

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	315459
Inspection date	20 June 2007
Inspector	Jane Pamela Berry

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 1995. She lives with her family in a detached house in the Ladybridge area of Bolton.

The downstairs areas of the house are used for childminding. An enclosed garden is available for outdoor play. The childminder is registered for six children altogether. There are currently a total of four children on roll who are cared for on a part-time basis.

The childminder takes children to local venues, parks and toddler groups. The childminder lives within walking distance of Ladybridge, Beaumont, and St Bernard's primary schools, and local playgroups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene because the childminder provides them with an effective role model. For example, she washes the children's hands using wipes, prior to and

after mealtimes, and after visiting the toilet. She is able to meet the needs of all children in an emergency situation, having updated her knowledge, through recognised first aid training.

The childminder provides healthy meals, such as pasta, which is served regularly and this is one of the children's favourite meals. The childminder describes how fresh fruit is served as a mid-afternoon snack, although if children are collected earlier, they do not receive snacks prior to leaving the childminder's home. Children have regular access to fresh drinking water and juice, which ensures that they remain well hydrated throughout the day.

The children have many opportunities for robust physical play in the garden and on outings to places of interest, such as the activity gymnasium. They enjoy these sessions, where they meet with other children to jump, climb, slide and balance on the soft play equipment. Children play energetically in the garden with wheeled toys, pedalling and steering them around obstacles with confidence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The environment is conducive to children's welfare, with plenty of space for them to move around in. Children have easy access to a range of suitable and safe equipment. The childminder is aware of the importance of checking the resources and maintains equipment to the required standards. The premises are well maintained although sometimes risks are not fully assessed. For example, the steps in the garden and the toys that are stored in plastic bags at child height, pose some hazards for very young children.

Children's safety and welfare are appropriately protected through the safeguarding policies that are satisfactorily adhered to. The childminder describes how the children are transported safely in a vehicle, with car safety seats used, taking account of children's ages. Fire safety is prioritised accordingly, with regular practises being undertaken, so that children know what to do and can get out quickly in an emergency situation. Smoke detectors are securely in place and these are tested to ensure that they are working properly to give advance warning of a fire.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge of the needs of young children, which she has updated through the 'Birth to three matters' training. She implements this in practice, for example through sensory play activities in sand and water. The children thoroughly enjoy paint and exploratory play at the local toddler group sessions. They also sing songs and often have stories read to them, by the childminder. This helps the children to understand real life situations and to develop an understanding of events. The childminder demonstrates a real understanding of the children's abilities and of their limitations. For example, when they are unable to listen to the story, she asks children to read the book to her. This enables the children to use creative language and to look and interpret their own ideas, making up a storyline from pictures. This helps children to develop their language and creative abilities. They take home pictures that they have made from recycled materials and paint. This helps them to express themselves during play and through artwork.

The children like visiting the toy library to select toys and walking to the local park to feed the animals. They enjoy a range of different activities, which are enhanced by the use of the loan

scheme. The children thoroughly enjoy selecting different equipment each week, to support their development and learning. They play with toy cars and activity toys that help them to learn about their bodies, such as building a face by adding two eyes, different shaped eyebrows, a nose and a happy or a sad mouth.

Children visit places of interest. For example, they feed the ducks in the park and visit childminder groups to socialise with friends. The children are excited as they talk about going to a friend's party, that afternoon and talk animatedly about giving him a present for his birthday.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are treated with equal regard and their differing needs are well met. Children are becoming aware of the wider world through playing with some resources, which reflect different cultures. They learn to value and respect the experiences and ways of life of others through meaningful discussions. Children are actively encouraged to participate in all activities regardless of their gender. This promotes their understanding of diversity, whilst increasing their self-esteem and respect for others.

Children feel at home because the childminder warmly welcomes them into the home and is attentive to their needs. As a result, parents report that their children have settled quickly. Children mostly behave well because the childminder rewards good behaviour with praise and encouragement. If children seek attention through unwanted behaviour, such as hitting they are, reminded of the boundaries and expectations by the childminder. As a consequence older children are beginning to distinguish between right and wrong. They know, for example, not to climb on the furniture and they are beginning to understand the consequences of their actions.

The childminder has established good relationships with parents and as a consequence is aware of children's individual needs. During the settling in period the childminder gathers information about the child's needs and interests, which contributes significantly to their care and well-being. Information is effectively shared using a daily diary and verbal exchanges between the childminder and parents. This promotes continuity of care. Parents are well informed about the care offered as the childminder shares written policies and procedures with them. However, the complaints procedure has not yet been updated in line with the requirements. This is a breach of a regulation. The childminder has a positive attitude to working with parents and carers, and there have been no complaints, received to date. Therefore, the impact of this oversight is minimal. The childminder provides an inclusive environment for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. She fully understands the importance of working with parents to promote the welfare and development of all children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder's home is organised to meet their needs, for example, they have space to play safely and areas for them to rest, as required. The organisation of resources enables children to select items freely. Children's individual needs are reflected in the daily organisation, for example, outings are arranged to keep children amused and active. Sensitive introductions support children in the settling in process and provide them with emotional security.

Documents are stored confidentially and are easily accessible. Information for parents regarding the services provided is mostly developing well. For example, photographs of children engaged in activities, sample menus and a daily diary of basic information is suitably maintained and shared with parents. At the beginning of the inspection, the childminder had not displayed her certificate of registration. This is a breach of a regulation that was rectified immediately.

The childminder understands the benefits of attending training. She utilises the knowledge that she gains by incorporating this into her practice, for example, the 'Birth to three matters' training and more recently the paediatric first aid training. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain written permission from parents for children to play on the driveway, at the front of the house under close supervision and to establish a written agreement with parents that sets out the expectations, as to the care of the child, activities provided and the business arrangements. Both of these recommendations have been met, which has improved the partnership with children's parents and subsequently, the quality of care for the children in attendance.

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

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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):

- develop the use of risk assessments to regularly identify and help manage hazards, particularly for young children, for example in the playroom and when using steps to the outdoor area
- develop the complaints procedure to include; a system for logging complaints from parents and for sharing appropriate information from that record with parents on request.

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