



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	322203
Inspection date	05 September 2006
Inspector	Michele Anne Villiers
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 has been registered for several years. She lives with her husband and two adult children in the suburbs of south Liverpool. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children and currently has two children under five and three children over five on her register. The childminder attends the local toddler group and takes children for regular walks.

The childminder has a qualification in childcare and is active in the local childminding network. The family has a dog, cat and a rabbit.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and very well maintained home where the childminder follows good procedures to help meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene throughout the daily routine, and individual hand towels are provided. The childminder takes positive steps to help prevent the spread of infection by wearing disposable gloves when changing nappies, and she uses an appropriate nappy change mat. The children's welfare is taken into account if they are sick and there is a written exclusion policy shared with parents. The administration of medication is well documented, along with parental consent. All accidents are recorded and the childminder holds a first aid certificate in order to deal with any minor injuries.

Exercise and fresh air are very much incorporated into the daily routine, helping to foster the children's health, growth and development. Children enjoy a wide range of outdoor toys, such as a climbing frame, small slide, trampoline, play tent, and several wheeled toys. On mild days young children sleep outside in their buggies, benefiting from the fresh air. Planned activities include digging and growing flowers, visits to the local park, and walks to the shops. The routine of babies and young children is respected. They sleep and feed when required and receive close support and attention, helping to foster their emotional well-being.

Children enjoy a balanced nutritional diet that includes fresh fruit each day, helping them to make healthy choices. Snacks are varied, and nutritional cereal bars are offered instead of sweets. Small bottles of fresh drinking water are available for older children to help themselves, and babies and young children are frequently offered drinks in order to quench their thirst.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure home. The environment is very welcoming for children and the childminder is vigilant about minimising the risks for them. Fire safety requirements are all in place and children learn about what to do in an emergency when they practise the fire evacuation procedure. This is recorded, although information is minimal with no record of how many children are evacuated and whether the procedure was successful within the appropriate time. Children further learn about safety through discussions on road safety, and stranger danger. On outings children wear bands with the childminder's name on, and the childminder has devised a written procedure to follow should children become lost, helping to further protect them.

Children independently select from a wide range of very good quality toys and equipment that meet safety standards. The childminder carefully supervises children's choice of toys, making sure they are appropriate for their age and stage of development. The play space is very child centred with child size furniture and areas for rest and relaxation. Babies and young children are safely strapped into chairs at meal times and buggies and car seats for outings.

Children are further safeguarded as the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues. She has attended training courses on how to deal with child protection concerns, and has a written statement on what to do and who to contact should she have any worries about a child, or if an allegation should be made whilst children are in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children happily settle in the childminder's care and eagerly engage in activities. They feel secure in a welcoming environment and confidently initiate interaction with the childminder. The childminder plans and provides interesting and stimulating activities to challenge the children and help them make progress in their all round development. Children particularly enjoy various art and craft activities, using different textured materials. They display their creative work on the walls, along with posters and colourful pictures.

Babies and young children access a good range of sensory resources and have fun blowing and catching bubbles, chuckling and giggling. They delight when playing with interactive activity centres, creating different coloured lights and musical sounds. The children's imagination is fostered well during role play and they enjoy a wide range of dressing up clothes. They show an interest in looking at books and listening to stories, and have fun making up their own stories when using the puppet theatre, helping to develop their language and literacy skills. Young children learn to skilfully stack blocks with good dexterity, and delight when they fall down. Children learn to socialise with others when they attend the local toddler group, and they enjoy visits to places of interest, such as a nearby farm where they have opportunities to handle small animals and ride on a tractor.

The childminder provides good support and sits with children encouraging and motivating their interest and play. She discusses colour, counting and shape with the children. Children use the play space well, choosing their toys and activities. The childminder encourages children to talk about their own experiences and past events, such as going to the park with grandad to feed the ducks with 'sandwiches'. The childminder forms a close and caring relationship with children and uses her knowledge and skills to help children develop physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually. She has completed the Birth to three matters training in order to help babies and young children become competent learners and skilful communicators through interesting, child initiated activities and good communication skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected as individuals and play a full part in the setting. They are happy, and confidently express their needs. Children learn about different cultures and the wider world in which they live through a good range of toys and resources and meaningful activities. They play with different cultural dolls and a 'Thai House' with play people, and visit places of interest such as the Chinese Pagoda in China Town. Children access a wide range of books, puzzles and toys reflecting positive images, and learn about disability when playing with dolls in wheelchairs

and with walking sticks. They learn about helping others and participate in fundraising events, such as completing a charitable walk for Barnardos to raise money for Children in Need.

The positive environment and constant praise from the childminder reinforces the children's good behaviour and fosters their confidence and self-esteem. They are encouraged to share and take turns, and for older children to help younger ones. They demonstrate good manners, saying 'please' and 'thank you', and cooperate in response to simple instructions, such as tidying toys away and sitting down for drinks and snacks.

Children benefit from the good relationship the childminder has with parents. Parents are welcomed into the home at any time. Information is shared through informal daily discussion and written documentation about the provision. Thank you cards evidence the parents satisfaction with positive comments, such as 'Thank you for your help and kindness'.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is committed to improving her own knowledge and skills which contributes to the children's care, welfare and development. She has accessed several training courses since the last inspection, including new initiatives such as the Birth to three matters framework. She effectively uses her skills to provide a wide range of interesting activities and play opportunities for children.

The environment is well organised and children develop a strong sense of belonging. All documentation, pertaining to childminding, is in place, with many comprehensive written policies and procedures to share with parents. The childminder is aware of recording any complaints. However, she is not familiar with the new system of recording complaints, in order to ensure that the information relates to the National Standards.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended: that the childminder should increase resources that reflect positive images of race, culture, gender and disability; and ensure sufficient information is recorded when administering medication. The childminder has purchased several new toys and resources to reflect positive images, including books, puzzles, posters and dolls. She also uses the local library and toy library to supplement her toys. All required information is recorded when children are administered with medication and parental consent obtained prior to children starting.

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 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):

- become familiar with the correct procedure for recording complaints
- review the recording of the fire evacuation to include more detail.

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