



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY339637
Inspection date	23 January 2007
Inspector	Victoria Gail Halliwell

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 husband and six year old daughter in a detached house in the Appley Bridge area of Wigan. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time and is currently minding three children, two of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder attends the local toddler groups and takes children to the local parks.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because they are cared for in a warm, clean home. The childminder uses a thermometer to ensure a comfortable room temperature is maintained. Good systems are in place to help prevent the spread of infection, for example, individual flannels, hand towels and bedding are provided for each child. Appropriate systems are in place to ensure the childminder can act appropriately if a child becomes unwell or requires emergency medical treatment. However, the system for obtaining parental consent prior to administering medication is inconsistent and at times unclear.

Children are well nourished; the childminder is keen to provide a balanced diet and frequently offers home cooked meals, such as, cottage pie with peas and broccoli. Chips are substituted with homemade potato wedges, oven cooked in olive oil. Children are involved in meal preparations, which are particularly beneficial for reluctant or fussy eaters, who happily eat the salmon fish cakes they have made themselves but would otherwise refuse. The childminder has suitable arrangements in place for storing and heating meals that parents provide for babies. Older children have constant access to their own water bottles, which they take with them around the childminders home; babies are routinely offered water to ensure they do not become thirsty.

Children do not use the childminder's garden. They do benefit from regular trips to local parks and enjoy a daily walk in the fresh air and sunlight, which contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Children also enjoy soft play centres where they can refine and practice their climbing and balancing skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into a child-centred home which helps them feel valued and secure. A large selection of children's art work and information relating to topics and themes is displayed in the play room creating a visually stimulating environment. A good range of age appropriate play materials are well presented in the living room for babies and young children. Older children are free to explore the play room and select their own resources from low level shelves. Craft materials and items which are potentially hazardous to children under three years are located on higher shelves. These are provided by the childminder at the children's request, so she can ensure appropriate levels of supervision are in place.

The childminder has a good understanding of safety within her home. Formal risk assessments are reviewed quarterly and informal checks are made on a daily basis, taking account of the children in attendance and their stage of development. As a result, safety equipment is sited or hazards removed, so that children of all ages are able to move around her home safely. Careful consideration is also given to the children's safety on outings away from the home, risk assessments are completed of areas such as, parks that the children visit.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder, who, following training, has a clear understanding of her duty to report concerns. She is able to identify possible signs and symptoms of abuse and has devised a written child protection policy, which she is able to implement to protect children from possible harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder provides warm and loving care. She knows individual children well and responds gently to meet their individual needs. For example, she patiently consoles a child who is unsettled due to teething, constantly soothing and comforting her. She works sensitively to resolve a child's separation anxiety, gradually encouraging the child to play happily alongside her rather than sitting on her knee. The childminder is mindful of the development of babies and selects equipment and resources which encourage children to acquire new skills. For example, purchasing push along toys for a child who is learning to stand and take their first steps. She is familiar with the abilities of all children in her care, but does not record children's progress or use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan activities, which promotes the next stage in children's learning.

All children benefit from a varied range of interesting play materials and activities. For example, under direct supervision, younger children explore the treasures of a touch and feel box, examining a selection of textures from smooth, shiny pebbles to rough sponge scourers. They listen with interest to the home made shakers and enjoy following a large plastic ball filled with dried pasta. The childminder plans a good range of stimulating activities, often linked to themes or topics, for example, a trip to a local bird sanctuary precedes a garden bird watch. The childminder is also mindful of the children's experiences outside her setting, for example, making links to the bird feeder a child makes at nursery. Through craft activities and interesting discussions, children are becoming increasingly aware of the cultures of others. For example, they make tartan tissue paper prints to decorate their Scottish figures, they listen to Scottish poems and learn about Burns night.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals. The childminder works closely with parents encouraging them to provide information about their child's routines at home, previous experiences, likes and dislikes. She also keeps parents well informed of their child's time in the setting. A daily written record is maintained which includes details of routine events, such as, sleeps and feeds but also includes details of their child's experiences and interactions. An informative notice board displays details of topics and current activities alongside details relating to the childminder's registration and qualifications.

Children are encouraged to respect and appreciate diversity, a range of positive images are evident through posters and play materials. Children enjoy practical activities which raise their awareness of the cultures and beliefs of other, such as, making Diwali lights to acknowledge the Hindu festival of light.

Good behaviour is promoted through the effective implementation of a positive behaviour management policy. The written policy, which includes the house rules, for example, must share toys, must not go upstairs is shared with parents who are encouraged to work in partnership with the childminder to promote a consistent approach. Children are routinely praised for good behaviour, they are well supervised and the childminder provides an interesting range of age and developmentally appropriate activities. Consequently children are well behaved.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a professional approach to her childminding. Since registration she has devised a range of written policies and procedures which inform prospective parents about the service she provides. She is committed to further improving the service she provides for young children and their families, seeking honest feedback from parents as she encourages them to identify areas for improvement as well as what she does well.

The childminder is well organised and ensures children's individual needs take priority, as a result she is currently only minding one child under five years on a full-time basis. During school holidays her home is effectively utilised so children of all ages can engage in developmentally appropriate activities of their choice. For example, older children enjoy crafts or playing games which include small pieces in the play room whilst younger children play safely with larger play materials in the living room.

Attention to documentation is generally good. Required documentation, such as, records of attendance, children's individual details and parental consent to seek emergency medical treatment are satisfactorily maintained and promote the welfare and care of the children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- improve the procedure for obtaining parental consent to administer medication
- further develop planned learning for children under three years, for example, by using the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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