



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	306308
Inspection date	11 January 2007
Inspector	June Cotton
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 1995. She lives with her husband and two teenage children in Upton, Wirral. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house, with the exception of the front lounge, is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five during the day, and two children over five before and after school and in the school holidays. The childminder walks to local schools and nursery to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler group. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted by the effective hygiene procedures in place to minimise the risk of infection. For example, the children have their own personal towels to dry their hands in the bathroom. They are learning the importance of personal hygiene as the childminder talks to them about why they are washing hands before snack. The childminder also promotes good hygiene practices in the setting by ensuring toys and the environment are clean. As a result, children are cared for in a well maintained setting which reduces the risk of cross infection. However, the childminder is unsure of the procedures related to notifiable diseases. Children begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. The childminder takes into account the dietary requirements of children and works in partnership with parents to ensure children have healthy nutritious foods. However, drinking water is not freely available throughout the day for children to help themselves. Meals are well balanced and offered in line with home routines. Children gain an understanding of healthy eating when they are involved in projects with the childminder at toddler groups.

Children participate in activities that promote a healthy lifestyle, such as having regular fresh air and exercise when walking to and from school. They make good use of equipment which promotes their all round development, such as climbing apparatus in the park and toddler groups. In the home they use ride on toys and dance and exercise to music.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe setting. The playroom is decorated with children's art work giving them a sense of belonging. They confidently select toys and equipment from the broad accessible range provided. The childminder checks them regularly to ensure they are safe for the children to use. The children are able to move around the ground floor level freely and are protected from harm because appropriate safety equipment is used, including safety gates and electrical socket covers. The childminder maintains a high level of supervision at all times. An evacuation plan has been prepared and it is practiced with the children in order for them to be familiar with the procedure to protect themselves in an emergency. Children learn to keep themselves safe when out and about as the childminder fosters their understanding of road safety. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and will take the appropriate action if an accident occurs.

Children are safeguarded as the childminder has a good understanding of child protection procedures which has been re-enforced with her recent training. She is aware of her responsibility to implement these.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children share a warm relationship with the childminder as they talk and laugh together. The childminder responds to children's questions and comments with interest, showing respect in what they are doing and saying. Children freely give the childminder a cuddle and look to her for support and reassurance. The childminder's settling in procedure for new children helps them feel more familiar and comfortable in their care setting.

Children have good opportunities to develop their social skills as they play with other children, matching picture games and floor jigsaws. They sit together at the table at snack and meal times. They also have opportunities to socialise with larger groups of children at toddler groups. Children are able to initiate their own activities and freely select from a good range of toys and play equipment. They receive very good support during play activities and the childminder promotes children's speech and language skills through effective interaction.

Children participate in a range of activities which help to promote their learning in different areas. For example, they plant bulbs and watch them grow and join in baking activities. They have fun when they play in the paddling pool and on the water slide. Children have opportunities to enjoy a wide range of pursuits which develop their creativity and imagination, such as craft, small world play, music and dressing up.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for consistently and according to their usual routines as the childminder fosters positive relationships with parents and regularly exchanges information with them. Parents receive good verbal and photographic information, keeping them well informed about the childminder's service and practices. Parents express their complete satisfaction and confidence they have in the care their children are receiving.

All children are treated with equal regard and their differing needs are met well. Children are warmly welcomed into the setting and have good opportunities to learn about themselves and the wider world. They have access to resources that reflect positive images of society like books, jigsaws and dolls. This promotes their understanding of the world and provides children with positive images of race, culture, disability and gender. Consequently, children are developing self-esteem and respect for others. Children's individual needs are met in accordance with parents wishes and positive steps have been taken to include children with additional needs. This is achieved by working with parents to ensure children are fully included in all aspects of learning and play opportunities.

Children have good behaviour which is encouraged by meaningful praise and high levels of support from the childminder. Children know they are valued as the childminder gives them full attention and immediately responds to their requests.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has developed her awareness of childcare issues through attending some professional courses, such as first aid and child protection. The childminder uses this knowledge well to provide good quality care. However, she has not yet updated her knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Documentation is well-organised and held securely, ensuring confidentiality for children and parents. All required documentation is in place and is shared with parents. Children benefit from information being shared on a daily basis between the childminder and parents, thus ensuring their individual needs are met.

Children benefit from good levels of support and supervision, which enables them to feel safe and secure in the setting. Consequently, children are confident to make their own choices, selecting toys and initiating play. The playroom in the childminder's home is well laid out to incorporate free play and relaxation. The day's activities are organised to provide opportunities and experiences both inside and outdoors. A flexible timetable is followed to facilitate taking and collecting children from school. Local facilities are effectively used with visits to toddler groups, parks and play areas.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Some recommendations were made at the last inspection regarding updating resources which promote diversity and updating knowledge of child protection and first aid. The childminder has completed courses in first aid and child protection and she has increased her resources which reflect diversity.

Complaints 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. 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 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):

- obtain information about procedures regarding communicable illnesses to ensure appropriate action is taken when a child is unwell
- ensure that children have easy access to drinks at all times
- further develop knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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