



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY343561
Inspection date	28 February 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 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 2006. She lives with her partner and one year old child in the Laffak area of St Helens. The whole of the ground floor and the bathroom on the first floor of the childminder's home are available to minded children. An enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time. The childminder is able to take and collect children from the local schools. A park, shops, library and duck pond are within walking distance of the childminder's home. The family have a pet cat.

There are three children on the register. Children currently attend part time sessions.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and receives support from St Helens Sure Start.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment which is cleaned and maintained to a high standard. The childminder implements effective routines to ensure the needs of the children are met well and in agreement with parent's wishes. The childminder protects children from the spread of infection by providing a range of equipment for individual use, for example, face cloths, cups and plates. The childminder talks through what she is doing while helping children to wash their hands and faces after snacks to help them to learn about the importance of good hygiene. Children are further protected from the possible spread of infection because the childminder has produced a written exclusion policy for sick children. This includes details of the types of illnesses that children would be excluded for and the period of exclusion.

Children's health is further promoted because the childminder provides them with healthy, nutritious meals and snacks, based on the information provided from parents and her own knowledge and understanding of healthy eating. Children are also learning about feeding themselves with support from the childminder, for example, she gives them finger foods, such as rice cakes, cheese and fruit at snack time and with their meals. Children are offered drinks at regular intervals throughout the day. Parents are kept informed of their children's food and drink intake through daily diaries.

Children benefit from opportunities to play on the floor where they can gain physical exercise and learn to control their bodies through stretching, crawling and pulling themselves up against solid furniture, such as the sofas. Children enjoy going for walks to local parks and other places of interest, where they also gain the benefits of fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being in a homely environment, which is maintained to a high standard of decoration and repair. Children are kept safe on the premises because the childminder is vigilant and effectively implements safety policies and procedures, such as the supervision of children, checking the premises and using appropriate safety equipment as needed. Children are involved in emergency evacuation procedures to help to prepare them in the event of a real emergency. Children are kept safe during trips and outings because the childminder follows the policy she has in place and has obtained written consent from parents for various activities.

Children have access to a wide range of toys and play equipment which is appropriate to their ages, safe and in good condition. The available space is used well to ensure children access the toys and equipment provided for them, including space for physical play. The childminder demonstrates through discussion sound knowledge and understanding of child development. She describes how children will be encouraged to make choices and select more toys and equipment as they become more mobile. Children are gaining confidence as they are encouraged and supported in being able to pull themselves up against solid furniture and begin to take steps, thus further developing independence.

Children are protected from harm because the childminder knows and understands the issues and procedures regarding child protection. She has produced a written policy based on the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and this is shared with parents. The childminder has attended relevant training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled with the childminder. Children are offered a suitable range of activities based on their age and stage of development. The childminder plans varied activities and records her observations of children's progress. Planning is flexible and takes account of children's needs and interest.

Children are beginning to enjoy each others' company and interact well with the childminder. Children are supported well with activities that are familiar to them and new ones which are introduced to broaden the children's interest and skills. Children are becoming more engaged in activities and stay focused and interested for extended periods of time. They are supported well by the childminder, who participates in the activities with the children. The children benefit from a calm and relaxing environment, which enables them to have fun and enjoy the activities.

Children are making good progress as they are supported well in developing independence, for example, they are being encouraged to feed themselves with finger foods, to reach for toys and to pull themselves up and take steps. The childminder gives lots of support to allow children to grow and develop at their own pace. Children are beginning to learn about basic language and mathematical concepts through routine activities, such as the childminder singing nursery rhymes, clapping and counting while playing and talking to children as they play. Children benefit from opportunities to explore some natural materials, such as paint and cooked spaghetti. The childminder has also introduced some home made toys which the children enjoy exploring. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from the childminder as they play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

To enable the childminder to meet the individual needs of children in her care, she exchanges a lot of information with parents and records the details. As a result, children's routines are maintained and their needs met well. 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. Children have access to a wide range of toys and resources which promote individual development and some which promote positive images.

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 a copy of the written policies and procedures, which clearly state what they can expect from the childminder. Daily diaries for younger children are shared with parents ensuring they have up to date information on their children's progress.

The childminder has produced a written behaviour management policy, which includes a range of strategies to enable her to deal with children's behaviour in a positive way. The strategies implemented are based on children's ages and stage of development, for example, clear explanations, distraction and time out. The childminder is a good role model for children and focuses on the positives. Children behave well.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by an experienced and suitably qualified adult. The childminder follows appropriate procedures regarding the care and supervision of children. She has sound knowledge and understanding of the National Standards for childminding and understands her responsibilities towards children in her care.

The childminder ensures that the children have sufficient space in order to play in comfort and organises the resources well to promote children's development and independence. Children are supervised well and have opportunities to move around freely. Required records and documentation are in place and meet the required standard, which contributes to the continuity of care for the children. These are also readily available for inspection and kept up to date.

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

Since registration 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):

- continue to develop a range of natural resources which promote sensory development and exploration for younger children.

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