



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	402375
Inspection date	30 August 2006
Inspector	Ron Goldsmith
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 since 2000. She lives with her husband and two children age nine and 16 years in Ellesmere Port. The lounge, conservatory and kitchen are used for childminding and the bathroom and daughter's bedroom on the first floor. There is a garden area to the rear.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children aged under eight. She currently minds five children at different times, three under school age. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. It is a non-smoking household. The family have a rabbit which is kept in a hutch in the garden.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children develop a healthy lifestyle through having daily exercise and fresh air. The childminder plans a good range of activities which helps children to enjoy the outdoors. They regularly visit places of local interest such as Stanney Woods and make occasional visits to places further away such as the beach.

Children learn to follow good routines in personal hygiene and cleanliness, washing their hands before eating and after going to the toilet. Children that attend the setting are rarely ill because it is explained well to parents in the sickness policy that those children who are infectious should stay at home.

Children enjoy a well balanced and nutritious diet and learn about how this affects their bodies. Children enjoy trying food which is slightly different, for example, they have Moroccan vegetables and they are introduced to different foods such as kiwi fruit or mangoes. The childminder links this to children's understanding of the wider world. All food is cooked from fresh ingredients, avoiding processed food as much as possible. Children enjoy their food because they are often involved in helping to prepare it, such as the fruit flan, which they have planned to make later in the day. They drink plenty of water and diluted juice, especially in hot weather.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy in the welcoming environment. The childminder ensures most hazards are isolated and equipment is safe, however a radiator cap is missing, an electrical mains box is accessible to children, there are no smoke alarms fitted. The childminder has recently moved premises. Children rarely have an accident in the setting because of good supervision and the childminder's understanding of their physical capabilities.

Children access a range of good quality safe resources which are easily reached and accessible. They enjoy using the garden area, however there is a small gap in the fence line. When away from the premises the childminder ensures safety by holding the hands of children. The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and the signs and symptoms of abuse. She ensures children are not left alone with anyone who has not been checked for suitability.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and relaxed. They benefit from having their individual needs met within excellent, warm and caring relationships which contributes to their sense of belonging. Children gain good levels of self-esteem and confidence in the child centred environment, where they experience consistent support, praise and encouragement. The genuine interest

the childminder takes in the children and their welfare helps them feel confident enough to talk about their needs and ask questions.

Children's learning is extended by the use of conversation and imaginative art and craft work. Their all-round development is further fostered by the childminder encouraging them to gain independence, make decisions, explore and participate in all areas of learning and play. For example, younger children are helped to recognise letters and numbers. They practise writing their own names. Children self select games and activities and are cooperative in their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children settle very well because the childminder makes good use of parents' knowledge to meet their individual needs and to make them welcome. They learn to respect diversity using some good resources which reflect this, such as a range of books. Older children are helped to learn about their own and other people's cultures through participating in activities, such as sampling food. Craft activities are linked to different to different festivals.

Children behave very well, they understand that there are boundaries. This is due to the childminder setting clear boundaries and having a positive approach towards the children, which encourages their good behaviour. There are opportunities for children to play with others of their own age. Children help to care for each other.

The childminder ensures children are able to make their own choices from a range of equipment to suit varying interests and abilities. Children's individual needs are met well in partnership with parents. The childminder has experience of including children with learning difficulties. Good relationships are fostered with parents through daily informal contact and there is generally good written information available for parents in written policies and procedures and a formal contract. This helps parents work in partnership with the childminder for the welfare of the children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her day, the premises and the resources well so that children enjoy themselves and their needs are met. She understands the ratios to be met and considers children's capabilities and the practicalities of meeting individual needs.

Most regulatory records are suitably organised and kept up to date. However, written information for parents about compliments and concerns has not been updated following changes to regulations in October 2005.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two recommendations for the childminder to meet following the last inspection. Since then she has moved home. Although most areas of the premises are generally safe, some new areas of concern were identified at this inspection. This means that children's safety overall is still not fully assured.

Good progress has been made in improving the knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues. Books have been obtained to reflect diversity and activities, such as sampling food from different countries, are devised, to help children be more aware of similarities and difference. This contributes to better outcomes for children's awareness of diversity in society.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. The childminder is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint 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):

- devise a system for recording any complaints made by parents and ensure that they understand the role of the regulatory body in investigating complaints
- improve safety by ensuring the garden is secure at all times, smoke alarms are positioned at every level of the house, the electric cupboard is inaccessible and the radiator valve is protected.

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