



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	316052
Inspection date	25 September 2006
Inspector	Marina Anna Howarth
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 1988. She lives with her adult son in Smithybridge, near Rochdale. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, with toilet facilities located on the first floor and there is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time. She is currently minding six children under five years during the day on a full time and part time basis and one child over five years, before and after school and in the school holidays. She walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends a local carer and toddler group and helps to organise a weekly childminder drop-in group. She takes children on regular outings to the local library, park and nature centre. The family have two dogs. The childminder does not offer overnight care for children.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where the childminder actively promotes good hygiene practice by implementing regular routines for cleaning the home and equipment. Children are developing an awareness of how to keep themselves healthy through personal hygiene and care. For example, they are aware that they need to wash their hands after visiting the toilet, touching the pets and before handling food. They are also aware of the location of wet wipes, booster step and tissues, this enables them to access the items independently and as a result this contributes to their health and well-being.

Children are alert and well rested as the childminder gives high regard to their individual routines for rest and sleep. Sleeping and resting arrangements take place in the hall or living room where children are closely monitored and supervised. For example, one child falls asleep on the way home from nursery and is left to rest undisturbed until he is ready to wake unaided. As a result of this children are comfortable, refreshed and the continuity of care is maintained.

Children are learning about healthy eating as the childminder provides them with a healthy selection of snacks and meals. Their individual dietary needs are met because the childminder works well with parents, who are kept informed through daily verbal feedback. The childminder offers a flexible service where parents are given the option to send packed lunches if they wish. Snacks and mealtimes are treated as a social occasion where all children are given the opportunity to sit together and relate to each other whilst they are eating. This is further enhanced by the childminder who sits with them. Children are encouraged to eat and the childminder is sensitive to individual needs, giving more support when required. Children are developing an understanding of different types of food from around the world, as they are encouraged to participate in tasting activities and the celebration of different festivals. Children are offered a variety of refreshments throughout the day which ensures they are well nourished and hydrated. Parents are requested to provide their own cups to enable children to identify what is theirs and promote their independence.

Children are alert and healthy because the childminder provides them with daily opportunities for physical exercise and fresh air, which she ensures are enjoyable and meets their developmental needs. As a result, children enjoy indoor and outdoor activities which contributes to their good health and helps them to develop control of their bodies. For example, they go on daily walks to and from school. They visit the local park, explore nature trails, and attend annual outings to a variety of places, such as the farm and different activity centres.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a child focused, welcoming environment where their developmental needs are met through the provision of a broad range of safe, good quality resources. These are organised well and located in storage boxes which enable children to have independent access and view them easily. Children are learning about hygiene and cleanliness as the

childminder explains what she is doing when she wipes their hands and tidies up. For example, a young child wipes the surface of the tray on his booster seat, where his lunch plate is located, with a wet wipe when he has finished lunch.

The childminder takes positive steps to promote safety and keep children safe and views this as being essential to their welfare and well-being. She provides safe and well maintained furniture and equipment to meet the needs of the children. This allows them the freedom to make choices in the setting.

Children are safe because the childminder uses her awareness to ensure appropriate safety measures are in place and ensures children are made aware of potential risks. As a result, dangerous situations are avoided as she has policies and procedures in place which are reflected in the setting. For example, this is illustrated through fire safety awareness, as the childminder has an emergency evacuation plan in place which is discussed and practised with the children every half term.

The childminder is skilled in achieving a good balance between freedom and safe limits. She ensures children are safe through being vigilant but also positively promoting their growing independence. For example, when walking to and from school younger children are escorted through the use of wrist bands and reins, when they have progressed they can hold onto the pushchair. Road safety is discussed and older children are aware they must stop at the curb and wait for the childminder to arrive before crossing the road.

She has all the required knowledge, procedures and documentation in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. For example, she has recently attended child protection training and demonstrates a sound knowledge of her responsibility to protect children in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and secure while at the childminder's home. They are independently able to access an interesting and stimulating balance of activities within the home, outdoors and through other provisions, such as toddler groups. The children are settled in the warm, child focused environment where they benefit from consistent routines which mirror their routines at home. Children share a warm, loving relationship with the childminder as they respond and interact well together, which results in children being settled and secure.

