



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	501585
Inspection date	21 September 2006
Inspector	Cathleen 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 registered in 2001. She lives with her partner and two children aged six and nine in Dobcross, Oldham. Most of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed area for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding five children mainly on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. Transport can also be arranged. The childminder attends local parent and toddler and playgroups.

The childminder has obtained a quality assurance award from the local authority and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are suitably protected from infection and are taken care of if they have an accident or become ill. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place. For example, medication and accident records are kept to promote children's continuing care. The childminder maintains adequate standards of hygiene and cleanliness in areas used by children. Children are beginning to understand simple good health and hygiene practices, and are usually reminded to wash their hands before eating. The childminder implements satisfactory procedures for nappy changing and toilet training, to ensure the personal care needs of children are met.

The childminder sufficiently promotes children's awareness of a healthy lifestyle by talking to them and explaining what is good for them, in a fun way, such as eating healthily and exercising. Children enjoy playing outside and use suitable outdoor play equipment, such as ride-on and push along toys. This enables children to develop muscle tone and coordination. Children rest and sleep according to their needs, and there is relevant provision for this in the upper rooms.

Children are beginning to learn the importance of eating healthily. The childminder reinforces this by regularly providing a balanced range of nutritional food and drinks. Children's favourites include pitta bread with ham or cheese salad and fruit. Food preparation procedures are sound.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning to discover boundaries and limits, such as not going out of the gate unsupervised in order to keep safe. The environment is generally kept safe by the childminder with sound understanding of the need for a balance between freedom and safe limits. The environment is appropriately risk assessed before children arrive.

Children have safe and independent access to a wide range of age-appropriate toys, furniture and resources. Items used by children are of suitable design and condition, which the childminder checks regularly for repair and replacement. Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder consistently uses appropriate child safety seats and restraints in the car.

Most fire safety precautions are in place, however, there are insufficient smoke detectors which hinders children's overall safety at the setting. The current public liability insurance certificate is available for parents to view.

Children are sufficiently safeguarded because the childminder clearly understands her role in child protection, and is aware of the procedures to follow should a concern arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children access and use a broad range of resources to support their overall development. The childminder professionally plans and evaluates activities with children. They find their resources fun and challenging. This helps to focus their attention on the wide range of opportunities to learn through play. Interesting themes and topics, such as number and letter recognition, are consistently incorporated into children's play. Children have fun playing various board games, like snakes and ladders. They thoroughly enjoy outings to different places of interest. The childminder effectively links trips to activities at the setting to extend children's learning. Children appropriately engage in quiet, relaxing activities, such as listening to classical music.

Children build on their natural curiosity as learners effectively developing their language when they play tunes on the piano and sing songs. They use their imagination and initiative fully when they make hand prints, cards and string paintings. Children are developing meaningful social relationships and are learning to share toys and take turns. They are developing good levels of confidence when they persist with artwork. During the Elma the elephant activity children used scissors and cut, glued and stuck shapes in appropriate places. Children accomplish new knowledge and skills when they use buckets and spades in the garden. They dig up the soil and adeptly use spades to fill buckets with soil. They empty the soil from the bucket into a child-sized wheelbarrow, and carefully push the wheelbarrow, negotiating uneven ground to prevent the wheelbarrow from tipping over. Children respond very well to challenge. Some children have learnt to match shoes, pair socks, button up coats, and use zips. This is purposefully done to develop children's independence and self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal concern and are fully included and involved. Children's individual needs are well met as the childminder has sound knowledge and understanding of each child's background, stage of development and additional requirements. Children are developing a positive awareness of diversity through toys, resources and various interesting activities. There are effective systems in place to provide for children with special needs.

Children generally behave well. Squabbles and differences that are likely to escalate are quickly dealt with by the childminder. She uses age-appropriate strategies, such as explaining consequences to manage a broad range of children's differing behaviour. Their good behaviour is actively encouraged through positive role modelling, meaningful praise and valuing good behaviour. There is a skilful balance of adult led and child initiated activities, which allow children to make choices and decisions to promote their confidence and independence.

The childminder keeps parents fully informed on a daily basis. Both childminder and parents record relevant information in children's journals, to promote children's continuing care. Children are looked after according to parents' wishes, as the childminder obtains written parental consent for various childcare practices. Parents are unsure about the formal complaints procedure, which partially impedes partnership with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. She has successfully obtained a quality assurance award through the local authority, which is evident in the positive outcomes for children. The childminder makes full use of her time by planning activities. She deploys herself effectively and activities are well supported. Daily and weekly routines are established. Children are settled and feel secure in a predictable, stable environment.

Most of the required documentation is up to date to promote children's care, welfare and learning. Records are maintained in an orderly fashion for parents to view. Clearly written policies and procedures underpin 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 last inspection a recommendation was raised to increase equipment which reflects positive images of disability. The childminder has extended resources and activities to reflect positive images of diversity including disability. This is helping children develop a positive attitude to differences in the wider community.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 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):

- ensure smoke alarms which conform to BS EN safety standards are provided at every level of the house and maintained in working condition

- review the existing complaints procedure and include how parents may contact Ofsted if necessary.

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