



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	301399
Inspection date	12 September 2006
Inspector	Christine Myerscough

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 outstanding. 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 1987. She lives with her husband and their adult daughter. They live in a house in Oldham. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. Children also have access to a bedroom and bathroom facilities which are upstairs. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered for a maximum of six children and has 14 children on roll who attend on either a full or part-time basis. She minds with her husband who is also a registered childminder, and together they may care for a maximum of 12 children. Both childminder's have joint responsibility for the childminding practice. Occasionally, the childminder works alongside her daughter who acts as an assistant.

The family has a cat. The childminder walks to a local school to take and collect children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and also a member of the Oldham

Childminding Network. She holds a Cache Level 3 Certificate in Childminding Practice and has completed the Investors in Children Quality Assurance award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Exceptional support and guidance from the childminder, through daily practices and thematic planning, helps children gain an excellent understanding about how to keep themselves healthy. They show a real desire to become independent in their personal care, have easy access to the toilet and learn to wash their hands without assistance from an early age. Children successfully use the dispenser with anti-bacterial soap after toileting and understand the purpose of hand washing in removing germs.

The childminder is an excellent role model to children on hygiene practices. For example, wiping the table immediately after use and washing her hands thoroughly at regular intervals. She implements robust nappy changing procedures, wearing protective gloves to ensure there is no risk of cross infection to children, and is vigilant in ensuring spillages on the carpet are wiped up speedily. High standards of cleanliness are maintained across the property and toys are kept extremely clean. Children demonstrate enthusiasm and a strong sense of responsibility in helping to keep the environment clean and tidy. For example, without any prompting or seeking assistance, they put away the bean bag cushions after use; wipe their feet on the mat as they come in from outside and competently brush the sand from the floor. The childminder follows guidelines from her training in food hygiene to ensure that surfaces, appliances and kitchen tools are clean and used appropriately.

Children are clearly aware of good nutrition and understand the benefits of a healthy diet. The childminder is very aware of the many learning opportunities to promote their understanding about healthy eating. Children look at colourful and highly informative posters which are displayed on the wall and discuss interesting facts about foods. The childminder prepares nutritious homemade meals, such as pasta dishes in line with her healthy food and drink policy. Her appetising cottage pie is a particular favourite with children. Children have opportunities to eat organic fruit and vegetables and the childminder introduces new foods for children to try and taste, such as carrot sticks. Children take responsibly for setting the table and remind one another about how to set out the knives and forks. They willingly wear their bibs whilst eating spaghetti bolognese and remind their friends that it can be very messy. Children are given plenty of time to savour and enjoy their food as mealtimes are a relaxed and social occasion. A menu is available so parents are fully informed about meal choices.

Children benefit from an extensive range of activities which promote their physical development and contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Every day they walk to school. They enjoy plenty of fresh air and experience the elements as they play out in all weathers wearing protective clothing, such as Wellington boots and rain coats. Indoors, they adapt the layout of the play room to create space to play, show real enthusiasm as they move their bodies and demonstrate fantastic expressive dance moves to music. Children take delight as they stamp their feet vigorously and sing to the 'Grand Old Duke of York'. They have fun as they form a line and hold onto one

another's waist to walk around the house. The childminder's beautifully designed, very well organised and equipped garden provides children with a range of wonderful experiences. They become experts at negotiating challenging steps and extreme confidence is shown as they jump on the trampoline. At activity based centres, children demonstrate total excitement as they ride down huge slides.

Excellent recognition of how a baby's behaviour slightly changes when they are feeling tired ensures their well-being is fully ensured. Children have individual mats and blankets and sleep comfortably and undisturbed in the living room. They relax, curl up and snuggle into their bean bags next to one another to feel cosy and take a well earned rest.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an exceptionally well-maintained home. They have a very safe environment in which to play as risks are substantially minimised due to the diligence of the childminder. Every potential hazard is risk assessed and extra precautionary measures are in place. For example, there are corner protectors on the coffee table and the childminder ensures when purchasing low-level glass furniture, it is accompanied with an appropriate certificate to ensure it is toughened and meets regulations. High regard is given to children's safety whilst they are sleeping. The childminder is vigilant by actively listening, undertaking regular checks on children and carrying the baby monitor around with her. Children are exceedingly well supervised both indoors and outdoors. The childminder liaises extremely closely with her co-childminder to ensure they are both effectively deployed to maintain children's safety and know their whereabouts at all times. As a consequence, children feel totally secure and move around with great confidence. Children use an extensive amount of high quality toys and equipment which meet their needs extremely well. Additional resources are rotated regularly to provide children with a broader range of experiences.

Robust and clear procedures are in place to avoid dangers outdoors. Children are escorted safely when walking along the pavement. For example, the childminder stands at the front of the line of children and her co-childminder at the back. Older children are also given permission to lead the way so they learn a sense of responsibility. Younger ones wear wrist straps or hold onto the buggy. Children develop a very good understanding about keeping themselves safe and a keen awareness of road safety issues.

Children's welfare is considered to be of paramount importance. The child protection policy shows a strong regard for children's welfare. Parents are fully informed of the action that would be taken in the event of a concern and are asked to sign to state that they have read and understood the policy. By attending training courses, the childminder has ensured that her practice is underpinned by up-to-date knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and also the correct procedures to follow.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely well cared for and thoroughly enjoy their time in the childminder's home. The nurturing environment and the childminder sensitive, very caring nature increase children's sense of trust. As a consequence, they feel totally secure and build a strong sense of self.

