



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	301301
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 August 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Ann Law

<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 1989. She lives with her husband, one adult child and one child aged 14 years in Greenfield, near Oldham. The whole ground floor is used for childminding, with toilet facilities on the first floor and there are fully enclosed gardens for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time. She is currently minding three children under five years during the day and one child over five years before and after school. She walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group and takes children to the local library and park. The family have a pet dog and a cat. The childminder holds the Certificate in Childminding Practice, a level 3 qualification. She is working towards a level 3 qualification in Early Years Care and Education and also working towards 'Quality for All', an endorsed quality assurance scheme.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and generally well maintained environment. The childminder actively promotes good hygiene practices to prevent the spread of infection and to keep children healthy. For example, children have their own flannels and hand towels. As result, the possibility of cross-contamination is effectively minimised. The childminder ensures that she obtains written permission from parents before administering medication. However, she has not requested written permission from all parents, at the time of placement, for the seeking of any necessary medical advice or treatment in the future. This compromises the continuity of care for children in the event of an accident.

Healthy and nourishing snacks are provided for the children, including a variety of fruit and the children have free access to drinks at all times. This means that they can get a drink when they want one, promoting their physical well-being. Written menus are provided for parents which evidence that healthy and home-cooked meals are offered to the children. The childminder ensures that children have regular access to large physical equipment at the local park, to develop their gross motor skills. Children rest and sleep according to their individual needs and not to fit in with the childminder's routine. For example, toddlers sleep on the sofa and babies sleep in prams when they are tired and this meets their emotional and physical needs.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe indoor and outdoor environment where the childminder identifies and minimises hazards to children's safety. Many safety measures are in place, such as fireguards, safety gates and plug socket covers, which allow children to move around freely and independently. A good variety of toys and resources are presented for the children in toy boxes on the floor and on low shelving. As a result, children can access them safely and are encouraged to be independent.

All fire safety precautions are in place, including smoke alarms, a fire blanket and an emergency evacuation plan. Children are learning about fire safety because the evacuation procedures are practised with them and recorded to highlight any potential problems which may occur. The childminder has attended a number of training courses related to child protection. In this way she has ensured that her practice is underpinned by a good and up-to-date knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and also the correct procedures to follow should she have any concerns. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and accurate records of accidents are maintained and shared with parents to facilitate children's continuity of care.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the welcoming environment. A varied range of toys for free play are available for the children, for instance, construction, cars, books and puzzles. This encourages children to make choices and take decisions in their play. Outings into the village, to the library and the local parent and toddler group, are a regular feature of the provision allowing children to mix with others and to develop a sense of community. Although these offer children the chance to be creative and to develop their social skills, the childminder does not have any system in place to show how the children are developing through the toys and activities that she provides. The childminder has attended training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework for caring for children under three years of age. She uses the framework to plan activities for the children and is currently developing a treasure basket for babies to encourage their sensory development.

Relationships between the children and the childminder are good and children demonstrate confidence and security when they climb onto her knee for a cuddle in the middle of playing. Children become engaged and involved in completing puzzles and develop their hand to eye coordination and cognitive skills in matching the pieces. The childminder instinctively knows when to hold back from too much adult direction and allows children to achieve and experience self-esteem from the meaningful praise that she gives. The children respond and interact positively with the childminder's pets. For instance, the childminder encourages the children to be caring towards the animals and they respond by bringing toys for them. This helps children to develop respect and consideration for animals.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children have access to comfort items from home, such as blankets, which are valued. This means that children are aware that the childminder understands their emotional needs and this helps them to settle as they move between the home and the childminding setting. The childminder has taken the time to find out about the children's individual preferences for play, for example, an interest in farms. She has provided related toys and resources to ensure that she caters for their individual needs. Children are becoming aware of the wider world because the childminder has an excellent range of books and a good variety of toys and resources which promote a positive view of a diverse society.

The childminder has a positive attitude to managing children's behaviour and always gives children age-appropriate explanations of why certain behaviour is unacceptable. This allows them to learn responsible behaviour, such as not running out of sight on the walk to school. Consequently, they are also learning how to keep themselves safe and avoid accidental injury. Although a vast amount of information regarding the provision is available for parents, including many written policies and procedures, the sheer amount may obscure the main and important information which will give parents the clear insight into the provision that they need when making decisions about placing their child. Written information is provided for parents of young children which includes details of their nappies, meals and sleeps. This is essential information for continuity of care. The parents of older children receive verbal information regarding their

child's time in the provision. Parents are appreciative of the care their children receive and this is supported by the many thank you cards that the childminder has received over the 17 years that she has been a registered childminder.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The home is well organised and provides an environment in which children can make choices in their activities. This means that they are able to initiate their own play and learning. The childminder manages her time effectively to meet the individual needs of the children in relation to snacks, playing and resting.

A high level of commitment to training and continual development is maintained. Many training courses are regularly attended to update and develop the childminder's knowledge of childcare and education. This contributes to children's health, safety and well-being in her care. All of the legally required documentation is in place. However, the childminder's knowledge of this is sometimes inconsistent and, as a result, parents are not always asked to provide the necessary written permissions for health.

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 the childminder was asked to improve safety and documentation. The childminder now ensures that her first aid box is well stocked; she has fixed the fireguards to the walls to prevent children pulling them over; and she has added the address and telephone number for the regulator to her complaints policy. These measures have contributed to the safety and well-being of the children in her care.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 written parental permission is requested, at the time of placement for all children, to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future
- devise a system to evidence how you help children to develop through the toys and activities that you provide.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)