Children are given opportunities to select activities of their choice. These are made easily accessible and the children are aware of their location. Resources and activities are suitable to meet the individual needs of children attending. These are rotated on a regular basis and children are offered additional stimulus through the use of the local resource centre and library.

Children are given opportunities to participate in planned activities, such as painting, sticking and dough. They also attend toddler groups, where there are opportunities to meet up with other childminders and their children and attend organised group outings to the farm, museum and seaside.

All children benefit from the childminder's ability to meet their individual needs through regular consultation with the parents. They are provided with consistent routines that offer stability. For example, sleep routines reflect consistency at home, as do meal times and free play.

Children are interested and enjoy their play opportunities. For example, they help themselves to the toys available, one child smiles happily as he empties the boxes and explores individual items. Two children sit on the bottom step of the stairs with a selection of books they have chosen. They look at the pictures together, pointing, naming items and clearly enjoy each other's company.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met because the childminder works in close partnership with parents. Their needs are met well in accordance with parents' wishes as their daily routines are incorporated into the childminder's day, such as routines for sleeping and dietary needs. Children's care is enhanced by the good opportunities in place to exchange information on a daily basis. For example, the childminder ensures she is available for discussion and makes alternative arrangements if this has not been possible, such as phone contact and daily diaries.

Children are rewarded for their good behaviour by verbal praise and encouragement. Reward stickers are also used and the childminder works closely with parents to ensure consistency is maintained and there is no conflict of interests. As a result children are well behaved, they listen to the childminder and respond in a positive manner. Children are happy, interact and play well together. They share a warm, loving relationship with the childminder and are developing good relationships with their peers. For example, children are aware of each other's presence, they take interest in what each other are doing and are beginning to communicate as their language is developing. Older children take on a nurturing, caring role to the younger children. Children are forming bonds with each other and are able to relate to children who are not present. For example, one child inquires where another is and then goes on to explain he is at nursery and will be home to play soon.

Children are beginning to learn about society through experiences offered to them by the provision of well planned activities. For example, children learn about other cultures by participating in the celebration of festivals and tasting different foods. They are beginning to develop an awareness of the wider world through positive images of gender role models, race and disability through resources, such as books, figures and puzzles. They are given further opportunities to access resources which depict positive images through the local resource centre and toddler groups. As a result of this children are becoming aware of differences in a positive way.

All children within the setting are involved and included as they are given various opportunities to learn through play. At times activities are adapted to meet individual needs. For example, older children are given opportunities to instigate their own creative activities, using different equipment. Younger children are given opportunities to explore through their senses, using their hands, as inclusion is given a high priority.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are comfortable and content in the welcoming environment. Space is well organised which enables children to develop their independence and confidence by freely accessing toys of their choice.

Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote safety, care and learning of children. These are shared with parents which keeps them informed about all aspects of the service and care offered. However, although there is a format for recording complaints, there is no information of the regulating body's contact address and telephone details. The exchanging of information with parents regarding the children's daily progress is given high priority and time is made daily for individual parents for verbal feedback. Recording systems, such as daily dairies have also been implemented in the past.

The childminder has been registered for nineteen years. She has a high level of commitment to attending further training and updating her skills and knowledge. She has recently attended child protection training and an introduction to 'Birth to three matters' which is at the early stages of being reflected in her practice. She is also due to commence training in a childcare diploma. As a result children continue to benefit greatly from her continued enthusiasm and commitment to good childcare practice.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, one recommendation was raised for the childminder to develop her knowledge and understanding about whom to contact if concerned about a child.

She has recently attended training on child protection which complies with the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. She now has a sound understanding of signs and symptoms of abuse, procedures to follow and is clear who to contact in the event of concerns arising. As a result the continuity of children's welfare is being safeguarded.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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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):

- develop the complaints procedure to include the address and telephone number of the regulator.

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