



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	306665
Inspection date	05 February 2007
Inspector	Kay Margaret Armstrong
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 has been registered since 1995. She lives with her husband and their three children aged six, 13 and 16 years old. The family live in the Heald Green area of Stockport, which is within walking distance of parks, shops and the library. The children have access to the playroom and adjoining toilet. The rear garden, which is accessible from the playroom, is available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered for five children and presently cares for a total of nine children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a broad range of activities that contribute to their physical growth and development. Regular visits to the park, provides the opportunity for the children to run around, swing, climb and slide. Children have the opportunity to play outdoors on the garden; they ride bikes, climb on the climbing frame and enjoy the slides. All these experiences help children to develop good coordination skills and gain control of their bodies whilst they explore their surroundings and have fun.

Children clearly thrive because the childminder follows effective hygiene procedures to ensure that they are cared for in a warm and clean home. The risk of cross-infection is minimised by daily routines, which promotes children's understanding of good hygiene practices. For example, the children are beginning to understand the importance of good hygiene routines as the childminder encourages and supports them to wash their hands at appropriate times using anti-bacterial hand-wash.

The childminder discusses and agrees children's dietary requirements with parents. She considers children's likes and dislikes when providing food and drink. The childminder provides children with a very good range of meals and snacks, which are nutritious and contribute to their physical growth and development. Children are beginning to learn about healthy eating as the childminder provides fresh fruit for snacks each day. Meals and snack times are a relaxed, social occasion where children are encouraged to develop self-help skills. The childminder ensures children remain hydrated as she refills their cups with water and encourages them to have regular drinks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children benefit from a well maintained, homely environment where the childminder places a high priority on safety. They are able to play freely and safely, as the childminder is vigilant and has a good recognition of the need for a balance between safe limits and freedom. Safe and secure premises are provided that are suitable for caring for children. Children have space to move freely and emphasis is given to making sure that the environment is welcoming for children and aids their development.

Risk of accidental injury to children is minimised, because the childminder has good risk assessments in place to identify and reduce potential hazards. Children are starting to learn about some aspects of managing their own safety, for example, the childminder encourages them to pick up toys they have dropped, so that they do not stand on them and hurt their feet. When out walking they practise crossing the road safely using the green cross code. There is a written emergency escape plan in place, which has been practised with the children, who are becoming aware of what to do in the event of a fire.

Children have access to a broad range of good quality resources, which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Toys are clean, well-maintained and comply with safety standards.

Resources are well organised and easily accessible to the children, which enhances their learning, and promotes choice and independence.

Children are protected by the childminder who has a good understanding of child protection policies and procedures. She gives priority to children's welfare. Parents are fully informed of the action that would be taken in the event of a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The relaxed atmosphere enables children to settle quickly. Warm and caring relationships have been established between the childminder and children, which increases children's sense of trust and belonging. The children are happy and have a very positive relationship with the childminder. The childminder listens carefully to what the children are saying and responds to their questions and requests in a positive manner.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the childminder's home. Although the childminder has some knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, this is limited. She prepares a varied and imaginative range of experiences for the children. Activities are fun, interesting and promote and challenge children's development and learning, for example, children thoroughly enjoy delving into the treasure box to find interesting resources to play with. They concentrate for long periods of time as they develop their own game. This involves making a 'chute' with cardboard tubes, which they then post pasta shapes down. The childminder spends time playing and interacting with the children who are engaged and interested. She becomes involved in their game under the children's direction as they explain how she must hold the 'chute'. Children laugh and giggle as the pasta shoots out of the end of the cardboard rolls. The childminder skilfully extends children's mathematical language and problem solving skills as she asks questions, which make the children think, such as 'where do you think the pasta will be now?' She supports and prompts the children by making suggestions, 'do you think it will be in the top tube, the middle tube or the bottom tube?'

Photographic evidence shows children participating in a range of different play opportunities, such as, dressing up, playing imaginatively and enjoying creative activities. Children are taken on outings to places of interest, such as a farm. Here they are able to explore different environments, ride on tractors and feed sheep and goats. Such outings extend children's knowledge of the world around them.

Children's language and communication skills are well supported as the childminder consistently talks to the children to develop their vocabulary and understanding. The children are able to make choices in their play as activities are within easy reach and sight. Children make confident choices in their play as they are able to explore resources freely. They express themselves creatively as they make a 'sun' out of different coloured pegs and create different patterns with the pegs. Children's learning is well supported by the childminder, who keeps herself informed of what children are doing at nursery. For example, she is aware of the 'letter of the week' which she reinforces with the children at home by looking for objects which begin with the letter.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder speaks very positively to children, using encouragement effectively to support their efforts and foster their independence. Good behaviour is acknowledged, celebrated and praised appropriately; as a result children behave well. They are beginning to act in a responsible manner as they tidy away resources they have been playing with without adult intervention. Children's creative work is valued and displayed, which promotes children's self-esteem. Children are comfortable in expressing their needs, which the childminder recognises and meets appropriately. Consequently, the children are confident and proud of their achievements.

All children are warmly welcomed and play a full part in the setting, because the childminder values and respects their individuality. The childminder has a clear understanding of equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory play. The children's understanding of the world around them is promoted through the broad range of activities, everyday experiences and resources that reflect diversity. As a result, children are becoming aware of difference and developing a positive attitude to others.

Children benefit from the positive relationships that the childminder has established with their parents, as their individual needs are consistently recognised and met. The childminder has a range of written policies and procedures in place, which she shares with parents. Informal discussions keep the childminder up to date with the children's routines and any changes that may have occurred, ensuring that children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has developed a range of written policies and procedures, which she shares with parents keeping them well informed. All documentation is regularly reviewed and updated. This contributes to children's health, safety and well-being. First aid training is kept up to date to enable the childminder to administer treatment if necessary, to ensure children's welfare is met. The childminder cares for children within the required ratios, which ensures that they are safe and she is able to effectively support them.

The children benefit from a skilled childminder who strives to develop her current childcare practice by attending training. She promotes children's development and learning as she encourages and supports them in making choices about their play and the activities they become involved in. The children enjoy a range of different play opportunities away from the home, such as visits to the park, groups and places of interest, which ensures they are able to explore different environments and socialise with their peers and other adults.

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 agreed to develop a range of natural resources for babies. Children and babies now have access to a treasure box. This contains a range of resources,

some of which are natural, for example, weather cones and pebbles, but also manufactured resources, such as pan scourers and cardboard tubes. These resources not only help to promote children's sensory development, but feed their imagination as well.

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):

- further develop knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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