



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY242407
Inspection date	08 January 2007
Inspector	Gillian Patricia Bishop
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 2003. She lives with her husband and teenage daughter in the Brandlesholme area of Bury. All ground floor rooms are used for childminding. First floor rooms are not included with the exception of the master bedroom; which is used as a sleep area for young children. There is a safe and secure garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends local gym groups and activity centres. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA)

The family has three cats.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene practices within everyday routines for hand washing and personal care. Most children use the bathroom independently, routinely washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Younger children make good use of a child's step so they can reach the sink. They remember to use the soap or 'shampoo' as some refer to it, without prompting from the childminder. Children's health and welfare is further promoted by appropriate hygiene arrangements for pets because feeding bowls are removed after use and children understand that they must wash their hands after feeding or petting the cats. Good consideration is given to keeping the home hygienically clean, so children and adults routinely wipe their feet and take off their shoes to keep the floors fresh and clean.

Children benefit from a developing healthy eating policy within the household. The childminder provides a combination of hot and cold food which is nutritionally well-balanced, and which takes account of children's own preferences. For example, the childminder asks children which filling they would like on their sandwich. Children receive regular drinks because the childminder ensures their cups are frequently refilled. Older children are able to keep themselves independently refreshed because they can help themselves to drinks as they wish. Children develop good self-help and social skills because they always sit to eat and drink at the dining table, where good table manners are encouraged. Older children sometimes help to prepare their own food, for example, at breakfast time. Children finish their breakfast routine by cleaning their teeth before they go off to school.

Children benefit from frequent opportunities to play outdoors in the fresh air when gardening, taking nature walks to feed ducks and visits to local parks. The children also visit local play gyms, activity centres, music and movement groups where they can practice and develop new physical skills such as climbing, running and dance.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, tidy and friendly home environment. Children benefit from a choice of play areas which they can use freely to suit their particular activities. The children are protected in the home because doors are consistently locked to ensure good security. Children are provided with a good range of toys and equipment which promote their interest, learning and play. Younger children benefit from the way the childminder effectively organises the play equipment because toys and books are located on shelves, most of which children can reach so they are able to make choices about what they want to do.

Children are well protected by the childminder's secure policies and procedures for safety, as a consequence, potential dangers inside and outside the home are successfully minimised. For example, hazardous objects and substances are inaccessible, garden play equipment is well maintained and the childminder takes care to replace electrical socket covers after they have been used. Children's welfare and safety is well promoted during their frequent trips in the

family car because the childminder ensures children understand that they must wait sensibly on the doorstep while children are placed in the car two at a time. The childminder ensures all children are provided with appropriate car seats and she requests parental permission to transport children in her car.

The childminder has a sound knowledge of child protection and she has relevant literature to advise her of reporting procedures. However, it has been some time since she attended a safeguarding children briefing which prevents her from approaching potential child protection situations with confidence.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and very settled in the childminder's home; they have good relationships with her and they gain a sense of achievement from her praise and encouragement. Children are relaxed and confident with their carer and they respond positively to her calm and warm approach. Children therefore feel able to express their own ideas and feelings, actively seeking her company and advice when they need it. For example, children state their intention to eat before they play and they independently collect the food for the cats because they know it is their dinner time too.

Children benefit from a flexible routine for play which allows them to make decisions and choices about where they will play and which equipment they will use. Children are well occupied in a good range of daily activities which promote their development and take account of their particular age and interests. For example, children are encouraged to make good use of their imagination and creativity because the childminder provides them with a good selection of construction toys and resources to make various pictures and models. Recent photographs show a child proudly displaying a large spider's web he has made using pipe cleaners, another shows a large free standing model of a person which a younger child has made from large boxes for body parts and yoghurt pots for eyes and feathers for hair.

Children's enthusiasm to learn and play is encouraged by the childminder who spends time talking and supporting them in their play by joining in their games such as cards and dominoes. The childminder ensures children benefit from a balance of indoor and outdoor activities in the garden and day trips to new places of interest. Children help the childminder to look after the garden, potting and watering plants so they can watch them grow, for example, sun flowers. They have also visited farms where they can handle small animals such as rabbits and Barn Owls.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are well known due to good communication with parents. The childminder encourages parents to negotiate a suitable settling programme for their child; and to share their own wishes and preferences with regard to routines already established at home. Parents are provided with daily information about their child's activities and well-being, this

has been particularly useful to both the childminder and parents where children have had difficulty settling into the provision. Parents are very well advised about childminding practices because they receive a copy of the childminder's detailed policies and procedures. Parents are also provided with a complaints statement which identifies Ofsted as the childcare regulator. This written policy positively encourages parents to share any concerns they may have, directly with the childminder. The childminder is pro-active in encouraging parents to provide her with written and verbal feedback. Recent questionnaires provide evidence that current parents are very happy with the care and attention their children receive.

The childminder ensures children are introduced to their local environment and community as they often take walks in the local country park where they can observe seasonal changes and feed the ducks. Children's enjoyment of the family pets encourages them to learn how pets and other animals should be looked after and cared for. Children's knowledge of the wider world is supported through some positive images of others in their environment, for example, toys and books. The childminder strives to offer an inclusive and respectful play environment for all children attending. Therefore, children engage in the full range of activities regardless of gender. She responds to individual needs by ensuring children are provided with appropriately challenging activities to suit their developmental and physical needs.

Children are encouraged to show care and concern for others by helping and playing in harmony. Children receive consistent messages about what is expected of them, for example, the need to wash your hands again, if you stroke the cat. Familiar routines encourage children to become independent and help themselves, for example, a child arriving home from pre-school knows where to hang his coat, how to take off his shoes and where to put them. Older children develop a high self esteem because they are provided with opportunities to take on more 'adult like' responsibilities. For example, a child was asked to take a video recording of the breakfast routine to show the childcare inspector. The child was very pleased with his handy work.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder demonstrates a commitment to further develop her own knowledge of good childcare practice in order to promote children's health, well being and enjoyment. She frequently uses various researching methods such as, childcare books, education websites and publications to ensure she is introduced to new initiatives and changes in legislation. The childminder is fully aware of the requirements of the National Standards which ensures she is able to protect children in her care. For example she implements appropriate vetting procedures for all relevant family members as and when required.

Children are happy and well settled and they are welcomed as part of the family. The daily routines for activities, eating and play create a sense of familiarity and security which children respond positively to. Children benefit from their carer's consistent support and reassurance which encourages them to actively seek her company and attention in order to make their needs known.

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

All aspects of documentation are in place. These are well organised and relevant information, such as the registration certificate, is displayed as required. The childminder has also developed good quality written procedures which reflect her current childcare practices. Individual files for children's information ensure good confidentiality practices when sharing details with parents. Systems are in place to ensure that records are reviewed and updated with regard to children's needs and personal details.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the childminder was required to address a number of safety issues within the garden. Children are now able to play safely in the rear garden because the childminder has removed a small water feature and a poisonous plant to protect children from potential dangers. The childminder has made the glass in the greenhouse safe because it has been covered with safety film, which ensures children are suitably protected when the area is used for potting plants.

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 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):

- continue to develop knowledge and understanding of current child protection procedures and the role of the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards.

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