

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 322527
Inspection date 08 May 2007
Inspector (Kate) Kathryn, Jane Ryder

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 2000. She lives with her partner and two children, aged 13 and 15 years. They live in a house in the Hindley area of Wigan.

The whole of the ground floor of the property, with the exception of a bedroom, is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have five pet cats and a large tank of tropical fish.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and currently there are eight children on roll, attending various sessions.

The childminder is working towards a quality assurance award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where the childminder promotes hygiene practices by having regular routines for cleaning the home, equipment and toys. For example, she uses antibacterial spray regularly to wipe work surfaces, toys and the bathroom. She occasionally hoses the outdoor toys, making sure they remain in a good standard of cleanliness. Children are beginning to develop an awareness about their personal care needs. They are encouraged to wash their hands after using the bathroom and before meals. The family have five cats and care is taken to protect children from any health risks by ensuring they do not come into contact with kitchen surfaces. However, the dressing up box is used on occasions as a bed and this impacts on children's health.

Children have regular access to fresh air and exercise which is enjoyable, meets their development needs and contributes to their good health. Each day they have access to indoor or outdoor activities, which help them develop control of their bodies, for example, by using the trampoline or riding bikes in the garden. They also enjoy and benefit from the weekly opportunities to visit an adventure play centre and practise skills, such as balancing and climbing.

Children are adopting healthy choices with food as the childminder promotes this in her daily practice. She has good regard to healthy snacks and meals, and sample menus demonstrate that food is healthy and nutritious. She takes care to prepare home cooked meals and avoids food with high salt, sugar and fat content. She makes sure children can keep themselves refreshed by offering drinks at mealtimes and making sure young children can independently access their cup.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming home. Space is well organised to promote a child friendly environment, which has ample space to enable children to move safely and freely in the ground floor rooms. Children's artwork and anti-discriminatory posters are displayed, which helps children feel a sense of belonging. Children are provided with a good range of toys and equipment which meet their developmental needs. Resources are well organised and accessible, enabling children to self-select, which encourages them to initiate their own ideas and play.

The childminder takes positive steps in the home to minimise risks and keep children safe. For example, good safety measures have been put in place, such as cupboard locks in the kitchen and appropriate fire safety equipment is available and in place. Safety gates and a fire guard protect children from higher risk areas in the home. Children are learning to keep themselves safe when outdoors. For example, they know that they must wait at the curb before crossing the road and must fasten their car seat belt before the car moves forward.

The childminder has attended safeguarding children training and as a result has developed an awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect, and the referral procedure. She has an adequate understanding about her role and responsibilities and is able to protect children and keep them safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and at ease in the childminder's company. They interact positively and spontaneously cuddle and kiss her. The childminder plays at the children's level, as they play together on the floor or side by side on the sofa. The childminder displays children's art work, which helps them to develop a strong sense of belonging within the home environment. Children have opportunities to socialise with other children through regular attendance at childminder drop-ins and play gyms.

Children are motivated, interested and involved in their play. Young children have a good variety of resources, which in the main they are able to access independently. This enables them to select their own play, initiate and explore their own ideas. They enjoy putting a teddy bear in a buggy and pushing it up and down the room. A waterfall tube holds the attention of young children as they manage to turn it upside down and watch and listen to the trickling sounds. The childminder has attended the 'Birth to three matters' framework training, however, as yet, she is not fully secure in her understanding and has not put it into her daily practice. She is due to attend further training in order to address the gaps in her understanding.

During school holidays, the childminder plans a wider range of activities, including pond dipping events, nature walks and creative activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to learn about differences in society and the wider community through their play experiences and discussions with the childminder. They occasionally talk about festivals, such as Chinese New Year and gain some awareness about the culture as they identify in which year they were born according to the Chinese calendar. A small number of resources promoting positive images of others are available but they are shared with another childminder. The childminder sees equal opportunities as an area for development and demonstrates a commitment to providing a wider range of resources and to the development of her own knowledge. The childminder demonstrates sensitivity towards children with disabilities and learning difficulties and works in partnership with parents to best meet individual needs.

The childminder manages children's behaviour well. She uses strategies which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. For example, she distracts their attention, redirects their interest and praises good behaviour. She remains calm when dealing with very challenging behaviour and demonstrates great patience and sensitivity.

The childminder works in partnership with parents, ensuring children's needs are discussed and understood at the time of placement. Information is shared with parents in a variety of ways, such as through her written policies and procedures, and daily informal discussions. The childminder has a written complaints record. However, it contains confidential information and does not follow the suggested format to fully comply with the regulation.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder shows a good level of commitment to attending further training and updating her skills and knowledge. She has attended several short courses, such as an introduction to

special educational needs, safeguarding children and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She is currently working towards a quality award scheme. As a result, children benefit from her continued development and the implementation of new knowledge and skills into her daily practice.

The childminder plans her time and resources well to ensure children have access to a good range of interesting activities, both inside and outside the home. Space is well organised to provide an accessible environment for children, which helps them to develop their independence.

In general all the documentation required by the National Standards is in place. Written policies and procedures are shared with parents and effectively promote the safety, care and learning of children. This keeps parents fully informed about all aspects of their children's care.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the childminder was asked to make a low level mirror safe or inaccessible, to organise her toy resources, make sure the outdoor toys were kept in a clean condition and to provide an appropriate range of anti-discriminatory resources. The mirror has been covered with safety film. Toys are organised on shelving and outdoor toys are washed regularly. The childminder is one of a small group of childminders who share a limited range of toys which reflect positive images of diversity. These have all improved the quality of children's care, safety and learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 1 2004, Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard 3: Care, learning and play; National Standard 4: Physical environment; National Standard 6: Safety and National Standard 7: Health. A Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement Officer visited and as a result of the visit four actions were raised. Ofsted was satisfied that appropriate action was taken to meet the National Standards and the provider remained qualified for registration.

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 knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and improve outcomes for children

- continue to develop the range of anti-discriminatory toys and activities
- amend the complaints record in line with guidance to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

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