

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY318573
Inspection date	13 February 2008
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 became registered in 2006. She provides care from the family home located in a village in Lancashire. She lives with her husband and their three children who are aged seven, nine and 14 years. Children are cared for mainly in the conservatory, which is organised as a playroom, and which has direct access to the enclosed rear garden area. The kitchen is used for eating and baking activities and the family lounge accommodates children's sleep times. Toilet facilities are provided upstairs. Local schools, shops and open play spaces are close by. There is currently one child on roll, aged two years. The childminder obtains support and training from the local authority Sure Start development team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder ensures that children have a balance of rest and play. Children benefit from regular opportunities to play outdoors in the garden, where they can use small bikes and push-along items, as well as when attending different groups or going to the park. Children are encouraged to explore their play environment and do so confidently as they select what

they want from accessible storage in the playroom. Children develop as they use their senses and their physical skills. They grow in confidence as they use the knife to spread the butter on to the bread as they make sandwiches. Children have many opportunities to handle other tools during art and craft activities and when playing with the construction toys or when dressing up. In these ways, children develop healthy physical skills and gain confidence in their growing abilities to explore and handle objects as they learn to control their bodies with increasing confidence.

Children's health is maintained very well in premises that are clean and hygienic. The childminder minimises the risk of cross infection effectively because of the good hygiene practices employed and in turn, learnt by the children. Children are encouraged to cover their mouths when they cough, for example, and to wash their hands after playing outside or at toilet times. Because children have their own towels and drinks bottle, their risk of cross infection is reduced. Children's continuing good health is also aided because the childminder has a clear sick child policy that she shares with parents. Children's health is further promoted because the childminder is proactive in arranging to renew her first aid training in good time. However, some items in the first aid box are not prescribed first aid items and therefore, would put children at risk of inappropriate first aid.

Children's dietary needs are very well met because the childminder ensures she follows parental wishes and maintains each child's usual eating or feeding routine. The childminder's approach of providing healthy balanced meals and snacks ensures that children's nutritional needs are met based on their individual circumstances. The childminder's homemade menu options provide healthy and nutritional selections, including familiar favourites, such as shepherd's pie with garlic bread. The childminder provides meals for children according to the times of day they are present, including offering breakfast cereals, and healthy snacks of fresh fruit. Children's health and dietary needs are promoted and they learn about making healthy choices. Children, as a result, are well nourished, allowing them to grow and develop steadily. They sample different tastes to broaden their experience when they explore Chinese New Year and taste soy sauce, thereby encouraging their willingness to try new things.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to understand how to keep themselves safe when out in public places, aided by regular and on-going discussion with the childminder. They learn about road safety and how to keep the home environment safe when encouraged to tidy the toys away before going to school. They take part in practicing the emergency evacuation procedure. Children, as a result, develop their understanding about their own personal safety and that of others.

Children are kept safe and secure within their environment and on outings because the childminder adopts a sound approach to their well-being at all times. She pays attention when children play indoors and outside by observing good practice, such as keeping the front door locked and maintaining effective direct levels of supervision. Children's safety is thus assured. Children feel secure and at ease in the childminder's home environment because they are cared for in family oriented surroundings where space is organised well. Children happily select activities from the accessible range of age appropriate toys and equipment safely. These items are regularly monitored by the childminder to make sure they are safe and appropriate for the children who are attending.

Children's safety and on-going welfare is addressed because of the childminder's knowledge of indicators of abuse and her clear understanding of what to do if she has concerns about a child in her care. As a result, children are protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children develop a very positive relationship with the childminder and benefit from the close and caring approach that she offers them. This helps to foster children's self-esteem and promotes their emotional development because they feel they belong. Children are provided with resources from which they can self-select and make decisions about in their free play. Children are able to express themselves through a variety of media and therefore, develop their creative and imaginative skills, for example, when they dress up in the nurses outfit and use the doctor set to make their doll better. Role play with the play kitchen enables children to recreate everyday routines like making the tea with the play food and cups of tea for the childminder and the inspector. They are creative when they make art and craft items like the collage style Valentines Day card they make to take home. Children are learning skills like counting during their play as they match the number of teacups they need to the number of people, so their early mathematical skills are promoted in meaningful and practical ways.

Good use of the indoor space, the garden, visits to community groups and trips to places of interest all allow children to discover new environments. This promotes their interests and widens their experience. Children enjoy learning about the local community and the wider world when they go to the library for story time and to the toddler group. They enjoy nature walks in the immediate local area as they learn and observe at first hand the changes in the seasons and they go to the pet shop to look at the animals there. Festivals from other cultures are acknowledged through art activities, role play and discussion as well as the play resources and images children see and handle everyday. This broadens their horizons and encourages their understanding of the world around them. Children go to groups and enjoy being part of the birthday celebration party. Their developing social skills are encouraged as a result, and they learn to share, take turns and respect one another.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Books, activities and discussion promote children's awareness of other people's similarities and differences. A range of resources and images to reflect diversity are available so children's understanding is raised. Children's behaviour is managed by providing them with lots of praise for their achievements, which effectively promotes their self-esteem. The childminder encourages children as they begin to learn about how their behaviour can affect others because she ensures that children have opportunities to be part of a group. Consequently, their understanding of other people's feelings and needs is developed as they learn to share and to be kind. Children are encouraged to help to tidy away their toys, with the childminder giving them clear reasons why, so children can start to take some responsibility and to make a positive contribution in the childminder's home.

Daily informal discussions with parents and carers help to keep the childminder up-to-date with the children's routines and any changes that may have occurred. This enables the childminder to provide care in accordance with parental wishes. The childminder has developed a set of written policies that are shared with parents and carers when their child is enrolled.

Confidentiality of information relating to individual children is well maintained offering them good levels of privacy and dignity and providing reassurance to parents and carers.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the setting is in the main effective in meeting children's needs. Space is planned so that children can move around freely and self-select play resources, easily making independent choices. Therefore, children develop confidence as they explore their environment. Required documentation is maintained well and is organised and recorded in a timely way. Children's details and emergency contact numbers are to hand, thus enabling the childminder to contact parents immediately should an emergency occur. As a result, children's needs are always paramount.

Relevant certificates are displayed for parents to see and the policy document is given to them from the outset. This promotes positive partnerships and ensures that the interests and needs of all children are important. However, information contained in two policy statements requires some revision and updating. Information about each child's day is shared verbally, and a daily written record would be made for parents of very young children. Regular information sharing about planned events, topics or health issues provides good links with parents and carers, keeping them informed about the way the childminder organises her childcare business. These clear lines of communication provide reassurance for parents and carers and continuity for children because of the friendly relationships that they create and foster.

The childminder is proactive in improving the service she offers by attending childcare related courses to further her knowledge and skills. 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, one action was raised. The provider was required to complete all component parts of the mandatory local authority approved childminder's pre-registration course. These must be undertaken within six months of commencing childminding. The provider has now completed the two missing workshops and is now meeting the requirements of the National Standards for Under 8's Day Care and Childminding. Children's care and safety have been improved as a result and regulations are now being met.

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):

- ensure that the contents of the first aid box conform to Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations
- revise the complaints procedure to include the addition of a complaints log that can be shared with parents and carers on request and update the child protection policy with the correct name of the social services reporting agency's name in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance.

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