



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	504148
Inspection date	25 January 2007
Inspector	Mary Kilroy
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 2001. She lives with her husband and three children aged five, 12 and 14 in Salford. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three children at any one time and is currently minding a baby of nine months and two children aged three and nine years after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends local carer and toddler groups. The family have a dog and two cats.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a healthy, balanced diet of fresh fruit, vegetables and home cooked meals and children are well nourished. Children are encouraged to sample new foods and they make independent choices from healthy options. They enjoy cucumber chips, carrot sticks, grapes and cheese. Babies love finger foods and try cold cucumber chunks to help with teething. The childminder consults parents about individual dietary needs and patterns of rest and sleep for younger children, and by providing options, children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs. Children understand simple health and hygiene practices from using tissues, hand washing at appropriate times of the day and especially after handling the pets. The childminder effectively explains to them why they need to do this to remain healthy. The pets are regularly inoculated, wormed and treated for fleas and there are no concerns around the care of the animals. The older children can access drinking water independently from a filter jug in the fridge. Children, who are too young to ask, are regularly offered drinks throughout the day. The childminder freezes sports bottles of water during summer months and children are offered healthy ice pops made from flavoured spring water and organic carrot flavoured snacks and rice cakes, which babies love. This offers children alternatives to sweet things. Older children know about 'five a day', the recommended minimum of fruit and vegetables required daily, through discussion with the childminder and age-appropriate information on the fridge door. Thus, they are beginning to learn about healthy eating patterns and how to remain healthy through diet. Health and dietary needs are successfully met because the childminder liaises well with parents and regularly reviews individual needs. Parents are welcome to provide items of food or drink and children feel at home with familiar foods.

Children stay healthy because the childminder ensures that all records are up to date, she has current first aid training and an appropriate sickness policy. Children are happy and confident, play and behave well and respect the needs of younger ones. They know that they must take their shoes off after being outside to ensure that the floor is clean for the baby to roll and play on. Children have their own personal items, such as individual towels, bibs, cups, sports bottles and cutlery to help minimise the spread of infection. When minding several children, the childminder uses colour coded utensils, which the children can easily recognise. The childminder was not aware of the new requirement that food poisoning is a notifiable disease in certain circumstances.

Children enjoy outside play and physical exercise through playing in the garden, on large apparatus in local parks and during visits to under fives' groups. The children enjoy fresh air during walks to school, on the nearby moss whilst feeding horses and by the old river. Children enjoy playing with a blow up obstacle course and balls. This develops children's strength, confidence and coordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have space to play comfortably, move around freely and access toys in safety and with confidence. Children are kept safe from accidents through regular risk assessments of toys, equipment and the premises. Babies' increasing mobility is managed by the use of appropriate equipment, such as stair gates. The older children are beginning to understand about the safety of the babies when moving around and why care is needed to avoid trapping fingers or dropping small bits of puzzle on the floor. They enjoy helping the childminder with small tasks around the care of babies. This encourages their self-esteem and independence. They are careful not to leave glasses on the floor and hot drinks are placed well out of babies' reach. The childminder ensures that babies remain safe, as she has good understanding of children's development and plans well for the next stage. She constantly monitors their mobility and removes hazards, such as ornaments, well before they are a danger. Children are cared for in a well maintained and safe home, with their work displayed. This provides them with a sense of belonging. The emergency evacuation plan is practised with the children so that they understand the procedure and are confident when it is used. The childminder prefers to mind small numbers of children to enable her to monitor them well and children benefit from her close supervision. She has an effective policy for children who are lost or uncollected which worked well when recent windy weather made the collection of children very late. However, the childminder needs to elaborate on the uncollected child policy, so that parents are clearly informed about all stages of the procedure to be followed.

Children are beginning to understand how to keep themselves safe inside the premises, on outings and whilst walking to and from school. In the home, they know that they must not open the front door to visitors and that the childminder checks identity carefully before admitting strangers. Children remain safe as the childminder carries out effective regular risk assessments of her premises inside, and outside and before trips and outings. She links with other childminders sometimes for safety, such as hiring a bouncy castle together to provide additional supervision. Through regular discussions with the childminder, children know that they must hold the buggy, wear their reflective armbands and choose a safe place to cross the road which is not between parked cars. They are starting to understand the Green Cross Code. The younger children can recognise red man, green man and help to press the crossing button. All children understand they must stop, look both ways, walk on the inside of the pavement and are learning about safe places to cross. Inside the home, they know the rules around safety, such as keeping safety gates shut. Children know about people who help them in the local area, such as policemen and the crossing patrol. They are learning about stranger danger at an age-appropriate level to help them to keep safe, such as knowing not to talk to strangers.

Children are kept safe through the childminder's clear and secure understanding of the safeguarding children procedures. The written policies and procedures ensure that children are protected from non-accidental injuries. The childminder recognises and responds to signs and symptoms of possible non-accidental injury to children with accuracy and confidence. She ensures that parents are aware of her responsibility to pass on concerns and are aware of their own responsibility to inform her should a child sustain an injury at home. She uses 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' and the latest flow chart to ensure that her policies

and procedures meet current requirements. She has a good understanding of signs and symptoms of non-accidental injury to children. She records accidents and significant incidents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework effectively to plan for play and has a good range of toys, books and activities for children. Babies and children have good opportunities to experience and explore natural materials, which enhances their tactile experiences. The childminder ensures that older children have good opportunities for individual attention when babies are sleeping. They enjoy using lining paper to draw around themselves to create a full sized picture. Children have good first hand experiences, such as having opportunities to use real old telephones. Babies enjoy rolling on the floor and the childminder places toys just out of reach to encourage them to move. There are age- and stage-appropriate activities for school aged children and the childminder has a good understanding of children's interests and uses these to plan for play. One child particularly likes characters from a well known children's book and the childminder ensures that she can access these. Children have opportunities to dig, plant tomatoes and bulbs and observe mini beasts. They enjoy dressing up, role play, and art and craft activities. There are opportunities to see and learn numbers and colours throughout the daily routine and on walks to and from school. Children's language and literacy is fostered through games played together, such as 'I spy.' The childminder values all children's contributions. The play activities and outings are organised around the individual needs of babies for rest and feeding.

