



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	301344
Inspection date	21 December 2006
Inspector	Ann Law
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 1994. She lives with her husband and two children aged 11 and 13 years in Greenfield, near Oldham. The whole ground floor is used for childminding and a bedroom and toilet facilities on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time. She is currently minding five children under five years during the day and three children over five years, before and after school and in the school holidays.

She walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group and takes children to the local park.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay mainly healthy in the care of the childminder because she follows some appropriate health and hygiene procedures, for example, children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet. However, all children use the same towel for drying their hands and this does not effectively minimise the possibility of cross contamination. The childminder has all the necessary documentation for health and records are shared with parents to facilitate children's continuity of care in the event of an accident. However, the childminder has not requested written parental permission from all parents to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future. This compromises children's continuity of care in an emergency medical event.

The childminder provides healthy meals and snacks for the children, including fresh fruit and home cooked meals, such as spaghetti bolognese and tuna pasta. Children enjoy physical activity both at home and in the local community. Regular visits are made to the park for children to have access to large fixed equipment and open spaces to develop their gross motor skills. Children rest and sleep according to their needs, for example, young children sleep in a travel cot or in their buggies for short periods during the day to meet their emotional and physical needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a mostly safe environment where there are some safety measures in place, including plug socket covers and a safety gate. These ensure that children can move around freely, safely and independently. However, inconsistencies are present for fire safety. Although smoke alarms and an emergency evacuation plan are in place, the evacuation plan does not include the first floor and no practises have been carried out to ensure that children are learning how to keep themselves safe in the event of an emergency.

A varied range of good quality age-appropriate toys, furniture and resources are well presented for the children facilitating their self-selection. Children's art work is valued by the childminder and colourful displays brighten up a kitchen wall, promoting children's self-esteem as they see their work displayed for all to admire. The childminder has a sound understanding of her responsibility within the local authority procedures to safeguard children's welfare. Written permission from parents to transport children in a vehicle has not been obtained for all children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the care of the childminder. They demonstrate security and confidence when they sing Christmas songs for the childminder and the other children and display pride when they are congratulated for their performance. The childminder acknowledges and affirms young children when they snuggle up next to her at story time. Children experience

closeness and a sense of belonging as they listen to the story and join in the repeated refrain of, 'Tom, go to sleep' in their favourite story. As a result, children are becoming skilful communicators.

Children enjoy exploring objects, such as a light pan and reflective mat. They use the pen on the mat to make light pictures, creating patterns and making marks. In this way, they are developing their hand to eye coordination and their creativity, at the same time as increasing their knowledge and understanding of why things happen and how things work. The childminder routinely takes children to local parent and toddler groups where the children develop their social skills playing with other children. However, the childminder has limited knowledge of appropriate frameworks to support the development of children under three years of age.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are well met in the childminding provision. They have access to comfort items from home, such as dummies and cuddly toys, which are valued. This means that young 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 makes the environment welcoming for the children through the accessibility of the toys and resources. However, children are not becoming fully aware of the wider world because the childminder has a limited range of resources which promote a positive view of a diverse society.

The childminder uses positive methods to manage children's behaviour and as a result, they are learning to share toys and resources. Mealtimes are important to the childminder and she maximises these as a social occasion, promoting good manners and helping children to develop social skills. Parents are shown a large photograph album when they enquire about placing their child in the care of the childminder. This gives them an insight into the activities and learning opportunities that their child will enjoy. Daily verbal exchanges keep parents adequately informed regarding their child's time with the childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The home is well organised and provides an environment in which children can make choices in their activities. This means that they can initiate their own play and learning. The childminder manages her time appropriately to meet the individual needs of the children in relation to playing and resting. An adequate approach to training is demonstrated by the childminder and she attends any legally required training courses, such as first aid.

There are weaknesses in the childminder's knowledge of the requirements of the National Standards and this means that there are omissions in the documentation for health, safety and partnership with parents. There are no systems in place to ensure that Ofsted are notified of any significant events, namely, the building of an extension to the home. Although this is a

breach of regulations, the childminder ensured that the building work did not pose a risk to children's safety.

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 develop her knowledge of child protection procedures. The local authority and government guidance for safeguarding children is now filed for ease of reference and this has contributed to the childminder's increased knowledge of keeping children safe.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- improve the facilities for hand drying to ensure that the risk of cross contamination is minimised
- extend the emergency evacuation procedures to include the first floor and undertake practises to ensure that children understand what to do in an emergency
- develop knowledge and understanding of appropriate frameworks to support the development of young children, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- review documentation to ensure that contracts are held for all children and all permissions are gained from parents regarding seeking emergency medical attention and transporting children in a vehicle
- ensure all significant events, such as structural changes to the home, are reported to Ofsted without delay.

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