

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY281981
Inspection date	07 December 2007
Inspector	Ann Bamford
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 2004. She offers care from her home in the Marshouse area of Darwen. It is close to the town centre and local parks. The childminder lives with her husband and two children.

Children have use of the whole of the ground floor of the property, the first floor bathroom and one bedroom. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

Care is available from 07.30 until 18.00 each week day with the exception of bank holidays. Annual leave arrangements are made with parents on an individual basis. At the time of the inspection there were seven children on roll; each of whom attends on a part time basis

The childminder attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy as a result of the childminder's attendance at hygiene training and her use of the knowledge gained from this when caring for children. The childminder uses information given by parents about their child's health needs in order to meet children's individual needs. Children are developing skills in managing their own hygiene routines as the childminder encourages them to use the toilet and carry out routines, such as hand washing with increasing independence. Children have regular opportunities to develop their physical skills as they walk to the park as well as having time to play outdoors each day.

Children's continued good health is usually maintained as the childminder has clear policies for issues, such as children's sickness and emergency treatment. However, the policy for administration of medication is not fully clear and this impedes the complete maintenance of children's good health.

The childminder involves children in the planning, preparing and selection of food. As a result of this, children are developing an awareness of how to eat in a way that keeps their bodies healthy. Older children can understand why, for example, they need to eat fruit and vegetables. They can describe how food, such as apples or milk are good for their bodies. The childminder cooks food, such as homemade lunches to ensure that children eat a well balanced diet. In addition, she works in partnership with parents to provide food which is agreed, for example, when weaning a baby.

Children's good health is maintained as the childminder plans her day very effectively to take account of each individual child's sleep patterns. This ensures that children have times in the day to rest their bodies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming and secure home. The well ordered environment is planned effectively to care for small children. Children have access to a range of activities which promote their development. The childminder's attention to the continued safety of the home encourages children to close doors behind them or walk carefully into the playroom. The childminder has begun to make use of risk assessments in order to improve children's safety. However, very young children are at risk from the marble fireplace in the lounge which has not been fully risk assessed.

The childminder has a range of safety equipment which she has begun to use in order to encourage children to recognise risks. However, the presence of items, such as balloons impedes the complete safety of babies as older children are not aware of the risks to babies' safety when they put them toward the babies' mouths.

The involvement of children in taking action, such as tidying up before another activity is set out, ensures that children develop an excellent sense of what they can do to keep themselves and others safe. Children learn about playing safely as they discuss why they do not run about near the fish tank.

Children are developing awareness of reducing risks to their safety when they are out and about as a result of the childminder's clear written risk assessments of regular outings. Her involvement of children when using safety equipment, such as reins or car seats enhances children's awareness of their own safety. Her skilled discussions with children foster their understanding of the risks, for example, when walking to the park. Children are confident to talk about how they can keep themselves safe on outings, for example, older children understand why they need to sit safely in car seats.

The childminder has a very clear understanding of her responsibilities in protecting children. Her confidence to act in the event of a concern relating to safeguarding a child ensures that children are completely safe in her care. Her discussions with children about how safe adults behave, increase their awareness of keeping themselves safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are purposefully engaged in activities during their time spent in the setting. The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of child development. She makes effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan activities which develop individual children's skills and enjoyment. She creatively plans activities with all children's individual needs in mind, such as manipulative play which allows children of all ages to be involved.

The childminder makes good observations about what children can already do. She is starting to use these observations to plan activities. She uses the local toy library service in an effective way to enhance children's learning, for example, borrowing a first stage computer to enhance the child's development of technology skills. She plays alongside children offering them additional information, such as how to operate the keys properly. Her imagination transmits to the children as they clearly enjoy the game they are playing. Children are developing the ability to communicate effectively as the childminder consistently encourages them to be aware of the likes and needs of others. Older children share toys readily with younger children.

The childminder has a creative approach to what children do whilst in her care. She imaginatively encourages children to develop self-help skills through taking part in aspects of life in the home. Children become competent learners and skilful communicators as they tidy away, or play imaginative games with technological instruments. The enjoyment that children experience when engaging with these tasks gives them a thirst for learning and an enjoyment of developing self-help skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children experience a sense of belonging as the childminder has a designated play space for their use. They have their own space to put their belongings. Their feeling of value is enhanced through the bright displays of their art work and child friendly photographs and pictures. Children are developing a strong awareness of the wider world as they play with toys and equipment which reflects the diversity of our society. Children are learning very effectively about difference as the childminder plans work for disability awareness and festivals, such as Eid, Diwali, Chinese New Year or saying 'hello' in different languages.

Children are developing responsible and considerate behaviour as a result of the childminder's skilful encouragement of children to consider other's needs. Children of mixed ages play

harmoniously together as a result of the childminder's planning of play resources and equipment. She regularly reminds older children to share. Children are polite and behave very well as a result of the specific praise they receive from the childminder for sharing their toys and time.

The childminder has good experience of meeting children's individual needs. She is confident when gathering information in order to assess how she offers care. The use of a childminder/parent diary allows parents and the childminder to work together to plan care before a child is left in the setting. She works effectively with parents to provide care which follows the individual child's routine. This enhances children's experience of consistent care. The childminder provides feedback to parents in a variety of different ways according to the differing needs of parents. This enhances effective communication. However, some of the childminder's agreements for areas of care, such as outings are not signed by parents and this impedes the clarity of parents knowing how their child is cared for.

The childminder has a complaints procedure and information for parents who may wish to make a complaint. She has a procedure for sharing information with parents on request.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her home and her time effectively to provide care for small children. She takes steps to ensure that adults who are in the home are suitable to be around young children. She makes effective use of her original training to care for children and attends further training. She makes use of records to support safe care as all records are current and easily available for inspection. She makes effective use of record forms to record accidents and incidents; copies of which are then given to parents.

Children are developing an awareness of the need to be organised as the childminder discusses and involves them in the planning of time. They can predict when activities, such as snack time or trips out to the shop are likely to occur, through the childminder's use of routines and gentle reminders.

The childminder's commitment to providing a good service means that she is beginning to assess where her strengths and weaknesses are and enters discussions about how to develop her practice accordingly. She has a commitment to providing good quality care and limits the number of children that she cares for at any one time to ensure the quality of care remains consistent.

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 required to complete training in first aid that was appropriate for young children. Since that time the childminder has undertaken this training and has recently attended further training to ensure that her knowledge remains current. In addition, the childminder was recommended to: devise and implement a policy regarding children who were sick; complete the register of attendance fully; increase knowledge and understanding of protecting children; increase the opportunities for children to have positive images of difference; develop an emergency escape plan; and make parents aware of the role of Ofsted with regard to complaints.

Since that time the childminder has produced a clear policy and procedure for parents to use when children are unwell. She has attended further training in protecting children and has devised a new policy as a result of this. She has increased the number of toys and books which present positive images and made them fully available to children. In addition, the childminder has devised and implemented an emergency escape plan. She has updated the complaints policy to reflect the role of Ofsted and has ensured that children's times of arrival and departure are recorded accurately and with consistency. Each of these actions has improved the quality of safe care for children.

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):

- review the policy on administration of medication to ensure it is clear to parents
- review parental consent for aspects of care, such as photographs taken on outings to ensure consistency
- review the risk assessment for the living room fire surround to ensure that it is consistently safe for all children
- review the provision of toys and equipment used for children to ensure that it is safe for all ages of children present

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