

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY264694
Inspection date	25 May 2007
Inspector	Joan, Patricia Flowers
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 2003. She lives with her husband and three young children aged three years, four years and six years. The family home is located in Lancaster. The local area offers parks, play areas, toddler groups and playgroups, and childminder support groups.

Facilities for childminding within the family home comprise of the whole of the premises including downstairs, the lounge, playroom, dining kitchen and toilet; also the upstairs bedrooms and family bathroom. There is a garden to the side and rear of the house. There are three children on roll, one aged 23 months and two aged three years, all of whom attend on a part time basis.

The childminder is a qualified teacher and has worked in various childcare settings with children aged from birth to 14 years. Advice, support and training are sought from the local authority Sure Start development team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a spacious, very clean and well maintained environment. They benefit from the good hygiene practice that the childminder employs and are positively encouraged to learn about the importance of hand washing and other good personal hygiene habits. Children are well protected from the risk of infection because the childminder has a clear sickness policy and takes effective practical steps if they become ill in her care.

Children's dietary needs are well met and they enjoy a range of nutritious snacks and meals. This is because the childminder follows the principles of healthy eating and also works in close consultation with parents to establish meal plans that meet the individual needs of each child. In this way children have the energy to grow and develop and to take full advantage of the play and learning opportunities they are offered.

Children benefit from outdoor exercise as part of their daily routine because the childminder understands well that exercise plays an important part in a child's development. Children enjoy a good range of physically challenging opportunities both inside and outside the home. They can be active or quiet and they can rest and sleep according to their individual needs, thus ensuring their good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children can comfortably help themselves from an extensive range of early learning toys and equipment, which the childminder regularly checks to ensure they are safe for children to use. Children play in a very family oriented and secure home. They explore their surroundings safely and with confidence because the childminder takes good practical safety precautions and supervises children very well. Children benefit from learning about road safety from an early age. Outings are planned with care in order to minimise risks to children and the good safety practice of the childminder helps ensure their safety when out and about. The emergency evacuation procedure, whilst having been devised, has not been practised with minded children. This thereby limits children's understanding of this important safety drill.

The overall welfare and protection of children is positively promoted. The childminder has a thorough understanding of child protection issues and has up-to-date procedures to follow if she had any concerns about a child in her care. These are shared with parents from the outset. Attendance at specific training events has enhanced the childminder's knowledge effectively in both child protection matters and also in first aid. Children's safety as a result is promoted well.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy an inspiring and challenging range of early learning experiences both in the home and when visiting the toddler group, music group, the library and trips on the train. Because the childminder has an excellent approach to planning daily activities for the children who attend, their all round development is fostered extremely effectively. The wide range of stimulating activities and resources enthuse and interest children so they make rapid progress

in their development. Children are actively encouraged to make choices. They enjoy activities like playing outside in the rain and selecting dressing up clothes according to size, as they dress the dolls and themselves and compare different sizes. Children's social skills are encouraged as they become increasingly confident in small groups, such as at music sessions. They also have opportunities to learn about making friends when they visit other local childminders and their minded children, hence their confidence and all-round development is fostered well.

Children are happy, confident and extremely well settled. They benefit from the warm and motivated approach of the childminder and respond well to her because she uses superb communication and listening skills and participates in their play and learning in a sensitive and supportive way. Children's interests are built upon very effectively because the childminder gets to know the children well so allowing her to support and extend their learning opportunities. She exploits to the full situations as they arise according to where children's interests lie. One child, for example, was interested in the battery operated toy drill. This was developed further by suggesting they should check that the radiators valves were not leaking. This sort of play supports children's early understanding and learning about technology and helps them to make links through practical and meaningful activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children receive lots of affectionate praise and their contributions are valued so their feelings of self-worth are promoted. For example, they willingly help to tidy up before going outside and are well accustomed to the daily routines thus enabling them to feel secure and happy with their childminder. Children are confident about expressing their feelings and are encouraged to show care and respect for others when they socialise at groups or interact together with the childminder's own children.

They have opportunities to learn about the wider world and use a range of resources that depict diversity thereby helping them to appreciate other people's differences and similarities, including disability.

The childminder treats children with respect and provides a good role model for them to emulate as they learn and develop their social skills and good manners. Children's progress is monitored and shared with parents regularly in discussions at the beginning and end of each day. Children's individual needs are well met by the childminder who liaises closely with parents allowing her to deliver her organised daily routines according to individual children's needs. Hence children feel secure. Information gathered about each child is comprehensive because the childminder actively encourages parents to share as much information as possible at the start of the placement. Children settle quickly as a result.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Documentation and records are very well maintained and regularly updated to ensure children's all round care needs are always a priority. Written information held about each child is wide ranging and is shared with parents. The well thought out, clearly written policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the safety, welfare and development of children. These include an equal opportunities policy, behaviour management statement, emergency evacuation procedure and child protection policy.

Children are cared for in a very warm and welcoming environment. Space is appropriately organised, providing a comfortable and welcoming family environment for the number of children the childminder is registered to care for. The childminder is pro-active in improving the service she offers by attending childcare related courses to further her knowledge and skills she has as a qualified teacher. As a result, children's ongoing care needs and development are enhanced.

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 agreed to consider two recommendations that were made to improve her childcare service. These were both in relation to written policy statements.

During the intervening period the childminder has amended her behaviour management policy to include reference to recording any incidents that may occur. Also, the child protection policy now includes details of the procedures that would be followed in the event of an allegation being made against the childminder.

As a result of these changes, partnerships with parents have been improved and children's care better addressed through adherence to the requirements of the 'National standards for under 8s day care and childminding'.

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 devised emergency evacuation procedure with minded children.

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