



Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 980398 |
| 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 2001. He lives with his wife 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. He minds with his wife 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 his daughter who acts as an assistant.

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

Childminding Network. He 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.

Children clearly thrive and stay healthy because the childminder follows highly effective and robust procedures and practices. He follows guidelines from his training in food hygiene to ensure that surfaces, appliances and kitchen tools are clean and used appropriately. High standards of cleanliness are also maintained across his home. Regular checks are carried out to ensure the contents of his first aid box meet with the necessary requirements and he purchases extra equipment, such as a device to monitor a child's temperature. This enables him to be vigilant about protecting children's health. Children develop exceptionally high standards of independence in their personal care and an excellent understanding about how to keep themselves healthy through daily routines. They know about germs and confidently follow the sign on the toilet door reminding them to wash their hands after toileting.

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 stack the chairs on top of one another, remove and line up their shoes neatly in a line before entering the house and fold the floor mat after snack with absolute precision.

Children benefit greatly from a varied, nutritious diet in line with the childminder's healthy food and drink policy. This strongly promotes their growth and development. Children talk about their favourite healthy snacks, such as breadsticks and fruit. They have devised their own healthy snack poster which contributes significantly to their understanding of which foods are good for you. Children are given plenty of time to savour and enjoy their food as mealtimes are a relaxed and social occasion. At snack time, children tuck in to a most appealing platter of juicy fruits and have opportunities to taste organic produce. When they have finished the apples, one child says to another 'let's try the pear'. On their return from school, older children make a list to request which healthy snacks they would like to eat. A menu is available so parents are fully informed about meal choices.

Children enjoy plenty of fresh air and an extensive range of activities to promote their fitness levels and physical development. This contributes strongly to a healthy lifestyle. Every day they walk to school. Children 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. They show real enthusiasm as they move their bodies and demonstrate fantastic expressive dance moves to music. They use all their strength to stretch up high as they sing 'twinkle twinkle little star' and spontaneously spread their fingers to make a diamond shape. The childminder's beautifully designed and very well organised and equipped garden provides children with a range of wonderful experiences. Extreme confidence is shown as children pedal their bikes successfully and they become experts at negotiating the challenging different levels and steps in the garden. Children learn about how activity affects

their bodies. The childminder draws children's attention to detail and reminds them to feel their heart beat after a movement session.

Children's well-being is fully assured as they 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 where their safety is given top priority. Thorough and regular written risk assessments are undertaken and an action plan addresses and rectifies any potential hazards. This ensures children have a very safe environment in which to play and prevents them coming to harm. As a consequence, children feel totally at ease and move around with high levels of confidence. Children are exceedingly well supervised both indoors and outdoors. The childminder also has an excellent understanding of creating a balance between encouraging children's freedom and setting safe limits to maintain their safety. Children enjoy an extensive amount of high quality toys and equipment. These meet their needs extremely well and are highly effective in stimulating their interests. Additional resources are rotated regularly to provide children with a broader range of experiences.

Children learn how to protect themselves in the event of a fire or emergency because the childminder involves them in regular evacuation drills. They respond extremely well by adopting a sensible attitude when the whistle is blown and develop an excellent understanding of the procedures to follow. An effective system ensures smoke alarms are always kept in working order and batteries are replaced on a frequent basis. Extra precautionary measures are also in place, such as a carbon monoxide detector as well as a yearly check to ensure the safety of gas appliances.

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 his 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. They are eager to attend and relish their time in the childminder's care and home. On arrival, they confidently make their entrance known, greet their friends and sit down to chat. Children flourish as they have many stimulating experiences that promote all aspects of their learning and development. The childminder establishes a super rapport with children and his passion for fun highly motivates them. This impacts strongly on their learning and they approach all areas of their play with an excellent attitude and great enthusiasm. A flexible and child-centred approach to planning and an excellent balance between

adult-led and child-initiated activities also enables children to learn at their own pace. They giggle and laugh out loud often because they thoroughly enjoy themselves.

Children achieve extremely well because the childminder is highly skilled and uses his exceptional understanding of early years guidance, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide high quality care. They are purposefully engaged and fully supported to reach their potential. The childminder devotes his time to playing with children and he gets down to their level and follows their lead. Playing so closely together helps children to become engrossed in activities and they develop high levels of concentration. Emphasis is placed on supporting children's communication skills through good quality interactions and effective questioning. The activities and experiences provided are exceptionally well matched to children's needs and interests.