The childminder and babies share lots of eye contact, smiles and close contact when feeding and playing. Babies enjoy helping to hold their cups and feed themselves with the last of the yoghurt in the pot. The childminder supports and encourages them and offers praise for their efforts. She always responds and answers baby chatter and noises and devotes all her time to playing with the children. Babies respond with smiles and gurgles and are beginning to talk in answer to the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to speak nicely to one another and to the childminder and to have concern for the feelings of others. They are sensitive to the needs of babies. They discuss likes and dislikes in all areas with the childminder. This leads on to people's different tastes and dietary needs and then to activities on valuing differences, such as drawing round themselves and comparing differences in the life sized models. The childminder has a positive attitude to all areas of equal opportunities and children are learning from her to show concern for others. Children have opportunities to celebrate and learn about their own festivals and those of others. They enjoy making seasonal things, such as mince pies, Christmas decorations, rice crispie nests and marzipan ducks. The childminder has books and toys that reflect positive images of all areas of equality and reflect the wider world. She is committed to further increasing her provision in this area as she continues to mind.

Children are helped and encouraged by her to try all areas of play, regardless of gender, culture or ability. The childminder regularly reviews her toys and equipment to identify possible gaps in provision as children and their needs change. She uses toy libraries to supplement her own stocks of toys. She has good understanding of the individual needs, likes and dislikes of all children that she cares for. She uses 'Don't call me special' books with all children to increase their knowledge and understanding.

Children have good opportunities for visits in the local area to observe the natural world and changing seasons in local parks, the moss and by the old river. They enjoy re-cycling and composting with the childminder and grow bulbs and tomatoes in season. Younger children can enjoy quick growing activities, such as faces with cress hair, so that they do not forget what they have planted. Children make bird feeders and observe squirrels and the life cycles of butterflies. They feed ducks and horses and have opportunities to dig in the garden and observe mini beasts at first hand. They visited the vet with the childminder to help an injured squirrel, which the cat had caught. They named the squirrel and later released it in the park when it had recovered sufficiently.

The childminder seeks advice, training and support as required to help children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She understands the need to discuss all aspects of care and play with parents. Inclusive play activities are planned, with each child supported at a level according to their need. The childminder is prepared to adapt play activities to meet children's individual needs. She is sympathetic and sensitive to the needs of parents should she be the first to identify a concern. Her good understanding of children's development and of meeting all the individual needs of the children ensures that they make good progress. Play activities and outings are organised around the individual needs of the children.

Children's behaviour is good. The childminder is fair and consistent in her approach. Parents are consulted on all aspects and methods used and the childminder works with them on managing behaviour. This ensures a consistent approach to methods used at home and at the childminder's house, and ensures that children know and understand consistent boundaries. Children are encouraged to share and to take turns. They are considerate to the needs and feelings of others, especially babies. The childminder uses age appropriate, positive strategies for managing children's behaviour, such as distraction, negotiation and time out as a last resort. She gives praise for wanted behaviour as it naturally occurs and is a good role model.

The settling in process for new children is good and is tailored to each child's individual needs. Children are secure and confident in the childminder's home. Relationships between the childminder and parents are good and there is an appropriate method of recording parents complaints, should this be needed. Parents are consulted on every aspect of their child's care and there is good daily verbal exchanging of information. Individual needs are noted and are regularly reviewed as they change.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting and activities are well organised. The childminder has good routines and clear expectations and children are happy, confident learners. They enjoy the play activities and are

provided with good experiences indoors and in the wider environment. Children enjoy making choices and decisions on their play, and helping to prepare healthy food. They are secure and settled. The childminder involves the children in small daily tasks around the home and this provides children with a homely atmosphere where they can achieve and grow in confidence. All the necessary information for parents is displayed on the wall.

Children benefit from the childminder's close vigilance and close supervision. She is proactive in ensuring that checks are obtained regarding suitability. She continues to be aware of all the significant changes that the regulator, Ofsted, need notification of. Written records are kept to a good standard and are shared with parents and there is an appropriate method of recording parent's complaints, should this be required. Records are up to date and are regularly reviewed to take account of any changes in circumstances. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children. She has completed this.

She was also asked to develop a range of natural materials for sensory exploration. She has improved children's sensory experiences by providing a treasure basket for babies and increasing opportunities for children to dig, plant and gather and use natural materials.

Complaints since the last inspection

A complaint arose in 2006 in relation to National Standard 14, informing the regulator of significant changes. The childminder was given an action and has responded satisfactorily. She remains qualified for registration. 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 working knowledge and understanding of the new legislation regarding notifiable diseases.

- provide further information on the policy for the child who is uncollected so that parents are made fully aware of the procedure.

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