



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY334892
Inspection date	04 December 2006
Inspector	Margaret Patricia Mellor
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 2006. She lives with her adult son in Liverpool. Children use the whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home for their play experiences and overnight care. There is no outdoor play area. The family has a dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years at any one time and overnight care for a maximum of two children aged under five years. There are three children on roll aged from 11 months to six years. She walks or uses her car to collect children from school and take them places. She regularly attends the local toddler group and childminder drop in sessions.

The childminder receives support from the local authority. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and local childminding network group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well as the childminder acts in their best interests when they are ill and ensures children use sun creams, hats and play in the shade on hot days. The childminder has a relevant first aid certificate and keeps two first aid boxes close at hand so that children's accidents are dealt with appropriately. This is supported by parental consent for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and children's detailed accident and medication records.

Children thrive because the childminder has a good understanding of health care issues, for instance, nappy changing, cleaning the toys and looking after the family dog. This helps to prevent the spread of cross-infection, promoting children's well-being. Younger children begin to learn simple personal hygiene as the childminder sensitively helps them with wiping noses and as they sing rhymes about how they brush their teeth. Older children build on their awareness through the childminder's gentle reminders to wash their hands after going to the toilet and as she explains why being hygienic is important.

Children enjoy plenty of activities that encourage them to be physically active. They go for a walk everyday and love to run in the fresh air, push or ride on wheeled toys, climb and move to music. This contributes to children's coordination and spatial awareness skills. Younger children's eagerness to be physically active is recognised and encouraged by the childminder as she organises the space so that babies can crawl and freely explore their environment. Children relish tactile and manipulative activities, which means that children's physical skills are extended through fun, play and learning experiences.

Children's awareness of a healthy lifestyle is fostered and encouraged. The childminder provides a wide variety of healthy snack options, such as toast and fresh or dried fruits. This increases children's awareness of a range of different tastes and textures, although there are no practical activities to reinforce children's awareness of healthy eating. Younger children have plenty of drinks and develop their coordination as they drink from their water bottle. Older children learn to listen to their bodies as they independently help themselves to water when thirsty or after exercise. Parents provide their child's lunch, which contributes to children's dietary needs and health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, clean and warm environment that meets their needs very well. They gain independence as they move freely and safely because the childminder's home is secure. This is supported by an effective procedure for the collection of children in an emergency. The childminder takes all the necessary precautions to ensure her home is safe, for instance, safety gates so children cannot wander into areas that may compromise their protection. Children are appropriately seated and secured in the childminder's car so they travel in safety and comfort. This means that the risk of children accidentally injuring themselves is minimised.

Children have access to a broad range of quality toys and equipment that are suitable for their age and stimulate enjoyment. Their self-esteem is promoted as they independently search out play materials that appeal to them from the tables, trays and toy boxes at child height. They have much fun as they eagerly pursue interests that appeal to them. Younger children love the phonic toys and respond gleefully at hearing the different sounds. They sit, play and eat together in comfort because the furniture is suitable for the range of children who attend. Children remain safe as the childminder follows appropriate health and safety procedures to ensure that the resources are maintained well.

Children learn aspects of safety as they regularly practise what to do in the event of a fire. They build on their awareness through the childminder's gentle reminders about how to behave on outings and to pick up the toys so they do not trip or hurt themselves. Children's protection is further assured as the childminder has a sound understanding of indicators of abuse and what to do in the event of identifying a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have plenty of fun and a good time in the childminder's home. They are making good progress in all areas of their development. They are involved in a stimulating range of activities, which actively engage their interests. Younger children's physical skills are promoted by pushing wheeled toys, eating with spoons or their fingers at mealtimes, and babies are encouraged to walk supported by the childminder. They listen to stories and look at books and sometimes recite numbers, shapes and colours when playing. Children are developing a sound awareness of how to behave and keep themselves healthy and safe.

Children are happy and relaxed in the childminder's home, promoting their personal, social and emotional development. They are gaining confidence as they build relationships with each other and the childminder who spends time talking, listening and playing with the children. Children have plenty of opportunities to join in activities as they play with the blocks and floor toys. They explore a wide range of creative activities and their imagination is fostered well. Children love to role play with the dolls, dress up, explore paint and draw with crayons. Younger children begin to develop a strong sense of self as they sing rhymes for instance, 'eyes, nose, fingers and toes'. All children explore their senses as they listen to music, taste different fruits and respond with gusto as they run their fingers through the water.

Children's experiences are enhanced through activities outside the childminder's home. They go for lots of walks to the park or shops and enjoy visits to places of interest, such as the museum. Younger children begin to appreciate the company of others through regular visits to the local toddler group and childminder drop in sessions. This provides children with positive experiences to play sociably alongside one another and with each other while the childminder is close by for reassurance.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and content in the childminder's home and the warm relationships between the children and childminder promotes children's sense of belonging. Children's play and activities help to make the environment relaxed, bright and attractive to the children. Their artwork is displayed on the playroom walls, promoting children's self-esteem and a welcoming environment for themselves and their parents. Children begin to develop positive attitudes towards others as they celebrate festivals, such as Easter, Carnival and Chinese New Year when they make cards. However, there are few multi-cultural or positive image resources reflecting race, gender or disability. This means that children's awareness of different lifestyles is not fully extended.

Children are cared for in a positive environment as the childminder uses plenty of praise and encouragement to acknowledge what children have done well. This helps children feel good about themselves. The childminder is very polite and attentive, encouraging children to talk about what they are doing, fostering their self-esteem. Younger children relish her close contact as they play with the toys or show signs of tiredness. They begin to develop good social skills as they learn to share the toys and take turns. This helps to promote children's awareness of what is expected of them. They are very happy and involved in their play and, as a result, behave very well. Children are confident to relax with the childminder, for instance, lots of hugging times and as they look at story books together.

Children's needs are met. They settle well as the childminder works closely with parents to ensure she understands children's individual needs and home routine. All children are included and happily join in the activities. The childminder lets new parents know about her activities through discussion before children start. There is effective ongoing sharing of information because the childminder takes time to write in the babies' day diary and to chat to parents at going home time. This reassures parents that children's interests come first, contributing to children's continuity and quality of care offered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe, comfortable and generally well equipped environment. This is supported by effective procedures so that non-vetted persons are not left unsupervised with children. The childminder has accessed first aid training and covered child protection on the childminder registration course. All the relevant daily documentation, which also helps to provide an effective service for the children is maintained well and made available for inspection.

Children benefit from appropriate adult support. The childminder is experienced in childcare and provides suitable levels of individual and group support for children. This helps to meet the needs of all children. She shows willingness about improving her knowledge of child development through resource materials but is not fully familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She regularly attends the local childminding network group and her childminding practice is reviewed monthly by the network coordinator. This contributes to the quality of care offered.

Children are cared for as part of the family in a very homely environment so that children's experiences are happy and positive. They benefit from fresh air and a balance of outings with home based care in a stimulating, fun environment because the childminder plans the activities well. Children are assisted to develop their independence through the childminder's organisation of resources to meet the children's needs. Children have plenty of fun and gain confidence as they self-select toys and pursue activities that appeal to them. Information is shared with parents regularly, promoting children's continuity of care.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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 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):

- continue to build on children's awareness of healthy eating
- improve the range of resources that promote children's awareness of equality issues
- continue to develop knowledge of child development for children aged under three years.

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