

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY291241
Inspection date	04 January 2008
Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten
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 was registered in August 2004. She lives with her husband and two children, aged four years and 11 months respectively, in the Thelwall area of Warrington. The whole of the house is used for childminding, except the main bedroom, and there is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play.

There are currently four children on roll, all of whom attend on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends local parent and toddler groups and places of interest on a regular basis. The childminder has experience as a nursery nurse and has completed the National Vocational Qualification in Child Care and Education to levels two and three.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is good because the childminder is proactive about providing advice and support to children so that they can learn to live healthily. This includes regularly talking to

pre-school children about healthy eating and plenty of fresh air and exercise. For example, the childminder ensures that children know why they must wash their hands thoroughly with warm water and soap after cooking activities, outdoor play and using the toilet. Children also learn to wash their hands before eating meals and they know about wearing appropriate clothes for playing outside in the cold. Children are fully involved in preparing all activities, for example, by cleaning and drying the outdoor swings before using them. They also love to take part in baking and food preparation activities. All the while they are encouraged to enjoy and talk about health and hygiene so that their understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle is good.

Children are well protected from becoming ill through good sickness policies and procedures to ensure this. The childminder keeps an extremely clean home and minimises cross infection by using a dishwasher, individual covered drinking cups, clean bedding, towels and employing hygienic nappy changing procedures. First aid supplies are ready to use and the childminder has a paediatric first aid qualification. She keeps written parental consent for emergency medical treatment and for all medications given. Daily fresh air and exercise are offered in all weathers, including walking to school, playing in the garden and regularly feeding the horses and ducks. Balancing this are quiet story times and sleeps, so that children are relaxed, have suitable amounts of rest and their emotional health is promoted well.

Children enjoy a healthy balanced diet with plenty of fruit, vegetables, protein and carbohydrate. Food is usually home made and children talk about the importance of eating at least five portions of fruit and vegetables each day. They drink water or weak juice throughout the day from individual cups in the playroom, which they can take wherever they are playing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe and secure both indoors and outdoors because the childminder places importance upon this area of her responsibilities and has written a health and safety policy. She is committed to teaching children how to keep themselves safe, for example, by not touching the oven or baking trays while the cookies are cooking because it is very hot. The home is all made safe for children through use of safety gates, locked exits, socket covers, cupboard locks where dangerous substances are stored and fire detection equipment. Small items are kept out of reach of babies and outdoor play equipment is carefully set up with gates to the play house, baby swings and a fully guarded trampoline. There are also written parental consents for being transported in a car and height appropriate car seats and boosters are used.

Children enjoy a welcoming, warm environment with ample floor and table top play space in the playroom, lounge, kitchen/diner and conservatory. They use a stimulating range of suitable and safe equipment and toys which are checked for safety and stored in cupboards and in storage boxes in the playroom or children's bedrooms, so that children can be involved in selecting, setting up and putting away activities themselves. Children are safe in an emergency because contingency plans are thorough. Emergency escape plans, back up plans and lost and uncollected child policies are written in detail. The children already know the adults who would care for them in the event of an emergency, and children's details and a first aid kit are carried by the childminder wherever they go. However, the emergency escape plan is not being practised regularly for all children to know what to do if an emergency occurred.

Children are well protected from abuse because the childminder is confident that she is able to put appropriate child protection procedures into practice if necessary. She has a child

protection policy which is communicated to parents and keeps up to date child protection information to hand. She also knows what to do if an allegation of abuse were to be made against her. Children are safe out walking or in the car because the childminder talks to them constantly about waiting and looking before crossing roads and staying close to her.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy and secure and are making very positive relationships because the childminder is welcoming, enthusiastic and well-prepared. She provides a wealth of activities and experiences for children, including baking, regular trips to places of interest and the locality, crafts, construction, role play, physical play and small world play. She actively encourages children to share and cooperate together and makes learning through play a fun experience as she jokes, praises, questions and joins in with everything that is offered. For example, she introduces the minded children to the inspector deliberately using the wrong names, so that they tell me their correct names to put her right. Equally, children love to make dens under the kitchen table, open a tea shop or clean the windows in the outdoor play house, play a matching lotto game and enjoy carefully colouring pictures of birds and animals.

