



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	304377
Inspection date	26 July 2006
Inspector	Sue Anslow

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 1997. She lives with her husband, also a registered childminder and their two children aged 14 and 11 years. The family live in Macclesfield. The whole ground floor and one bedroom for sleeping babies, is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed front and rear garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and together with her husband, is currently minding four children under five years and four children over five years. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and attends the local childminder's support group. The family have three cats.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because the childminder follows effective procedures and practices which meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. The childminder's animated and enthusiastic personality ensures children learn about their health and good hygiene practices by talking, explaining and encouraging the children's active involvement. They put on hats and sun bloc in hot weather and wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet.

Children explore, test and develop their physical control through a variety of indoor and outdoor experiences. They visit local parks to play ball or use playground equipment and the swing frame and trampoline in the garden presents children with superb challenges to their ability and agility. Younger children are extremely confident and enthusiastically try out new skills on the climbing frame, the wide variety of wheeled toys and the swing ball game which particularly promotes their hand eye co-ordination.

Children learn about food and its effects on the body because the childminder actively involves them in the preparation of snacks and baking activities. She talks to them about how good food keeps them healthy and they are helping to grow tomatoes and cucumbers in the garden. Children have a variety of fresh fruit and salad produce every day and being able to pick and eat home grown produce helps children learn more about living things and where their food comes from. Children are encouraged to bring back interesting pebbles or shells from their holidays, rather than sticks of rock, which again reinforces the healthy eating programme. Children have diluted juice with all meals and snacks and extra drinks are supplied in the hot weather or after physical exercise. However, children are not able to help themselves to drinks which hinders their choice and independence. The childminder has an excellent understanding of children's individual dietary needs, gained in consultation with parents. This ensures each child's individual requirements are respected.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because the childminder is extremely vigilant, providing close supervision and thoroughly risk assessing all areas and equipment used by the children. The childminder has an excellent understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. Smaller objects are put at higher levels on the shelf units so children can only access toys and equipment which are safe for their use. Colourful stickers have been put on the patio doors, at children's eye level, to prevent any collisions. Children are kept extremely safe on outings because the childminder has very good procedures in place for the children's protection. A book containing children's details is taken, along with a mobile phone and first aid kit.

Children use a very wide range of high quality equipment, appropriate to their age and stage of development. This enhances their learning and enjoyment in all areas and protects their safety. Excellent use is made of natural play materials such as sand, water, dough and things

they find on their walks which they use to make pictures and collages. Children are cared for in a wonderfully warm and welcoming environment where easy access to all toys and equipment is given high priority. This allows the children to make their own choices and their independence is significantly enhanced as they move from room to room or outside into the garden. Children's enjoyment and delight in the varied activities they undertake is evident from the art work displayed in the kitchen. Posters showing letters, numbers, shapes and colours inspire children to ask questions and copy what they see in their drawings, counting games and early writing attempts.

Children's welfare is very well protected by the childminder who has a clear understanding and sound knowledge of child protection procedures. She has attended relevant courses and a written procedure keeps parents informed of her responsibility to record and report any significant concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time spent with the childminder and engage well in a broad range of exciting and stimulating activities which promote their all round development. Teaching and learning are consistently high because the childminder's enthusiastic and outgoing personality motivates and excites children to use their imaginations and curiosity. Children are asked what they want to do or make today and plans are flexible and spontaneous to follow and extend the children's ideas. Local road works prompted a visit to watch the machinery from a safe distance and a routine call from a fire officer produced a visit from the fire engine allowing the children to try on the hats and sit in the cab.

Children's needs at various ages are extremely well met with the childminder providing a fun and challenging environment, conducive to effective learning. Children are actively encouraged to try new things such as preparing their own snacks, planting tomatoes and cucumbers in the garden and making pictures out of natural things they find in the countryside. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas enthusiastically as they join in a diverse range of exploratory and sensory experiences. They create things with paint, paper and cardboard, watch jelly cubes melt in hot water and find out how chips are made.

Children are extremely confident and self assured because of the close and caring relationship with the childminder. They are supervised, supported and encouraged with animated praise and enthusiasm, making each activity exciting and stimulating the children's imagination and curiosity. Each small achievement is praised and children are encouraged to be kind to each other. Actively involving children in the care of the family pets and the new arrival of a baby into the childminding group, promotes an excellent understanding of occasions when they need to be gentle or quiet and show care and kindness to others.

The childminder has a clear understanding of each child's individual needs and interests, which ensures the comprehensive range of activities suit their various ages and abilities. Optimal challenges lead to all round progress in children's learning and development. Activities are linked together such as looking at books about fish, visiting the local aquarium shop and drawing pictures, leading to discussions about colours and pattern shapes. Seeing squirrels in the local

park leads to discussions about red and grey squirrels, visiting the red squirrels at Formby and looking on the globe to see where squirrels come from. Visits to local play facilities so children can have social contact with other adults and children and trips to the library to look at books or listen to stories, significantly enhances children's enjoyment, excitement and interest.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals. They show a very positive attitude to others and gain a good understanding of the world around them through the variety of activities available and the positive encouragement and sound teaching of the childminder. An excellent range of toys and books with images of people who look different from themselves, ensure children's understanding of diversity and respect for others. Children's welfare is promoted well because the childminder consults closely with the parents and others on any issues of concern or particular requirements. Children with special needs are welcomed and integrated into the home environment. They actively participate with the other children, to the level of their ability, which promotes their all round development and ensures a positive sense of self esteem.

Children's contributions and achievements are highly valued and rewarded which contributes to their self esteem and self confidence. Behaviour is well promoted through meaningful and enthusiastic praise and positive role modelling by the childminder. Children are thanked for helping or taking turns with another child. Children have a positive understanding of right and wrong. They care for each other and their environment. An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to the children's well being. Parents are given full written information about the service offered and daily verbal exchanges of information ensure continuity of care and an understanding of how their children are progressing and enjoying themselves. The childminder works closely with parents to support children's all round development and parents are encouraged to talk about any changes or events at home which may effect the children's mood or behaviour at the childminders.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by the quality of organisation and management techniques of the childminder. The home and garden is well organised, bright, warm and inviting for young children, with a wealth of play materials easily accessible to meet all their needs. The childminder is highly motivated and committed to enhancing her knowledge and skills in child care, for the benefit of all the children. She has completed the three childminder training courses and attended many more relevant courses and workshops such as child protection, behaviour management, keeping children fit and active and disability discrimination.

Well kept records and relevant documentation is clear, up to date and reviewed regularly. A set of written policies and procedures informing the child care practice is shared with all new parents, ensuring the children's health, safety and progress is well promoted and managed. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder agreed to bring documentation up to date, which has now been done. This enhances the support and management of good childcare.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. 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

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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):

- ensure drinks, including water, are accessible to children at all times.

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