



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY266868
Inspection date	14 March 2007
Inspector	Susan Patricia Birkenhead
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 2003. She lives with her husband and two children age four and two years. They live in the Great Sankey area of Warrington. Designated areas on the ground floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden area for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding seven children on a part time basis at different times throughout the week. These include three children under five years, four of school age, of whom one is over the age of eight years. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect the children. The family have two dogs.

The childminder holds a relevant early years qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because the childminder follows suitable practices and procedures to promote their good health. Parents are made aware through discussion initially, that children are not cared for when they are ill. Children learn about personal hygiene as they wash their hands before snacks and meals when reminded and younger children are introduced to this practice because wipes are used to clean their hands. Therefore, children are appropriately protected from the risk of infection. Professional systems are in place for the recording of all accidents and any medication administered, which parents acknowledge by signing all entries made. However, parental consent to the seeking of any necessary medical advice or treatment is not in place for all the children. Therefore, at times, this compromises their welfare.

Children's physical development is actively promoted both indoors and outdoors. For example, the children walk to and from school daily and visits to the local park enable children to access larger apparatus. They use the garden which is equipped with good quality play materials, such as the static climbing frame, the trampoline and the wheeled toys. The construction materials, play dough and inset puzzles help promote the children's finer skills. The non-walking children use the furniture and the walking aid to pull themselves up to the standing position, supported well by the childminder. Therefore, children take part in worthwhile opportunities to develop their physical skills and learn to develop good control and coordination over their bodies.

Children benefit from a varied diet at snack and lunch time, which includes dried fruits, yoghurts, sandwiches and fresh fruit daily. The childminder respects the children's individual dietary needs and the parents' wishes appropriately. The childminder has completed basic food hygiene training, which further enhances the children's health. They receive healthy drinks regularly throughout their stay and can access them independently according to their age. For example, the older children have access to a jug of drinking water stored in the fridge and the younger children have their drinking cups within the playroom. As a result, children remain refreshed and hydrated throughout their stay.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in a well-organised environment. Children have access to designated areas on the ground floor for their use. For example, the playroom and the toilet facilities are close to the kitchen, with easy access to the outdoor play area. Therefore, children move confidently between the areas accessible to them under close supervision. On arrival, young children can access some aspects of play that are set out for them. Alternatively, older children can select from the well-organised resource boxes in place. Therefore, this contributes to the sufficiently welcoming environment, where children's independence during play is positively promoted.

Children have access to a wide range of stimulating, good quality play materials and equipment, which are safe and cleaned regularly, and these meet their individual needs. Positive steps are

generally in place to minimise risks to children using appropriate procedures or equipment to support their developmental needs. The entrance and exit doors are secure and cupboard locks are in place to secure hazards. The stable door into the kitchen allows access to be restricted whilst cooking. Procedures in the main are in place to ensure children stay safe during outings, which include discussing and practising road safety whilst walking. However, records of parental consent for outings and transporting children in a vehicle are not in place for each child. As a result, their welfare is not always safeguarded. They learn about fire safety through the procedures followed in the written plan for evacuating the premises, which is regularly practised. However, records are not held of the practises completed.

The children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder demonstrates, during discussion, a sound knowledge of the role she plays in protecting children from abuse. She recognises the signs to look for and knows the procedures to follow for reporting such concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are secure and settled in the childminder's care because she has developed good relationships with them and provides a good range of resources to occupy and stimulate their varied interests. The positive procedures for settling children in enables the childminder to get to know the children and assess the children's needs accordingly. The childminder has a good understanding of how children learn, which she demonstrates by frequently changing the emphasis on play and activities for children under two years. Therefore, children's interest in play and activities is sustained, particularly when they are too young to ask for alternatives or to make choices for themselves. The childminder has access to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and some aspects of the framework are apparent in the practice observed. However, the relevant training has not been completed.

The routine in place provides structure to the children's day and incorporates many worthwhile opportunities to promote all aspects of the children's care, learning and play. Young children have space to explore their environment with confidence and play freely with activity toys, which positively stimulate their senses. They learn how things work and they copy and repeat actions and words because of the childminder's positive interaction during play. Children visit places of interest, for example, the local library to borrow books. Trips are planned during school holidays for children to visit the working farm and the museum. Therefore, contributing to their development and understanding of the wider world. Children have opportunities to develop their imagination when playing with the farm, the domestic play materials and dressing up clothes. They have opportunities to express themselves positively through the creative activities they engage in, which are adapted according to their ages and stages of development. As a result, children have fun and extend their learning through play and opportunities available to them.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued as individuals and have equal access to play and stimulation, without stereotyping. They learn about diversity, in the main, through the sufficient range of resources accessible which reflect positive images of race and culture. However, disability is not represented. They recognise various times of the year through the activities they complete, which include making lanterns to celebrate Diwali, discussing Chinese New Year and looking at the associated animals that represent the year they were born. Therefore, children begin to develop their knowledge and understanding of cultural differences and learn to treat everyone with equal concern. The childminder has some experience of providing care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, however, there are no such children currently cared for.

The children are learning to recognise what is acceptable through the methods used for managing their behaviour. For example, the childminder is calm in her approach, she encourages children to share and show consideration for each other, and promotes the use of good manners. Children learn about the house rules, they are given time to reflect on their unacceptable behaviour and good distraction techniques are used for younger children. Children receive regular praise or stickers as reward in recognition of their good behaviour and achievements. As a result, children are well behaved, they learn to play cooperatively and form good relationships with the childminder and other children.

The childminder develops positive relationships with parents because she works in close partnership with them. The sufficient information provided by the parents initially, enables the childminder to become aware of the child's individual needs and meet them accordingly. Different methods are in place for feeding back information to parents relating to the children's well-being at the end of their day. These include, recording information in the day book for young children and verbal feedback for the older children. The childminder demonstrates through discussion, how she would deal with any complaints the parents may have and recognises the change in regulation. However, systems for the management and recording of complaints, which can be shared with parents, have not been developed. This, therefore, constitutes a breach in regulation.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded because the childminder ensures persons not vetted do not have unsupervised access to children. Children are cared for in an environment where they can feel relaxed and secure. The childminder has completed a relevant early years qualification and has attended the necessary childminder training initially. For example, the Introduction to Childminding Practice (ICP) training and a paediatric first aid training course. This, therefore, successfully contributes to the care the children receive. In addition, she is committed to attending further training to develop her own knowledge and recognises the need to attend the 'Birth to three matters' training to further inform her positive practices .

The childminder is sufficiently organised, in the main, in her approach to record keeping. For example, the attendance register reflects the hours children are cared for and details of accidents

and medication administered follow the correct procedures. All records are stored securely and the childminder respects confidentiality. However, parental consent for certain activities and care are not obtained consistently for all children and the certificate of registration is not on display for parents to read.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

During the last inspection two recommendations were raised regarding fire safety and the provision of drinking water. Since the last inspection the childminder has fitted a smoke detector on the first floor, which is in working order and checked regularly. Children now have access to drinking water at all times. As a result, children's safety and health is promoted to a satisfactory standard.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 parental permission is requested for the seeking of necessary emergency medical advice or treatment and that records consistently reflect the parents' consent for outings and transporting children in a vehicle.
- develop a system for the recording of complaints, which parents can see on request
- display the certificate of registration.

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