



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY310144
Inspection date	28 June 2006
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 2005. She lives alone in a house in a residential part of Nantwich. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, along with the bathroom and one bedroom upstairs for sleeps. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks or drives to nearby schools, pre-schools and other facilities, to take and collect children. She also attends local toddler groups and takes children to places of interest. She has child care and nursery nursing qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's physical health is good because the childminder efficiently follows environmental health and hygiene procedures and utilises her experience as a nanny and nursery nurse. She keeps all play spaces and surfaces extremely clean and tidy and minimises cross infection by using different coloured cloths for cleaning sinks, toilets and for wiping activity tables. For example, she thoroughly cleans the craft table down with anti-bacterial spray before starting the chocolate spiders cooking activity and ensures that children have washed their hands and put on aprons. During the activity she is vigilant to change the stirring spoon if one of the children has licked it as they are stirring their cake mixture.

Children are increasingly independent in taking care of their own general health because the childminder teaches them to be aware of their bodies and how to look after them. For example, children use sun cream when the summer sun is hot and take their drinks outside so that they do not dehydrate. They also enjoy lots of fresh air and exercise and go outside each day. They regularly go to local garden centres or parks, use the grass area opposite the house, or play in the garden, using a wide variety of equipment which helps them to develop strong and healthy bodies.

Children are protected from becoming ill because the childminder has devised good policies, consents and records to ensure this and children do not attend if they are ill. There are good accident, medicine and sickness policies and the recording systems for these are accurate and up to date. First aid supplies are also ready to use and taken wherever they go. The childminder also has a good working knowledge of childhood illnesses and retains some written information for parents to refer to. However, she has omitted to obtain written parent consent for any emergency treatment, should this be needed. This compromises children's health in an emergency.

Children have a balanced diet and learn about healthy eating because the childminder talks about this and encourages children to eat good food. She talks to them about why we have the food we have and supports the campaigns running in schools and pre-schools. Children are also sometimes involved in helping to get snacks and meals ready and sample menus are written in the policy document for parents to view.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, clean, secure and safe indoor environment. All exits are kept locked, but with accessible keys. All areas are kept very clean and clear of hazards, so that small children can move about safely and freely. The childminder is committed to safety through thorough supervision and holds emergency evacuation practises, so that all children are very familiar with how to

safely evacuate in the event of an emergency. Parents are also familiar with these practises because the evacuation policy and plan is detailed in the childminder's portfolio.

Children use a good range of suitable and safe equipment and toys because the childminder selects and organises all resources, using her clear understanding of each child's needs and stage of development. Items are stored mainly in the playroom, lounge and garden so that children can choose what they want to do as soon as they arrive. Equipment and toys are very well organised on shelves and in storage containers, are kept clean and are checked regularly for safety. Outside, the garden is secure and offers a wealth of play equipment including tent, sand and ride on toys.

Children are safe as they move around the setting because safety equipment is in place and the only equipment out is what children are actually using. Safety gates, socket covers and cupboard locks are in place and all dangerous items, such as cleaning materials are inaccessible. Children are carefully supervised and the childminder always employs safe practices. For example, she reminds children not to put the hoops around their neck and to wheel, rather than try to lift, the toy store trolley.

Children are kept safe on outings because the childminder is highly vigilant whether on foot or in a vehicle. Policies demonstrate a thorough approach to safety outside on the roads and children know where the safest points to cross are. There are also lost child and late collections policies detailing what the childminder would do in these eventualities. Children know that they must hold hands when out walking and the childminder asks them to look to see if cars are coming and explains why.

Children are protected well from abuse because the childminder has a good understanding of her role in child protection and is confident that she is able to put appropriate procedures into practice if necessary. She is sure of what to do and who to inform, should an allegation of abuse be made against her.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and secure and are learning to make positive relationships from an early age because the childminder actively encourages children to share and cooperate together. She facilitates this by playing on the floor, at the table and outside with children and is skilled at keeping pre-school children motivated and interested. For example, she enters into their shop role play and skilfully ensures that they are taking turns and speaking kindly about one another by intervening as if she was a shop customer too.

