

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY269230
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Inspector	Glynis Margaret Kite

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 October 2003. She lives with her husband and two children, aged nine and 12 years. They live near to the centre of St Helens, Merseyside. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding purposes. There is a fully enclosed, paved rear yard available for outside play. There may be a maximum of four minded children on the premises at any one time.

There are currently four children on roll. Children attend full or part time sessions.

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 stay healthy because the childminder implements good health and hygiene procedures. She sets high standards with regard to hygiene and cleanliness and the children are learning from her example. The premises are kept clean and children's toys and equipment are routinely

cleaned to help prevent cross contamination. Children are also protected from the spread of infection because the childminder provides children with their own equipment for washing, such as face cloths, flannels and liquid soap. Children are also becoming increasingly independent through the support given to them by the childminder. She also implements an exclusion policy for sick children.

All children engage in physical activity on a daily basis, such as walking to and from school, playing in the garden or going to local toddler groups and soft play areas. Children develop a variety of skills as they play with wheeled toys, climb, dig in soil and create. Quiet times in the day enable children to rest and sleep as required, children know when they are tired and ask for their pram.

Children benefit from the childminder's understanding of providing a healthy, nutritious diet. She has attended some short courses with a focus on healthy eating and as a result children are benefiting from the knowledge gained. For example, children are now more involved in making choices about the food they eat, they help to select and prepare food for snacks and meals, such as picnics in the garden. Children enjoy a wider variety of foods including some from other cultures. Children enjoy visits to local restaurants where they can sample various foods and enjoy the social aspect of eating out. Children benefit from home cooked meals as the childminder is more aware of the sugar and salt content in processed foods. Children help the childminder to shop for food, for meals and snacks and this encourages children to try new foods. The childminder shares lots of information with parents about the type of food their children have tried and enjoyed, this contributes to consistency of care for the children. Children are becoming independent as they are encouraged to feed themselves at meal and snack times. Positive relationships are established as children sit together for meals and snacks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a homely environment where potential hazards are identified and minimised, allowing children to move around safely and play independently. For example, appropriate safety equipment is used and written procedures are in place for the safe evacuation of children, in the event of an emergency situation occurring. The childminder is vigilant regarding children's safety indoors and has put safety measures in place for outings, such as taking details of the parents contact numbers, children also wear a wrist strap with the childminder's contact number in the event of a child becoming lost.

Children's learning and play is encouraged through the provision of good quality, safe and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment. Children access these freely thus developing independence. Children are beginning to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe as they attend health and safety courses, aimed at young children, with the childminder and help to tidy up toys to prevent accidental injuries.

Children are safeguarded from harm because the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and procedures. She ensures parents understand her role and provides them with a copy of her written statement. The relevant contact details for other agencies are readily available.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled with the childminder. They are becoming increasingly confident because they receive praise and encouragement from the childminder. Children freely explore the environment and access toys and equipment of their choice. Children also benefit from routine activities within the wider community where they mix with their peers, extend their learning and play in different environments, such as toddler groups. All children benefit from the close links that the childminder has established with the local school. They share ideas and children have access to a small garden area within the school grounds where they can dig and plant things to grow.

All children enjoy creative activities and are provided with a wide range of materials which enable children to express themselves in a variety of ways, such as painting, constructing and dressing up. The childminder supports language and mathematical development through the wide range of activities available and daily routines, such as stories, singing, number rhymes and sorting and matching.

Children are learning about sharing and taking turns as they participate in small group activities, share the toys and receive support from the childminder. The childminder has a flexible approach and provides toys and activities based on the children's interest and their stage of development. Older children are involved in planning and selecting activities of interest to them. The childminder has a good understanding of the developmental needs of the children in her care and as a result, children benefit from appropriate levels of support, care and attention given.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The individual needs of children are met well. The childminder provides a booklet that parents and children can complete giving information about likes and dislikes, health needs and routines. A programme of gradual visits enables parents and children to meet the childminder and her family and become familiar with the surroundings. Children benefit from these visits and settle quickly. All children are treated equally and with respect and are building positive relationships through the support of the childminder. Children are learning about diversity through activities within the childminder's home and some within the local community, such as the regular visits to the local school and toddler group. Children also benefit from a range of resources which promote positive images and help to raise awareness of others' differences and similarities, for example, dressing up clothes.

Children benefit from the close working relationship that the childminder has established with their parents. They regularly exchange information, both in writing and verbally. Parents are provided with the childminder's policy pack which clearly states what they can expect from the childminder and how she operates. Children's behaviour is managed effectively by the childminder, she allows and encourages children to express their feelings in a safe and secure environment. Strategies are based on the age of children and their level of understanding, for example, distraction may be used for younger children. The childminder sets clear boundaries and is consistent in her approach, therefore, children learn the rules and respond appropriately. Children behave well.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a suitably qualified and experienced childminder. She knows and understands the procedures required to keep children safe while in her care, such as making sure children are supervised at all times and never left alone in the presence of adults who may not have been vetted.

The space is organised well to ensure children can play in comfort and access toys and equipment easily. As a result children are becoming more independent and confident because they can make choices and decisions about their play.

Most of the required records and documentation is in place and supports the childminder in providing appropriate care, learning and play opportunities for children, although some children's records lack consistency. The childminder has failed to maintain a valid first aid certificate and is therefore in breach of the National Standards. Confidentiality is maintained well. All records and documentation is readily available for inspection.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has provided more resources that reflect positive images and updated the information contained in her 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 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):

- complete a first aid course which includes training in first aid for infants and young children, and which is consistent with any guidance issued to local authorities by the secretary of state

- further develop practice, for example, by ensuring children's records are consistent with regard to information held in them and current policies and procedures provide clear information for 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