

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	322267
Inspection date	12 April 2007
Inspector	Gillian Sutherland

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 1993. She lives with her partner and one adult daughter in Wavertree, Liverpool. The rooms used for childminding are on the ground floor apart from the bathroom which is on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently caring for seven children, some of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and pre-schools and also attends local toddler groups. She takes the children on outings to local places of interest.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and also a local childminding network group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a varied range of activities and experiences, both indoors and outdoors, which promote being healthy. Children develop their physical skills as they access a range of age-appropriate outdoor resources, including a slide, push and pedal toys, and with parents' written permission they also have the opportunity to access the trampoline. They also visit many local places of interest as part of their daily activity programme. The activity programme does include visits to local playgroups with the childminder.

Children are cared for in a home that is very warm and welcoming to them, where they learn about the importance of good health and personal care as part of their daily routine. During the inspection visit, children enjoyed participating in a creative activity which involved them selecting and cutting out pictures of healthy foods from food magazines. The activity also promoted their language development as they chatted freely to each other and to the childminder about healthy eating and their likes and dislikes.

Children also learn about the importance of healthy eating as the childminder encourages children to eat a healthy range of lunches and snacks. Children's individual dietary needs are made known to the childminder prior to care commencing and specific needs are recorded on their enrolment form. This ensures that children are looked after in accordance with their parents' wishes and their individual dietary needs met. The childminder discusses fully the range of meals and snacks that she provides with parents as part of the pre-admission discussion.

A choice of drinks, including water, is available to children at meal and snack times and also as and when requested, however, they are not freely accessible to the children at any time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are allowed to move round freely and play safely and this is due to the childminder taking steps to minimise or eliminate any potential risks or hazards. The childminder has fitted effective safety equipment in different areas within the house. An example of this is in the kitchen, where all low-level cupboards containing hazardous materials and substances, have had child safety catches fitted.

Regarding fire safety, the childminder has fitted a smoke alarm on each level of the house and these are checked regularly to ensure they are in working order. Children cared for have participated in fire drill practices and the childminder maintains a record of when these have been carried out and also which children were present.

Children are well informed about road safety dangers through discussion and participation in good practice as they go on outings to local places of interest.

Children can freely self-select toys of their choice from a wide and varied range of toys and resources, all of which are clean and well maintained. The range of toys and resources is appropriate for children in the different age groups which the childminder currently cares for. Children can very easily access which toys they want to play with as they are stored in such a way that promotes freedom of choice. Additional toys and resources are stored in the cellar and these are changed and rotated on a regular basis.

The childminder has a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and she has a copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures, which she has familiarised herself with and would refer to for contact details as and when required.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are content, happy and enjoy their time at the childminder's home. Here children access a wide and varied range of resources; they make choices about their play and learning as they self-select what to play with or which activities they want to participate in. All children are well occupied and spend their time purposefully.

Interaction is good and children are confident in the care of the childminder, who is involved and interested in their play and ensures that the activities provided are stimulating and fun. For example, she and the children participated in a singing session during which the children accessed the musical instruments. Children's efforts in all activities are praised when appropriate, thus, raising their self-esteem. As the children were playing outside during the inspection, some of those present took great delight in showing me the sunflowers they had planted which were being kept in the greenhouse until they were ready to grow tall and flower outside.

The children's play programme is flexible and ensures that all children are given the opportunity to access the full range of activities available. The range of activities includes construction play, role play and creative play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about the different needs of people in their own environment and also in the wider community. They develop an awareness of how people may differ from each other. Children access a varied range of toys and resources which provide positive images of diversity.

Children's behaviour is good. The childminder leads by example, speaking to the children politely and praising them appropriately during their play. The childminder supports children's learning about behaviour through setting clear, consistent boundaries and providing simple, age-appropriate explanations. Children's behaviour that is inappropriate is dealt with by the childminder using one of her appropriate strategies. The childminder always discusses the strategies she uses with parents prior to care commencing, and this results in achieving a consistent approach to managing unwanted behaviour.

The childminder respects all children she cares for and ensures their individual needs are met. Children's needs are discussed with parents prior to care commencing and information gained is recorded in their personal file. As a result, the childminder is very knowledgeable about the children in her care and ensures that their individual needs are met. All parents receive a comprehensive set of the childminder's policies and documents are available to look at during the pre-admission discussion, such as sample menus and a daily activity programme.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's enjoyment and time spent with the childminder is greatly enhanced by good organisation. The areas of the house indoors which are accessed by children are very well

organised, and as a result children benefit from a thoughtfully prepared environment, where indoor and outdoor space is set out to maximise play opportunities for children of all ages. Activities for the children are planned and prepared in advance by the childminder, who is beginning to implement into her daily practices some aspects of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Children also benefit from the childminder's commitment to training and to continuous development. Her enthusiasm for her work is visible in the range of courses she attends. Children's care is then further enhanced by the well-maintained documentation. This ensures that the individual needs of the children are met, and that they are looked after in accordance with their parents' wishes. The childminder has a broad range of policies, which support her childcare practices, and each parent receives a copy of those policies as their child or children's attendance is confirmed. However, the Local Safeguarding Children Board policy and the complaints policy have not been updated to ensure they comply with current legislation and guidelines.

All the required documentation that contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place. The childminder has developed a good working partnership with parents and keeps them fully informed about their child's day and the activities they have participated in. 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 required to provide parents with the contact details of the regulator, Ofsted. She has, since that inspection, made parents aware that Ofsted's address and telephone number is available to them on request, therefore, children's well-being is protected.

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 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):

- consider how drinks can be made freely accessible to the children

- ensure that the Local Safeguarding Children Board and complaint policies comply with current legislation and guidance.

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