Children respond well and show interest in what they do because the childminder is skilled and enthusiastic as she presents themed activity ideas which captivate children's interest. She uses materials from holiday clubs and former colleagues for her inspiration. For example, last week's safari theme included a visit to Knowsley safari park. Preparation and links included a song which they learnt and sang in the

car and some cuddly toys of monkeys and lions. The childminder actively extends children's learning with questions of 'what ?' and 'where?' so that jigsaws and skittles games become opportunities to improve numeracy and communication skills as well as hand-to-eye coordination, physical and small motor skills.

Children have very good opportunities to investigate, use their imaginations and discover for themselves. For example, three and four-year-old children discover how to make perfect sandcastles using the 'magic pat' to push down the sand. Then they look around the garden for sticks to use as pretend birthday cake candles. They decorate the sandcastles as if they were cakes and then sing happy birthday to each other, each time asking the other one what age they are going to be. Likewise, they role play an impending weather disaster or fire, moving all the toys in the garden into the play tent, shouting 'we need to get indoors quickly!', 'Is there room for me?' and 'I'll save you!' These activities enable children to enjoy and achieve well as they play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children new to the setting are developing a sense of belonging and feel secure enough to join in because the childminder fully includes them in all aspects of domestic life. Incorporated into these every day activities, is the sense that all routines are learning experiences where children can learn how to care for one another and the world around them. Children are becoming aware of wider society because they talk with the childminder about their home life, nursery life and the wider world. The childminder is interested and helps children make links between parts of their experience. For example, they talk about their friends at pre-school and what activities they are doing there. They also talk about their feelings and why there are consistent rules wherever they go, so that pre-school children can try to make sense of their world. Children have sufficient opportunities to consider and value diversity because the childminder has an open approach to equal opportunities issues. She has a written equality policy to include all and to present positive images of race, gender and disability. This is followed through by use of resources such as play figures, books, ethnic dolls and dressing up.

Children receive good support to behave well because the childminder is vigilant, consistent and positive in her approach. She consistently gives praise and encouragement, talking to the children and successfully using the procedures detailed in her behaviour policy. She encourages children to work alongside her when they are finding it hard to take turns and reminds them of how much they look forward to playing together. As a result, children mostly behave well and are learning how to think of others, be kind, and use good manners.

Children's needs are met well through good partnership with parents. The childminder is open and communicative with them and spends time giving and receiving effective verbal feedback. Some parents also give good quality written information about routines and preferences, which helps the childminder in giving good continuity of care. This is backed up by an informative policy and information portfolio which the childminder shares with parents. However, her complaints policy

does not give details of how to contact Ofsted if a complaint is not dealt with satisfactorily by the provider. This compromises partnership with parents because incorrect information is given. Nevertheless, parents indicate high levels of appreciation of the service being offered because it delivers the expectations given in the printed advertisement for the childminding service.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of all children and builds upon her knowledge and experience by attending child care training. She has worked in various child care settings and has recognised child care and nursery nursing qualifications. She also keeps these up to date and is applying for courses, particularly child protection and behaviour management, from the latest training calendar. She also promotes children's social opportunities through attending childminder support groups.

The childminder has a clear sense of purpose and direction and uses her time and resources well to support children's care, learning and play. She keeps group sizes small and manages the daily routine so that all children have their individual needs met and are well stimulated. For example, pre-school children enjoy the exercise, fresh air and social opportunity of walking home from nursery and then have home activities tailored specifically for them, including jigsaws and stories. Good activity planning and preparation is done, so that there is a theme for the fortnight. The present theme is, 'it's a bugs life', and there are activities based upon this each day. For example, children are making spider cakes this afternoon and all the ingredients and utensils are ready to use. Other themes include outer space, 'commotion in the ocean' and animal safari.

Policies and procedures work well in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. For example, a policy pack contains policies and procedures about all aspects of the National Standards and written details of planning. Evidence of certificate, training and insurance are displayed. All necessary parent agreements, child details and consents are kept confidentially with each child's record. Written consents from parents are signed for routine outings, going in a vehicle, sun cream application, Calpol and photography. This information is very well organised so that good quality care can be given which accords with parents' wishes. In addition, the daily register is kept accurate and up to date as children arrive and depart.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- ensure that parents know about how to contact Ofsted, should they be unhappy about how a complaint is handled
- ensure that parents give written permission for emergency medical advice or treatment, should it be needed in the future.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk