



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY337563
Inspection date	19 February 2007
Inspector	Jane Shaw
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 satisfactory. 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 partner, and three year old child in Warrington, Cheshire.

The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding, and there is access to a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time, and is currently caring for two children under five years, three and four days per week, and one child over five years, before and after school and during school holidays. The childminder drives or walks to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children, and attends the local toddler group. The family have a parrot and hamsters as family pets.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is satisfactorily promoted as the childminder has appropriate routines and procedures in place. For example, a written sick child procedure ensures children are cared for within an environment which is free from infection as much as possible. Parents and carers are made aware of the childminder's responsibility to keep children healthy. Children are learning about the importance of keeping themselves healthy, as they are encouraged to wash their hands after using the bathroom, before meals and after outdoor play. Older children are encouraged to be independent in this task, and normally younger children's hands are wiped with wet wipes.

Children's healthy eating is well promoted. Children are offered a variety of meals and snacks, dependent upon the length of their minded day. They enjoy a range of home cooked meals which includes a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables, for example, cooked evening meals include hotpot and sweet and sour chicken. Children enjoy fruit at snack and mealtimes, and there is always a bowl of fruit available, which the children are able to help themselves to. Children are offered regular drinks and older children have independent access to drinking water in the form of prepared jugs within the fridge. Younger children are offered healthy options, such as fruit pieces and are also offered regular drinks. Drinks are healthy and include a choice of milk, water and low sugar juices. The childminder obtains information on children's likes, dislikes, allergies and preferences, and makes available sample menus for parents and carers, enabling them to keep up to date with their child's diet.

Children's physical health is well promoted through regular opportunities to be outdoors. Children enjoy activities within the enclosed garden and local walks, including walks to the park. Children also enjoy trips away from the childminding setting, such as bowling and soft play centres.

The childminder has an awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, having access to an information pack.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder makes appropriate use of the available space to provide the children with an environment which promotes their development and enjoyment. For example, children enjoy craft and messy activities within the kitchen & dining room, and other activities, such as construction and quieter activities within the lounge. Children also enjoy activities within the enclosed garden.

Children confidently select toys from those set out for them or from the storage boxes within the rooms. Younger children enjoy the toys placed near to them or those placed slightly further away, which they are able to move towards, developing their crawling skills. Toys and equipment are varied, age appropriate and rotated regularly to ensure children's interest. The childminder

regularly checks toys and equipment for safety and hygiene, ensuring children's health and safety as they play.

Children are cared for in an environment where their safety is given due consideration. The childminder uses suitable safety equipment to ensure children's safety at all times, for example, socket covers and cupboard locks. However, the hearth and top of the stairs pose risks, particularly for younger children. The regular checking of furniture, toys and equipment for safety and hygiene ensures children are kept safe and healthy at all times, during their play and sleep. A written fire evacuation policy and procedure, which is regularly practised with the children, ensures they are kept safe and secure in the event of this occurring. The childminder has a written emergency plan, which she shares with parents and carers, ensuring they are aware of how the childminder will protect their children in an emergency.

Children's welfare is protected because the childminder is aware of the need to ensure this aspect of their care is addressed. The childminder has access to relevant information regarding Local Safeguarding Children Board's, and is aware of the procedure to follow in the event of any concerns. A written child protection policy, which is shared with parents and carers, ensures they are aware of her responsibility to their children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled, and comfortable in the care of the childminder. They are offered good support and encouragement, which promotes their enjoyment and development.

Younger children cared for show excitement, kicking legs, moving arms and 'chatting' when spoken to by the childminder, and when playing with the various toys available. They join in with conversations when spoken to and make themselves and their needs understood. Comfort and reassurance is readily given. Toys are placed on the floor which helps younger children develop physical skills and mobility, such as crawling, and hand eye coordination.

The childminder provides a range of activities appropriate for the children she cares for. For example, younger children access noisy toys and 'feely' toys. Older children have access to imaginary play resources, construction and board games. After school children have the opportunity to use a computer and other age appropriate toys and equipment of their choice. All children, including babies and toddlers, have access to messy play, craft, baking and other tactile experiences. Children enjoy activities that cover a range of different play experiences, for example, construction, imaginary play including den making, craft, table top board games and quieter activities, such as story time. Appropriate arrangement are made for younger children to rest and sleep, these arrangements are agreed with parents and carers.

Children self select toys from those set out for them and from the storage boxes within the lounge. Children are also able to request additional toys from the range available. Toys and equipment are rotated regularly to sustain children's interest and enjoyment. During the inspection, younger children enjoyed playing with the various noisy toys, musical toys and concentrated carefully when using building blocks to build a tower.

Children receive lots of praise and encouragement for attempts and achievements, which enables them to persevere and practise skills, for example, a younger child is congratulated after building a small tower with blocks. The childminder uses good language and tone of voice to actively encourage children's enjoyment and pride in their successes.

Children have good opportunities to develop both large and small physical skills through various activities both within and away from the childminding setting. For example, they use the rear garden and local park to play football and enjoy bowling during school holidays and soft play centres. They are developing small physical skills whilst involved in craft activities and baking; several pieces of art work are displayed in the kitchen and dining area.

Parents and carers are kept informed of the different activities their children are involved in through verbal feedback at the end of their child's minded day, and in written form via a daily sheet, particularly for younger children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Minded children have equal access to all activities and experiences offered by the childminder. These activities are appropriate to their age and level of development. Children have regular access to a good range of resources that promotes their understanding of diversity. For example, a variety of books, play figures and finger puppets.

Children's individual care needs are discussed with parents and carers prior to their child starting, enabling the childminder to plan and provide appropriate care to meet their needs. The childminder is able to liaise with parents, carers and other professionals in order to meet children's individual needs.

Children are happy and settled and as a result their behaviour is positive. During the inspection, minded children sought comfort and reassurance, which was readily given. The childminder plans a range of activities and access to resources, as a result children are occupied and engaged. The childminder joins in with the children in their play and activities, encouraging children's enjoyment. A written behaviour management policy supports the promotion of children's positive behaviour.

Positive partnerships with parents and carers support children's placements. Children's individual needs and requirements are discussed carefully in detail with parents and carers prior to placement. Parents and carers are given feedback on their child's minded day both verbally, and in the form of a written sheet, which looks at meals and activities. They have access to written policies and procedures during the initial stages and each set of parents or carers have a pack of these within their child's individual folder. Clear documentation ensures that parents and carers are kept up to date with their child's development and general well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Necessary checks have been successfully completed on the childminder and other household members where applicable, ensuring children's safety at all times.

The childminder provides children with a planned environment, for example, activities within the childminding premises and away from the setting, such as toddler group or walks to the park. Children's minded days are planned in advance, around commitments to other childcare groups or appointments. The childminder ensures they have appropriate rest and playtimes throughout their day.

All legally required documentation and records are in place ensuring children are cared for safely, and the childminder strives to ensure that these are well maintained. Parents have access to a folder containing the childminder's registration, insurance and other relevant information, however, the registration certificate is not displayed. Information regarding children's individual needs and care requirements are gathered by the childminder prior to placement, ensuring that these are appropriately catered for. Children's safety and enjoyment is given priority as the childminder obtains parental consent for aspects of children's enjoyment and care, for example, the bathing of younger children if required; consent for the seeking of emergency medical treatment; being in the proximity of the family pets and consent for outings.

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 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 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 satisfactory. 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 the hearth and stairs are made safe
- ensure the registration certificate is on display at all times.

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