

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY260885
Inspection date	12 December 2007
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 has been registered since 2003. She lives with her husband and two children aged two and five years, in Goose Green, Wigan. They live in a semi-detached house with a fully enclosed rear garden. All ground floor areas of the house are used for childminding purposes along with the bathroom on the first floor.

The childminder may care for a maximum of four children at any one time. At present she is caring for three children under five years on different days across the week and also one school aged child who attends on a part time basis.

The childminder attends local groups with children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's good health is effectively fostered through the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Mostly healthy foods are provided and children are encouraged to eat fruit as snacks. They are able to respond to their own bodies by accessing drinks from an individually coloured sports bottle when they are thirsty. Children benefit from walks within the local community and enjoy some outdoor play in the garden. They also benefit from physical exercise during the different play sessions they visit each week, including, 'physi-bodies', a dancing class and a music and movement group.

The childminder adopts clear procedures to ensure that children's health and medical needs are met. Children are protected from illness and infection through a clear sick child policy and suitable hygiene practices. She clearly knows about and responds to individual health needs and encourages children to become aware of personal hygiene by reminding them to wash or wipe their hands at key times. Continuity of care for young children is sufficiently promoted as the childminder verbally discusses information about feeding and sleeping routines each day, although the detailed daily diaries do not go home until the end of each week.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play freely within the ground floor of the childminder's home. This is made welcoming through the provision of soft furnishings and a good range of toys many of which are stored in the toy chest and enables children to make independent choices. They spread out their play driving their toy cars from one room to another and moving around the house, in role, during dressing up activities. They are effectively cared for when eating and sleeping using a range of children's equipment which promotes their development.

Potential hazards within the premises have been identified and minimized. Additionally the childminder continually assesses and records newly identified risks and any action to be taken to keep children safe. Consequently all children are able to move around the home with a level of independence. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves safe by offering clear explanations of the possible consequences of the actions, when for example, they attempt to climb on furniture. Their awareness of fire safety is increased when they take part in testing the smoke alarms, discuss what to do when it sounds and remember the visit from the fire officer and his engine when they came to do a risk assessment.

Children's welfare is clearly prioritised. The childminder has a clear understanding of her responsibilities and knows what to do in the event of concerns. She has accessed training which has updated her awareness of local procedures and includes information about her responsibilities in her prospectus for parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy good relationships with the childminder who dedicates her time playing and talking with them. They are settled and happy in the friendly atmosphere created in her home.

She is calm and kind in her approach and offers lots of positive physical contact by means of hugs and cuddles.

Children are provided with a wide range of play opportunities through which they learn new skills, such as discussing the colours of the cars, exploring paints and 'make and do' sessions. Resources are arranged accessibly which enables the children to make their own choices and develop independence. The childminder makes good use of local amenities to widen children's experiences, such as visiting the local library for a music session where they are also able to socialise with other children.

Children make good progress as the childminder informally assesses their current level of understanding so that she knows what they can do and what they are working towards. She has accessed training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and is developing her understanding of how to use it to plan experiences using her observations to further enhance children's development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder knows each child very well and responds quickly to their individual needs. They are secure in her care as they follow their own routines with which they are familiar. Some basic resources are available which help raise children's awareness of the wider world and the childminder has introduced some practical activities to help children be aware of diversity. The childminder understands that some children may have learning difficulties and or disabilities and she manages her time well so that all children's individual development can be fully promoted. She works very closely with parents in identifying and planning for additional needs.

Expectations for children's behaviour are stated in a gentle and positive way and so all children quickly acquire confidence. Their behaviour is generally good. They are happy, confident and are learning good manners. The childminder offers the children lots of praise in order to encourage positive behaviour.

The childminder has developed secure relationships with parents. Daily verbal exchanges ensure that details regarding children's day are shared and a detailed daily diary is kept for each child which goes home at the end of each week. A good range of written information including a framework for policy and practise, contractual agreements and written permissions all facilitate working in partnership, although the way that the childminder would deal with parental complaints is not in line with current regulations.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is enhanced by suitable organisation. They feel at home and at ease in the relaxed environment. There is space to play in comfort with free access to toys. This encourages them to make their own choices about their play and learning.

The childminder is committed to improving her knowledge and skills so that she can improve the quality of care she provides for the children and she has accessed a good number of short training courses. She has however, overlooked the introduction of new requirements in relation to complaints procedures, the lack of which is a breach of regulation, although she has had no written complaints to respond to.

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

Following the last inspection it was recommended that the childminder conduct risk assessments to enable her to identify and respond to hazards, and to increase her knowledge and understanding of meeting the needs of children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The childminder has effectively responded to both recommendations. Children's safety is continually assessed because she has implemented appropriate procedures to identify and respond to hazards. She has accessed training and sought information which enables her to respond effectively to disabilities. As a result of the childminder's attention to both recommendations, the quality of care in these areas has been improved.

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

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):

- improve strategies used to promote a healthy child by, for example, reviewing the way that information about feeding and sleeping is shared in the diaries
- further develop the use of observations and evaluations of what children can do to plan play and activities which help children take the next natural steps in their learning and development
- increase knowledge and understanding of the requirements in relation to dealing with parental complaints.

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