

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY310335
Inspection date	16 June 2006
Inspector	Sheila Iwaskow
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 was registered in 2005. She lives with her husband and two children, aged seven and three years old, in Manchester.

The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding purposes; this comprises of the lounge, playroom and kitchen. Toilet facilities are available on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family have a dog.

There are currently two children on roll who attend on a variety of placements. The childminder holds an appropriate early years qualification and she is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into a home which is warm and generally clean. An effective sick child policy is in place which excludes children who are ill, preventing infection being spread. If a

child becomes unwell they are comforted appropriately and parents are contacted straight away. Children receive good levels of care if they have an accident as the childminder holds a valid first aid certificate and a first aid box is placed strategically away from the children. Good nappy changing routines are in place and daily routines, such as washing hands with coloured cloths, help promote children's awareness of good hygiene practices. The childminder understands that it is her responsibility to ensure that her dog is safe to be in the proximity of children, however, feeding bowls in the kitchen are accessible to children, posing a risk to their health. Young children's needs with regard to sleep are recognised and promoted. Sleeping children are checked on a regular basis to ensure their safety and gentle music played in the playroom creates a restful and peaceful environment.

Children enjoy a range of activities that contribute to their physical growth and development. While playing outdoors they can play with bikes and wheeled toys. Bats, balls and nets provide children with the opportunity to play team games, learning to follow defined rules.

The childminder discusses and agrees children's dietary requirements with parents. She provides children with a range of meals which are nutritious and contribute to their physical well-being. Children enjoy healthy options, such as Spaghetti Bolognese, tuna salad, yoghurts and fresh fruit. Drinks are available to allow children to quench their thirst, however, they are not always easily accessible. Menus are planned and clearly visible, keeping parents fully informed about the quality of the food that their children are eating. Attractive plates and child-sized crockery make eating a more pleasurable experience for children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared in a homely environment, which is reasonably well maintained and where they have sufficient space to move around and play freely. Examples of children's independent art work, photographs of the children at play and posters of nursery rhymes and the alphabet are displayed within areas of the house. This helps to create a purposeful learning environment and gives children a sense of belonging within the setting. Outings to Blackpool, Gulliver's World and to other childminders' homes allow children to experience alternative play environments and socialise with other children. Risk of accidental injury is minimised by the good supervision of the children and the use of appropriate safety features, such as gates and safety film on the low level glass panels on the door. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as they practise fire drills on a regular basis. Such procedures teach children to follow defined routines in the case of a fire or an emergency evacuation. However, some issues have been identified which compromise children's safety: smoke alarms in working order are not available on all floors of the house. Furthermore, cleaning materials, a bin in the bathroom and plug sockets are accessible to the children.

Children access a wide range of play materials which are safe, in good condition and promote all areas of their learning. Resources are stored in low level units, which are clearly labelled, allowing young children to make choices and develop their independence. The childminder regularly swaps toys with another childminder and utilises the toy library to further extend the range of resources available to children. Child-sized furniture is of good quality, meeting children's needs.

Children are protected because the childminder has a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and procedures that must be followed if neglect is suspected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and relaxed in the childminder's home. The childminder offers comfort and reassurance through appropriate hugs and cuddles. Children have the support and the attention of the childminder which increases their sense of security. Written play plans, which are linked to the Birth to three matters framework, are in place to provide children with a range of worthwhile and interesting experiences. Details of the framework are clearly displayed in the playroom, allowing parents to be fully aware of and involved in their children's learning.

Mathematical concepts are explored as part of the daily routine and as children play. Whilst travelling to school children count the buses and the traffic lights. Children have fun as they count the pots of play dough in the basket and eagerly tell the childminder which is their favourite colour. Children enjoy story time. The childminder models how books should be held and points to words as she reads, allowing children to understand that print carries meaning. Language skills are enhanced as children identify the letter that their name begins with and then think of other objects beginning with the same sound.

Children enjoy exploring the contents of the treasure baskets, feeling the different textures of pegs, beads, rope and sponge. Creative activities allow children to develop their imaginative skills as they paint pictures of the animals that they have seen on a recent trip to the zoo and make 'junk models' of rides they have been on at a local theme park.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the close relationships that the childminder has established with their parents. Written and verbal information is shared on a daily basis to ensure that children's individual needs are recognised and their welfare promoted. Particularly noteworthy are children's individual diaries, detailing all aspects of their day and supported by photographic evidence. The childminder ensures that parents are made aware of Ofsted's details, but she is unsure of recent changes to legislation regarding the recording of complaints or concerns expressed by parents.

The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory play. Activities and resources that reflect equality of opportunity allow children to appreciate the diversity of the world in which they live. They particularly enjoy finding out about Chinese New Year, dressing up as and making Chinese dragons. The childminder demonstrates a positive attitude towards the care of children with learning difficulties and disabilities, understanding that they should be welcomed into a sharing and inclusive environment.

Children are well behaved. Age appropriate strategies are used in respect of behaviour management. Distraction techniques are used for younger children and older children are offered simple explanations. The childminder is aware that other circumstances may affect a child's behaviour and is considerate of these factors when managing behaviour. Children's efforts and achievements are constantly celebrated throughout the day, which helps promote their confidence and self-esteem.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children express themselves freely in the childminder's home. The childminder has completed the basic training for childminders and all adults living in the house have been vetted. She is proactive in developing her childcare practice and has attended additional training, ensuring that children receive the best possible care. Children benefit from the individual attention they receive from the childminder who has made a conscious decision to restrict the number of children she looks after. The childminder's certificate is clearly displayed, keeping parents fully informed of her conditions of registration.

Space is arranged well to provide children with a good balance of play experiences. There is a clear timetable in place to collect children from a local primary school. All aspects of documentation required for childminding purposes are in place and organised to respect confidentiality. 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 since registration. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints 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

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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):

- make sure drinks are available to children at all times; when children are in the kitchen ensure that the dog's feeding bowls are inaccessible to the children
- make sure that smoke alarms that are in working order are available on both floors of the house; ensure that cleaning materials, the small bin in the bathroom, and plug sockets are inaccessible to the children
- implement procedures for recording complaints or concerns expressed by parents.

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