

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY251218
Inspection date	09 August 2007
Inspector	Ann Law
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 2003. She lives with her husband and two children aged five and 12 years in Mossley, near Ashton-under-Lyne. The whole ground floor is used for childminding, with toilet facilities on the first floor, and there is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time. She is currently minding two children under five years during the day and one child over five years in the school holidays. She walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group and takes children to the local park. The family has a pet cat and a rabbit.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean home where adequate facilities are in place for hygiene. For example, children have access to soap and a shared hand towel in the bathroom. The childminder encourages children to learn about good personal hygiene by helping young children to wash

their hands after they have used the potty. All of the required documentation is in place for health, but the childminder has not requested parents' written permission to seek any necessary medical advice or treatment. This compromises the health of children in the event of an emergency.

The childminder implements safe storage and re-heating arrangements for the food that parents provide for young children. Snacks are limited to healthy options which include fresh and dried fruit, and beakers of juice are easily accessible to ensure that children are refreshed as necessary throughout the day. Garden games, including a trampoline and swings, and visits to local parks mean that children have plenty of opportunity to develop their gross motor skills and enjoy physical exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a mostly safe environment where some risk assessments have been carried out by the childminder. These have resulted in some safety measures being in place, including plug socket covers and cupboard locks. However, a chest freezer in the conservatory and a rotary dryer and garden tools in the garden compromise the safety of children. Toys and resources are presented in low baskets and barrels to facilitate safe and independent access by the children.

Minor inconsistencies are present for fire safety. Smoke alarms, a fire blanket and an emergency evacuation plan are all in place, but the evacuation plan has not been practised with the children to ensure that they know what to do in the event of an emergency. The childminder has a basic knowledge of her responsibility to safeguard children. She has attended a training session covering signs and symptoms of abuse and she holds the government guidance for safeguarding children. However, she has no knowledge of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures for recording and reporting any suspected child abuse. This is a breach of regulations.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the care of the childminder. A sufficient range of toys and resources is available for the children to independently choose from, including a train track, cars, dolls and puzzles. This encourages children to make choices and take decisions in their play. Focused activities, such as painting, allow the children to develop their creativity as they explore different techniques using brushes, sponges and their hands to make different effects on the paper. They imaginatively describe the marks they have made on the paper as 'the seaside'.

Outings are undertaken in holidays, for example, to Chester Zoo and Gulliver's World. Older children have written testimonials for the childminder, expressing the fun they had on these trips. The childminder routinely takes children to local parent and toddler groups where the children can develop their social skills interacting with other children. However, due to the childminder's lack of knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, young children have few opportunities to explore and discover natural materials, for example treasure baskets, to develop their senses.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and have their needs well met. For example, children who are potty training receive good levels of support and the potty is easily accessible. Their efforts are encouraged and valued as they gain control of their bodies. The childminder has a limited range of toys and resources which promote positive images of differences and this reduces children's opportunities to learn about the diversity of our society.

Parents are provided with some basic information regarding the childminding service, including a behaviour management statement. In this way, a consistent approach is maintained so that children learn what behaviour is unacceptable, such as snatching toys. Although the childminder has an informal complaints procedure in place, and a system for recording any complaints, the procedure is not shared with parents. Written agreements are in place with the majority of the parents, setting out the expectations of both parties as to the care of the child. However, these are not in place for all children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are weaknesses in the childminder's knowledge of the requirements of the National Standards. As a result, systems to ensure that Ofsted are notified of any significant event are not in place. The childminder did not inform Ofsted of the building of a conservatory and this is a breach of regulations. However, the childminder ensured that the building work, which took place mainly outside the home, did not pose a risk to children's safety and while the garden was unsafe for use they used the local parks for outdoor play. The majority of the required documentation is in place, the exception being related to health, but it is not fully completed for all children.

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 the childminder was asked to: improve ventilation in the home; ensure children have access to books and mark-making materials; and develop a range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity. The childminder has purchased an air conditioning unit so that she can keep the doors locked for security but maintain a comfortable temperature in the home during hot weather.

Children have free access to a range of cardboard books, and paper books and mark-making materials are now available under supervision from the childminder. This has increased their opportunities to enjoy storybooks and draw pictures. The childminder has downloaded some colouring sheets depicting children with disabilities and American Indian braves, but the range of resources to introduce children to the diversity of our society remains limited. This continues to be an area of improvement from this inspection.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- request written parental permission, at the time of placement, for the seeking of any necessary medical advice or treatment in the future
- assess the risks to children from the chest freezer in the conservatory, and the rotary clothes dryer and garden tools in the garden and make them safe or inaccessible
- develop knowledge of child protection procedures in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines
- plan and provide activities to help children's development in line with the aspects and approach described in the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- share the complaints procedure with parents
- increase the range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity
- ensure that significant events, namely an extension to the home, are notified to Ofsted at the earliest opportunity.

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