

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	312980
Inspection date	08 May 2007
Inspector	Sheila May Price

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 for 13 years and works with her daughter, who is also a registered childminder and lives on the same premises in the Kirkby area of Knowsley. Other persons in the household are the childminder's husband and adult son. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor activities. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children aged under eight. There are currently six children on roll aged under eight and two children aged over eight. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a busy schedule of activities planned for them each day which allows the younger ones limited time for rest, however, they do get a chance to sleep while escorted from one place to another in their prams. Children get fresh air every day and older children walk to and from school, which contributes to their good health. They use a range of large and small equipment to develop their physical co-ordination, balance and spatial awareness, such as

things to climb through, wheeled toys to pedal, and balls to catch and throw. Young children learn to manipulate small equipment, such as building blocks, to make towers.

The childminder follows suitable procedures for maintaining hygiene in the kitchen. Wipes are used to clean children's hands for convenience before meals, but this means that children who are old enough to learn are not practicing how to wash their hands properly. Arrangements are made to look after children who have been unwell and continue to need medication administered to them, as long as children are settled and happy and not spreading infection to others. No information about communicable diseases is available to share with parents for their guidance.

Children's dietary needs are met in partnership with parents, who normally provide the main meal at home. The childminder provides a satisfactory range of nutritious meals and snacks and children eat fruit and some milk products daily. The childminder is aware that children need to be encouraged to try a range of tastes and consistencies to improve their chance of making healthy choices, but finds that some children still reluctant to do this.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are well maintained and secure to keep children safe. A child orientated environment has been created using child sized furniture, posters, photographs and children's art work on the walls so that children settle in quickly and feel they belong. Although only one room is used, this is large and well organised with domestic furniture pushed back against the walls to create as much space as possible. Children are able to access a good range of well looked after toys, suited to their needs and interests.

Any hazards in the home or outdoors are isolated or made safe using suitable safety equipment. There is a written fire evacuation procedure for clarity, and fire practices are carried out at regular intervals. Children learn how to keep their environment safe by picking things up and putting them away when the floor gets too crowded. When older children are escorted to and from school they are expected to walk safely and not run on ahead. Younger children are safely strapped into their prams.

The childminder supervises children well. Children are developing self-esteem so that they are confident to make choices and state their views, which contributes to their protection. The childminder understands the signs and symptoms of abuse and shares her policy on child protection with parents to ensure that children are well safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled because the childminder behaves in a calm and friendly manner. She listens to them well and takes delight in their achievements. Appropriate cuddles are given when necessary to reassure young children until they adjust to new situations. Children explore their environment with confidence, selecting their own resources to play with from the good range provided. Young children enjoy naming the objects they play with and are gradually widening the vocabulary they use with the good support of the childminder, who encourages them to communicate through taking an interest in what they do.

Children have the opportunity to explore a range of materials using all of their senses when they visit their local toddler group with the childminder. They use sand and water, make dough,

and plant seeds in soil. Older children enjoy art and craft activities and trips out during the holidays. The childminder observes what children like doing and brings out appropriate resources to develop their imaginative play, such as encouraging them to make imaginary cups of tea or using the play telephone to ring home. She takes pictures of what children do to share with parents but has not yet developed a system for recording their achievements in any consistent way to monitor their development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young children behave well because they are kept well occupied. They are prepared well for changes of activity so that they are not rushed and can do things at their own pace. The childminder involves children in tidying up and preparing the table for their lunch, so that they learn that they have a contribution to make. There are opportunities to meet the needs of one child while another is asleep and when children are playing together their different needs are accommodated so that all feel included. There are sufficient resources used to encourage older children to learn about similarities and differences in people and cultures so that diversity is appreciated and respected.

Good relationships are fostered with parents which benefits the children. Information is shared verbally on a daily basis, so that children's and parents' needs can be discussed in an informal and friendly manner. The childminder keeps a file of policies and information for parents to read if they wish and certificates and posters are displayed on the wall for parents to see as they enter. Parents are informed about the forthcoming inspection so that they can make their views known about the service that is provided for their children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder is experienced in childcare and uses her skills to create a happy and relaxed atmosphere where children's self-esteem is fostered well. The partnership with her daughter as co-childminder works effectively. Each is sensitive to what the other is doing and will take over responsibilities regarding nappy changing, preparing food or talking to parents when the other is busy with the children.

Although records are well maintained, the childminder has not kept fully up to date with some changes in legislation and adapted her policies accordingly, such as with child protection and complaints procedures. She makes improvements where these are suggested to her, but has not yet developed reflective practice which would involve reviewing her provision in the light of new guidance documents and the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were four recommendations arising from the last inspection. These related to fire evacuation procedures, procedures for dealing with complaints, recording medication, and obtaining parents' permission to seek medical advice or treatment in an emergency. The childminder has carried out the recommendations as follows.

She now has an emergency fire evacuation policy and records when practices have been carried out with the children. She has displayed the Ofsted poster in the hall to inform parents of the number to call if they wish to share their views about her service, and included a complaints policy in her information pack, however, this has not been updated again since changes in regulations were made in October 2005. Records are now kept of when non prescribed medication has been administered. Permission has been obtained from all the parents for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future.

Through carrying out the above recommendations children are being better 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 complaint 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):

- keep updating policies and practices in line with amendments to standards and use training and guidance to help with planning for children's continual development
- promote children's understanding of healthy eating and good hygiene and obtain information about notifiable and communicable diseases.

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