



Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 312274 |
| Inspection date | 06 March 2007 |
| Inspector | Sara Haigh |
| 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 has been registered since 1989. She lives with her husband and teenage son in the Denton area of Tameside.

She is registered to provide care for six children under eight years. There are currently three children under the age of eight on the register. The childminder also looks after three children over the age of eight years before and after school and in the school holidays. The children have access to all the rooms on the ground floor and the bathroom on the first floor. There is a secure garden at the rear of the premises.

The childminder takes children to and from local nurseries and schools. She regularly attends local toddler groups and she is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept healthy and protected from the spread of infection and cross-contamination as the childminder maintains satisfactory levels of hygiene. Children develop skills and independence in their personal hygiene as they follow adequate routines such as washing their hands after using the toilet, before eating and after they have been outside. Children are well cared for in the case of illness as the childminder follows a sick child policy and administration of medication policy. However, current hygiene practices relating to toys and equipment do not minimise the spread of common childhood illnesses such as colds.

Children benefit from a choice of healthy and nutritious snacks and meals to promote their growth and development, some of which are home-cooked, for example, pasta with bolognese sauce, meatballs or a roast dinner. Children have free access to drinks throughout the day ensuring that they are hydrated and refreshed. Children's individual needs and routines with regard to diet, health and sleeping are catered for.

Children benefit from regular opportunities to be active. They enjoy walking to the shops, park and local toddler groups. Children also walk to and from school daily and visit the farm and Reddish vale in the school holidays. During warmer weather children also develop their large muscle skills and co-ordination as they play with a wide variety of outdoor play equipment such as a trampoline, bikes and skipping ropes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play happily within the warm, welcoming and secure environment of the childminder's home. They have adequate room to explore the plentiful and wide range of resources available. However, the current organisation and accessibility of the toys restricts the children's independence and self-selection.

Thought is given to making areas used by the children safe. For example, when playing in the rear garden, the childminder ensures their safety by using a bicycle lock to secure the gate. Children's safety is enhanced by the careful monitoring of toys and activities to ensure that they are safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development.

The childminder has a good regard for children's safety at all times, thereby minimising the risk of accidental injury. Children are well cared for in the case of an accident as the childminder has an up-to-date first aid certificate. Children are supervised at all times and understand the need to be in sight of the childminder when outside of the setting. Children are learning to accept responsibility for their own safety as they become aware of road safety and stranger danger. Older children are learning to act as role models for younger children as they are reminded to stay away from rubbish in the park and not to pick berries.

The childminder recognises her responsibility to protect children from harm and has a sound knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse. She has an effective fire evacuation plan which is practised with all the children further ensuring their safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are relaxed and stimulated as the childminder has a sound understanding of the children and of their stage of development. The childminder spends time with the children and supports them well developing language and communication skills. For example, the childminder gives words to the actions of children playing with play dough such as, rolling, crumbling and squashing.

Babies are encouraged to reach forward for toys and supported in their attempts to stand. Sensory and sound action toys are available for exploratory play. However, babies do not have opportunities to investigate natural materials and resources in their play.

Children's efforts are praised and their contributions valued, promoting their confidence and self-esteem. For example, children's successful efforts at naming colours of pop-up play people are positively recognised and the game extended to include counting.

Children have daily opportunities to go out and about, exploring their local environment, and widening their knowledge of the wider world. For example, children go shopping with lists, have running races, and socialise with other children at local toddler groups.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel a sense of belonging in the setting through a trusting and secure relationship with the childminder. Children feel valued and confident as their work is displayed on the playroom walls along with posters of familiar characters. The childminder implements good settling in procedures to ensure that new children are happy and confident in her care. Children generally play harmoniously within the childminder's boundaries. Minor altercations are dealt with in a calm and consistent manner and each child is treated with individual care and respect. They learn responsible behaviour through the childminder giving them explanations and talking about consequences.

Children are cared for by a childminder who works in partnership with parents to meet children's individual needs. The childminder has a high regard for parents, is sensitive to their needs and has good relationships with them. The childminder obtains information which enables her to meet children's individual needs and develop consistency of care. The care of children is enhanced through the daily verbal exchange of information regarding their progress and welfare.

The childminder interacts with the children in a way that promotes equality of opportunity, talking about the differences that the children observe. She provides a positive role model for children and uses language that does not conform to stereotypes. Children develop their awareness of our diverse society through toys, books and resources.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has a clear sense of purpose and commitment to providing quality care for all children. She attends relevant training through the local church group. The children confidently explore their surroundings and benefit from well planned routines both in and out of the home. The childminder organises her time well and is flexible in order to meet children's individual needs.

All necessary policies and procedures are in place and are shared with the parents, therefore promoting children's health, safety, enjoyment and ability to make a positive contribution. The childminder maintains adequate ratios thus improving the safety for children.

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 included training in first aid for infants and young children. The childminder has a current, valid first aid certificate. She was also asked to improve safety by securing the fireguard to the wall. This has been satisfactorily completed.

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 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 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 that hygiene practices relating to toys and equipment minimise the spread of infection and cross-contamination
- improve the accessibility of resources to enable children to make independent choices in their learning and play

- develop a range of natural resources for babies to explore

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