The childminder has developed an excellent understanding of how children learn through attending courses, private study and experience. She talks to them constantly about what is happening now and next as well as making time for children to review and consolidate their learning from experiences and play that they have already enjoyed. For example, pre-school children talk about number, letter and the weather as they complete a daily weather chart. Similarly, they practise their letters and numbers and learn about how the local shops and mail system work as they write and receive letters from a relative in Australia and buy essentials from the food store and chemist. In this way, the childminder successfully combines indoor play with real life experiences, social opportunities and outdoor play so that children quickly become independent and confident learners.

The childminder understands the six areas of learning and the 'Birth to three matters' framework for pre-school children and keeps simple records of their progress using pieces of art and craft work, photos and quizzes that children have completed. She also knows what each child needs to learn next in order to take the next steps in their development. She creates a calm homely atmosphere and spends all her time with the children, reading, entering into their games and giving them time to discuss and do things for themselves as much as possible. She reads to them, explains things simply and joins in with their role plays enthusiastically. The childminder also makes sure that she knows what individual children are learning about in all the venues they attend and supports the continuation of this through providing relevant, but different activities. As a result, children are developing a thirst for understanding how things work and a very good sense of time, culture and community.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children in the setting have developed a strong sense of belonging and feel extremely secure because the childminder creates a home from home atmosphere where each child's individual needs are carefully considered. Having fun is high on the agenda, but so are good manners and respect for each other's feelings and possessions and the childminder's home and its contents. Children have equal opportunities to access all toys without any gender bias and positive images

of disability and various cultures are put across through discussion, books, crafts, toys and appropriate television programmes. As a result, children care about each other and their play environment and do not touch the ornaments or stand on the furniture. Instead, they enjoy the attention, praise and encouragement that they get when they play and cooperate well together, for example, pushing the baby in the baby swing.

Children receive good support to behave well because the childminder is clear, vigilant, good humoured and consistent in her approach. Documentation is also available to support consistency of behaviour management through use of the childminder's own behaviour incident record which is linked to her behaviour policy. This has not been needed thus far, but it can be used as a tool to support working together with parents to manage any behaviour issues that children might have.

Children's needs are met well because partnership with parents is successful. The childminder is open and communicative with parents and spends time giving and receiving effective feedback from them. A full set of policies and consents are made available to parents to give them detail about the quality of the service and how children will be cared for under the National Standards. Parents say that the childminder provides 'wonderful care and support' and that their children 'love attending'.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of all children and is building upon her child care knowledge and experience over time. She has completed relevant training courses and makes well organised, ongoing plans for improvement. For example, she has planned lists of play activities and experiences to cover each of the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and she has kept materials and ideas for incorporating healthy living and equal opportunities themes into children's play. In addition, daily routines, menus and a wealth of ideas about local amenities also ensure that every day is well used to provide stimulation and variety within a safe structured day. These ideas are well organised and indicate the childminder's commitment to deliver learning experiences which promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and ability to make a positive contribution.

The childminder's policies and procedures work generally very well in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. There are clear and relevant policies on all aspects of the National Standards and the daily register is always accurate and up to date so that it could be relied upon in an emergency. All records of medication and accidents are organised and accessible, but the childminder has omitted to obtain parental signatures of acknowledgement in every case. The complaint policy is clear, the certificate of registration is displayed and parents know how to contact Ofsted.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were three recommendations made at the last inspection in 2005. Two recommendations related to liaison with parents to make sure that their permission is gained for any necessary emergency medical treatment and to ensure that they understand the arrangements for behaviour management in the setting. The childminder has produced clear policies about both of these aspects which are signed by parents so that it is clear that they understand the

childminder's approach and responsibilities. The third recommendation was to make the glass in one of the internal doors safe. The door has been replaced with a part glazed door where the glass is safety glass and is above the height of the door handle. The childminder's actions have improved children's safety and welfare with parent's approval.

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

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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):

- ensure that parents sign to acknowledge every entry in the administration of medication and accident records
- document and regularly practise emergency evacuations.

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