjacks under the watchful eye of the childminder.

Children have a good balance of free choice and planned activities, where they benefit from skilful adult interaction. They visit theme parks together and show an interest in nature as they observe wild and domestic animals at a local farm. Children spoken who were spoken to really enjoy being at the childminder's home and talked excitedly about a recent trip to Blackpool and Camelot. They enjoyed it so much they expressed that they want to go back again.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children are familiar with the routines and expectations. They are developing a strong sense of themselves and enjoy taking responsibility for small tasks. For example, they enjoy helping the childminder, collecting items for her on request. The childminder knows the children well and discusses their requirements to ensure that their individual needs are met.

The children benefit from the childminder having a clear awareness of equal opportunities. She helps them to be aware of differences in people and places and fosters positive attitudes to difference. The children learn about the locality when they go out visiting people and places of interest. Children become aware of the wider world as they look at books and talk about other countries. The childminder promotes inclusion and ensures that children have equal access to play materials.

Children respond well to the positive methods used to manage their behaviour. The written policy is clearly implemented in practice. Children understand the simple house rules and high, yet realistic, expectations. They respond by behaving very well. Explanations and reassurances appropriate to their age and level of understanding are given, following any incidents and good behaviour is often rewarded with praise and attention.

The childminder promotes positive working relationships with parents. There is a detailed information file which covers all aspects of childcare practice. Notices and posters are displayed to keep parents well informed of any changes to childminding regulations. Regular discussions and appropriate record keeping ensure that the needs of children are consistently met. However, limited information on how children are developing in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework is accessible for parents and carers. Long term relationships develop and parents commend the quality of care given to their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are very happy and are well cared for in the childminder's home. They clearly benefit from consistent routines which meet their individual needs. Space is well organised and is effectively defined for varied activities. The children are well stimulated and they show high levels of interest in activities. The consistent routines ensure that children always feel secure and settled.

Records and documentation are clearly detailed and are maintained in good order, which contributes to the continuity of care for the children. The childminder demonstrates a clear understanding of her responsibilities and of the childminding regulations. She attends relevant courses to update her knowledge and to promote good quality childcare. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to improve the complaints procedure and ensure an accurate record of children's attendance is maintained. The childminder is aware of what she is required to do in respect of any written complaints received from parents and she has updated her procedures to ensure attendance, and departure times are accurately reflected. These measures have enhanced the safety and quality of care provided.

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):

- ensure parental consent is obtained for emergency medical attention
- practise fire evacuations more frequently to ensure children confidently know what to do in an emergency situation
- develop the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and share this with parents.

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