



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY265646
Inspection date	09 January 2007
Inspector	Kathy Ann Leatherbarrow
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 November 2003. She lives with her husband and their two children aged 10 and nine years. They live in a terraced house, located within a residential area of Preston, Lancashire, close to local schools, shops and a park.

Children have access to the whole of the ground floor, with the exception of the front lounge. On the first floor, infants have the facility to sleep in the main front bedroom and bathroom facilities are also used on this floor. School-age children only access the children's bedroom and the main bedroom for quiet activity. There is a rear outdoor area available for the children to play in.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years. There are currently 16 on roll, of which 10 are under eight years of age.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is generally well protected as the childminder updates her knowledge by attending courses, such as food hygiene and childhood illnesses. Children are familiar with the daily routine and learn the importance of sound personal hygiene. For example, they brush their teeth after breakfast and wash their hands at appropriate times of the day. This helps to promote healthy personal care and prevent cross-infection.

Children have access to regular physical exercise to develop their physical skills. Appropriate use is made of the outdoor area and children have regular visits to the park and activity centres, where they have access to a variety of suitable play equipment. For example, they climb trees, crawl through tunnels and go roller skating. This helps to promote children's coordination, balance and interest in a healthy lifestyle.

The childminder has an adequate understanding of healthy eating. Fresh fruit is available every day and is encouraged at snack time. However, there are many high-sugar desserts on the menu and some toddlers are given juice in bottles, which has a negative effect on their teeth. The childminder recognises the importance of children receiving a regular intake of fluid and they are offered, and are able to access, drinks easily.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally safe and secure. The childminder identifies and minimises risks to children around the home, which means they are able to move around safely and independently. The childminder gives priority to maintaining children's safety in the home and when using equipment. For example, infants are becoming aware of their own limitations as they begin to pull themselves up on furniture and become more mobile. However, occasionally, older children's safety is compromised as they can, at times agreed with parents, play at the front of the house between lamp posts. This puts children at risk of traffic on the road and is not under the supervision of the childminder.

The childminder has appropriate fire evacuation procedures in place, which are displayed and routinely practised with the children. These are further enhanced by the childminder, as she takes the children to the fire station in the summer holidays, where they receive a presentation and demonstration from firefighters. The childminder has a clear understanding of her responsibility for child protection. Sound knowledge of the procedures and the use of documentation ensure children are safeguarded.

Children select activities from a developing range of suitable toys and equipment, which meet safety standards. For example, infants freely explore a range of rattles, soft toys, stacking cups and musical touch-pads as they start to crawl. The childminder carefully monitors and supervises children's choice of toys to make sure that they are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Therefore, children are appropriately stimulated and their development is sound.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well and are confident to make themselves at home. They relate well to each other and to the childminder, enjoying lots of cuddles and reassurance. Children are happy as they make choices about their play and are independent as they choose from a variety of exciting toys, books and activities.

The childminder responds to the children's requests and interests by providing activities that contribute to promoting their creativity and imagination. For example, children enjoy trips to the museum to look at the dinosaur models and fossils, then make their own models from junk.

The childminder spends time sitting on the floor, supporting children's learning, as they build towers and learn to count. They enjoy washing and dressing the dolls, which enhances the children's personal and social development. Children's early communication skills are well supported as the childminder consistently talks to them, encouraging them to engage in conversation and extend their vocabulary through the good use of books.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and play a part in the homely environment because the childminder values and respects their individuality and the family context of each child. Children behave very well and are learning to co-operate with one another. For example, they happily follow guidance from the childminder to take turns at building the tower of bricks. The good use of praise fosters children's confidence so they develop a positive self-esteem.

Children have good opportunities to learn about themselves and the wider world. Beneficial planned activities and the use of regular outings help children to learn about difference. For example, children pack suitcases for different types of holidays, make collages from travel magazines and dress-up in different traditional costumes, such as those of Japan. The childminder has some experience of caring for children with specific needs. She recognises the importance of adopting a sensitive approach to help meet the children's individual requirements.

A good partnership with parents contributes to children's well-being at the childminder's home. Information is up to date and clearly informs further practice, ensuring that all children's individual needs are met in a consistent manner. A flexible service is on offer and time is spent discussing children's care needs on a daily basis.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children feel at ease in the suitability organised environment. The childminder organises the day to ensure that children's routines and individual needs are met. For example, children have time to rest, as well as to be active. Children are happy, content and encouraged to feel at home in the bright, friendly environment.

On the whole, child ratios are maintained. However, due to the childminder's flexible approach the 'first come first served' approach does not guarantee consistent care for children and families. Documentation meets the requirements of the National Standards.

The childminder ensures that children's all-round development is sound as she holds a National Vocational Qualification Level 3 in Early Years and Education. She has also completed additional training to develop her skills and knowledge in child development. She increasingly uses some policies and procedures to promote the welfare and care of children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has minimised potential hazards in the rear yard to increase children's safety and changed the arrangements for first aid and administering medicines to meet requirements. She has extended resources to reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability, thus enabling children to become aware of diversity. She has also obtained contact information for social services and devised a written policy for the protection of children, which is shared with parents so that children's well-being is protected.

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):

- review practice of giving infants juice in bottles and the amount of sugar in the children's diet
- ensure children are under direct supervision at all times
- reassess vacant places in line with current child attendance.

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