Children busily mark make as they select rollers and brushes from their decorating trays and splash water on the outside walls and paving stones. The childminder places strong emphasis on developing children's appreciation of music. As a consequence, they sing with gusto accompanied by the childminder on his guitar. They know a range of rhymes and confidently select their favourites, such as 'I'm a little tea pot' and all join in with the actions. The use of puppets in play produces plenty of excitement from children. Children sit together in the corner of the room and wait patiently in eager anticipation for Mr Brown the bear to enter the room. They respond sensitively to him, recognising he is a shy bear. They slowly approach him, talk in soft tones and gently stroke his fur. The childminder uses puppetry to explain the hibernation process to children and they learn that this is the reason why Mr Brown has been asleep for a long time. On Valentines Day, children watch chocolate melt and solidify to form a heart shape and decorate their creations. 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 are highly valued as individuals. Significant events in their lives, such as birthdays are recognised and every child's special day is marked with their photograph on the birthday wheel display. This helps children to feel very important and good about themselves. Children eagerly await and look forward to the first initial of their name being displayed on the wall. They become excited as they know this means that it will their birthday next.

Children have equal access to a wealth of well presented play resources and activities to help them value diversity. They develop a strong awareness about their local community and the wider world through imaginatively planned activities and visits to local places of interest. For example, children take their clip boards outdoors to count the number and types of vehicles they can see on the road. On their return home, they record their findings on a chart and point to it with pride and interest. Children practise their skills in Chinese writing and create beautiful and colourful dragon heads during Chinese New Year. They learn about the plight of others through very well thought out activities and discuss significant world events, such as the Tsunami. They thoroughly enjoy taking part in a sing-a-long, record their voices and capture them on a compact disc to raise money for the disaster fund. Children have exceptional opportunities to go out on regular outings which are inspiring and educational. For example, they visit Southport beach and an aquarium. Children also gain immense pleasure from exciting

experiences through planned events. A pre-arranged visit from the fire service enables children to have a fantastic day as they sit in the fire engine, use the radio and squirt water from the hose.

Children's behaviour is exemplary due to the childminder's consistent and highly skilled approach in promoting positive behaviour. Children show respect for themselves and others, encouraged by the childminder setting a superb example. Older children remind others of the house rules which are on display, such as 'we are all friends here'. They play together harmoniously as they ride on their bikes and have a super time with their friends. Children show great care and concern for others. For example, after two children bump into one another by accident, they spontaneously hug. As they gather around a toddler to help him out of his vehicle, they realise he wants some space and move away. Children develop a strong sense of belonging and high self-esteem. Achievements are documented and celebrated as each child has their own book with samples of their work. Their name is also highlighted on the start of the moment chart for their personal achievements. The childminder is highly skilled in photography and uses these talents to produce wonderful and stunning photographs of children at play. Children take absolute delight in watching a slide show of themselves on the computer.

The childminder is proactive in ensuring he is in a position to care for children with a range of needs. He has attended courses for example, on the care of children with asthma and epilepsy to extend his 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.

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 day is extremely well planned to maximise opportunities so children have plenty of fun. The sharing of experiences on a daily basis enables children to feel totally secure. The premises are exceptionally well-organised to accommodate different activities and children also have the sole use of a dedicated, purpose built play room. The effective layout enables older children to play games peacefully without being disturbed by the younger ones. 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.

The childminder is well qualified and experienced in child care and gives high regard to children's welfare. He has a strong commitment towards his ongoing professional development and the continuous improvement of his childminding practice. For example, he frequently attends

training courses on a wide range of subjects to keep fully abreast of current issues in child care. He regularly reflects on, monitors and improves the quality of the care that he offers as part of a local network and a quality assurance scheme. This has a major impact on the service he delivers as he incorporates new ways of working to ensure children receive the best possible care. Records and documentation are in meticulous order and fully meet the requirements of the National standards. Comprehensive policies and procedures which are shared with parents strongly contribute to a highly effective operational plan and enhance all aspects of his work successfully. This maintains a highly efficient service to ensure children's well-being is fully ensured.

The childminder works extremely well and in close partnership with his 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 his 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 fully 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