Children achieve extremely well because the childminder is highly skilled and uses her exceptional understanding of early years guidance, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide high quality care. She devotes her time to playing with children and her fun and enthusiastic approach enhances their desire to take part in activities. Babies' early communication skills are extremely well supported through spontaneous, high quality adult to child interactions. The childminder talks to babies in a gentle manner using a range of tones to capture their interest and, makes excellent use of eye contact to engage them. Babies explore a highly stimulating and attractive treasure basket with great curiosity. They use all their senses as they play and investigate wooden items, shells and shiny pebbles. The childminder waves a scarf in the air as they lay on their back. They open their eyes wide and look up in amazement. As they feel an extensive range of textures, such as soft and smooth, they respond by making different sounds and vigorously move their legs and arms with excitement. They become calm, relax and show a sense of wonder as the childminder strokes the skin on their hands gently with very soft brushes.

Children show great enthusiasm in play and develop an excellent attitude to learning. They are purposefully engaged in a wealth of activities throughout the day which are exceptionally well matched to their needs and interests. Children have their own plot in the garden where they learn about nature and plant bulbs. They enthusiastically and successfully count out pieces of pasta and match bugs to picture cards. Children gain further in confidence and knowledge as spontaneous opportunities are seized to extend their learning. For example, children took delight in going outside to meet and stroke a horse which was passing by the childminder's house. They took great pleasure in looking and talking about the photographs following the event. Children freely select and become absorbed in books. They show high levels of confidence as they stand up in front of their friends to recite poetry from memory. They enjoy their audience and following their performance, they willingly and proudly accept the spontaneous round of applause. Children have exceptional opportunities to go out on regular outings which are inspiring and educational. For example, they make visits to farms, parks and go on trips to Chester zoo. By the time they go to nursery, they are ready and very well prepared to accept the transition to their new environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children show a strong sense of belonging to the group, being familiar with routine and knowing what is expected of them. Their individual needs and characters are clearly understood and respected by the childminder. Children create their own colourful welcome signs for their friends which are on display on the play room door. Their shoes are placed in boxes labelled with their name and they hang up their coats independently on child height pegs. Children share wonderful moments in their lives together. For example, they celebrate their birthdays with a party and

cake and, receive presents from their friends. Photographs of the event are taken so their special day can be remembered and treasured. This helps them to feel very important and good about themselves.

Children develop a healthy respect for others and a high awareness of similarities and differences in people and the way they live. They have numerous opportunities and activities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, children play with a wealth of resources that promote all aspects of diversity and handle interesting artefacts from the childminder's visits around the world. Their awareness of diversity is further developed through practical first-hand experiences. They make special outings to shops in the local community to explore the different types of food available. During Chinese New Year, they visited a Chinese supermarket to purchase noodles and rice. On their return home, they practised their skills using chop sticks.

The childminder is proactive in ensuring she is in a position to care for children with a range of needs. She has attended courses for example, on the care of children with asthma and epilepsy to extend her knowledge and confidence in dealing with any specific requirements. Sensitive use of stories helps children to develop a very good understanding of the needs of others. The childminder explains issues through, such as why people wear glasses and links this to characters in books.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They take responsibility for deciding and writing the house rules, such as remember your manners, show politeness and look after the babies. These are on display on the wall for everyone to see. They play together harmoniously as they ride on their bikes and have a super time with their friends. The childminder is extremely skilled and sensitive in the management of behaviour. She uses language, such as brilliant and excellent when offering them praise so they develop a high level of self-confidence in their abilities. A vast array of shiny stars is on display on the behaviour chart to recognise children's achievements. This helps them to develop a strong self-esteem and feel proud. Children show respect and great care and concern for others. They remind their friends to speak quietly because the baby has just woken up and gently stroke her leg to offer reassurance.

An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being. Parents speak highly about the care and activities for their children and describe the service as first class. Their comments are highly valued. The childminder actively seeks their views through discussion and the use of very detailed parental questionnaires. Parents are fully informed about the service via a range of different sources. They receive an attractive brochure about the childminder's practices and other important information is on display on the wall in the reception area. An open door policy and flexible approach reassures parents and they develop a strong sense of trust with the childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by clear aims and exceptional organisation. The childminder spends considerable time and effort planning experiences to ensure children have plenty of fun. As a consequence, they relish their time with her and giggle and laugh out loud

often. The childminder organises her home exceedingly well to accommodate different activities and children have the sole use of a dedicated, purpose built play room. Strong emphasis is placed on ensuring it is a welcoming environment to children and their families. The play areas lead directly onto the garden and children enjoy the freedom of making their own decisions as to whether they play indoors or outdoors.

Children benefit from a well qualified and very experienced childminder who gives high regard to their welfare. She has a strong commitment towards her ongoing professional development and the continuous improvement of her childminding practice. For example, she frequently attends training courses on a wide range of subjects to keep fully abreast of current issues in child care. She regularly reflects on, monitors and improves the quality of the care that she offers as part of a local network and a quality assurance scheme. This has a major impact on the service she delivers as she incorporates new ways of working to ensure children receive the best possible care. All legally required records and documentation are in extremely good order to ensure the smooth running of her business. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures which are individual to the childminder and regularly reviewed, support and enhance all aspects of her work successfully. This maintains a highly efficient service to ensure children's well-being.

The childminder works extremely well and in close partnership with her co-childminder. A shared purpose and a collaborative approach in ensuring high regard is given to the National Standards means outcomes for children are excellent. 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 agreed to ensure parents know how to complain to Ofsted should the need arise. A poster is on display in the reception area and provides Ofsted's contact details if parents wish to comment on the service being offered. The childminder has updated her complaints procedure and has the necessary records in place in line with revisions to the National Standards. This enables parents to resolve any issues and protects children's welfare.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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