



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY247961
Inspection date	06 February 2007
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 2003. She lives with her four children aged six, 10, 13 and 16 in a detached property in Leyland, Lancashire.

The lounge, dining room, playroom, kitchen and bathroom on the ground floor are used for childminding purposes. There is a rear garden available for outdoor play. The family have a dog, cat and fish as pets.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently caring for eight children who attend on a variety of placements. She is able to take and collect children from the local primary school and she 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 a well maintained environment. They stay healthy because the childminder exercises good hygiene practices to minimise the risk of cross infection. For example, she follows good standards of hygiene when changing nappies to help protect very young children; she washes her hands before preparing food and uses antibacterial spray to wipe work surfaces. Children learn about personal care routines as they wash their hands at appropriate times of the day. There are effective arrangements in place regarding the care of pets. The first aid box is well stocked ensuring that accidents may be dealt with quickly and effectively.

The childminder has attended food hygiene training. She works in accordance to parent's wishes regarding the provision of food and drink. The children are well nourished and develop an awareness of healthy options as the childminder has a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating. She provides snacks and light meals that are nutritious and include lots of fruit and sandwiches made from brown bread with various fillings; helping to aid children's growth and development. The children are able to quench their thirst independently as drinks are readily accessible to them.

Very young children benefit from routines that are consistent to their home experiences as the childminder follows their individual sleep and meal routines; providing a secure and familiar environment. They also benefit from lots of positive physical contact and interaction during personal care routines such as bottle feeding. Babies are able to move around freely; learn and discover about their bodies and practise their large physical skills such as sitting, crawling and pulling themselves up to the standing position. Babies play with a ball, they roll it along the floor and then crawl to its resting place to retrieve the ball and roll it again. Older children have opportunities to enjoy and develop their physical skills as they play in the garden and visit the park and a soft play centre. They also go to the seaside during school holidays. Photographic documentation shows the children having fun at the park as they play on the slide, rocking horse and in the sand pit. They visit the beach where they run along the sand and use stepping stones to cross a small stream. All of these activities contribute to the children's good health and physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a warm, welcoming and homely environment for the children in her care. There is lots of space available for the children to move around and extend their play. They play in the lounge, dining room and a playroom which is well equipped with furniture and toys. 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 a wide range of resources to meet the needs of the children being cared for. She checks all items on a regular basis and records her findings to minimise risks to children.

The childminder has a good understanding of safety and all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that the environment in which children are cared for is safe and secure. She has devised an escape plan; although, this is not practised with minded children on a very regular basis. The childminder keeps children safe on outings as she takes a first aid box. She has children's contact details on a mobile telephone, spare clothes and drinks to cover any eventuality. She supervises the children well enabling them to play safely and independently. The use of age appropriate distraction and gentle explanation techniques keeps very young children safe. Older children develop an awareness of safety through discussion of the house rules and daily activities, such as the importance of wearing seat belts when travelling in the car.

A child protection procedure is in place and this is discussed with parents at the initial meeting. The childminder has a secure understanding of child protection matters and procedures. As a result, children's welfare is effectively safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder maintains individual children's diaries of experiences that include photographs and observations of the children at play; these record the children's development. The childminder is an enthusiastic and committed practitioner. She uses her initiative well to plan interesting and exciting activities to help the children develop and learn whilst having fun. Written play plans and photographic documentation show the children have access to a range of activities that include painting, baking, exploring colour, magnets and melting ice, shopping, feeding the ducks in the park, clay modelling and role play activities. The children are happily engaged and occupied. They also benefit from activities outside the home as the childminder utilises local amenities such as the library, park and parent toddler group; widening children's experiences and giving them opportunities to socialise with their peers.

The childminder dedicates much time supporting the children in their play and learning. She sits at the same level as the children as they play and interacts with them to extend their language, support early mathematical thinking and to encourage imaginative play. The childminder is spontaneous to the children's interests and she follows their lead in play. She shares warm, close relationships with the children, who are happy and secure in her care.

Babies have access to a range of toys that are colourful, tactile and that make noises to help develop their sensory experiences. They begin to find a voice and listen and respond as the childminder listens to babies babbles and then responds in gentle tones to reinforce early speech patterns. A lovely interaction occurs between the babies and the childminder, this continues for quite a period of time and the babies are clearly excited and happy to be affirmed and acknowledged.

Older children make connections as they press buttons on an interactive toy and it plays music and figures pop up. The children repeat this action time and time again to consolidate the consequences of their actions. They develop representation and remember a recent game of skittles. They line up small figures and roll a soft ball to knock the figures down. The children

develop their fine manipulative skills and hand eye coordination as they build quite complex models using bricks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children develop an awareness of their local community through trips out to local amenities. They have access to a good range of resources that reflect diversity and the childminder uses play activities to open discussion with the children about such topics as disability and other cultures; helping to develop their awareness of the wider world. The children celebrate their own and other festivals and learn about other countries. The children recently helped to plan a theme about Italy; older children used the internet to access information to use in their activities. The children made their own pizzas and tasted other Italian food. They learnt some every day Italian phrases and looked at pictures of famous Italian buildings. Such activities help children value each others similarities and differences and helps them to develop respect for other people's cultures and traditions. The childminder has experience of working with parents to meet children's additional needs.

The childminder acts as a good example to the children. She treats them with care, patience and sensitivity; she is polite and encourages the children to share and take turns. Consequently, the children develop an awareness of what is expected of them and they develop and show care and concern for other children. The children receive praise at every opportunity for their efforts and achievements, helping to develop their confidence and self-esteem. The children develop a good sense of belonging and move around with ease and confidence. They clearly enjoy being in the childminder's company and thrive on her interaction and attention. The children are involved in daily activities and are able to make choices, such as deciding what to play with. The childminder values children's ideas and contributions and they are involved in planning activities.

The childminder has developed a port folio which includes written policies and procedures. This is shown and discussed with parents at the initial meeting and parents are given copies of the policies, helping to forge good working relationships and a shared understanding from an early stage. The childminder shares information with parents on a daily basis to keep them informed about their children's activities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of her responsibility as a registered person to notify Ofsted of significant changes. She 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 records of children's attendance shows that ratios are maintained to positively promote children's care, learning and play. The childminder organises space, time and resources well to effectively meet children's needs.

The childminder has devised written policies and procedures and these work well in practice to promote children's health, safety, welfare, enjoyment and achievement. All required documentation and records are in place; these are well organised for easy reference. The childminder maintains individual children's records to ensure 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 safety and documentation.

The childminder has improved safety as she has taken steps to ensure the premises are secure. Documentation is in place that shows children's achievements, progress and special events. Parents have been made aware of the complaints procedure.

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):

- practise the escape plan with children on a more regular basis.

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