

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	303333
Inspection date	20 February 2008
Inspector	Wendy Brooks
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 outstanding. 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 2000. She lives with her husband in Murdishaw, Runcorn. The whole of the ground floor and first floor bathroom of the childminder's house are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight years at any one time. She is currently minding six children in total, some of whom are over eight years, and some children only attend on a part time basis. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and attends toddler groups.

The childminder is currently studying for a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3 Working with children. She is a member of and representative for the local childminder's support group and has close links with the local Surestart centre.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health and well-being is given extremely high priority and there is a very good standard of health and hygiene in the home. The childminder ensures that thorough daily routines are followed, such as wiping the dining table with anti-bacterial spray before snack time and after messy activities and providing children with individual, labelled hand towels to use after washing their hands. An effective sick child policy ensures the children's medical needs are well met and they are cared for appropriately if they are ill.

Children gain a high level of self-control. They express their needs appropriately, for example, informing the childminder when they are feeling hungry and what activities they would like to take part in. The childminder encourages children to develop independent self care skills whenever possible, for example, learning to wipe their nose, washing hands with soap and water and peeling their own fruit at snack time.

Superb organisational skills enable the childminder to provide children with a nutritious and healthy diet. Home cooked meals include shepherd's pie and spaghetti bolognaise which are cooked in advance and frozen until required. A selection of cereals, yoghurts and fruits are available to children who attend for breakfast and the childminder composes a weekly menu which is shared with parents in advance. Children independently select tangerines, apples and bananas from the fruit bowl, discussing what fruits they are having today. With minimal support from the childminder they sit together at the table and enjoy a tasty and nutritious snack.

Children show an excellent understanding and willingness to keep themselves safe and healthy. Older children understand the aim to have five fruits or vegetables a day and are proud of themselves when they achieve this, marking it off on the wall chart. Younger children attempt to pour their own drinks of water from the jug, with support from the childminder as required.

Children are involved in an extensive range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities which provide high levels of challenge appropriate to their age and stage of development. When playing in the garden, children play on the slide, ride on wheeled toys and use bats and balls. Regular visits to toddler groups, parks and playgrounds allow children of all ages to develop their large physical skills. Additional outings during holidays to the beach, animal parks and other areas of interest provide a varied and interesting selection of activities for children to enjoy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has an excellent awareness of health and safety, and positive steps are taken to ensure that this is maintained and reinforced with the children. When using the stairs to visit the toilet, young children are asked each time if they want to hold the childminder's hand or go down on their bottom. This enables the children to make sensible choices and contribute towards their own safety. Regular fire drills are practised with the children, involving them in the procedure to follow in the case of an emergency. This is extended into the children's own homes by encouraging parents to talk to their children about fire safety at home.

Children's safety is given high priority both in the home and on outings and appropriate equipment is used to meet children's needs at various stages of development. Children wear

badges with contact numbers for the childminder should they get lost when on outings. The childminder carefully plans any visits outside of the home, assessing what equipment and essential items will be required, in order to maintain children's health, safety and well-being.

Children have access to an extensive selection of resources, toys and equipment. These are maintained in excellent condition and regularly checked by the childminder to ensure children's safety is not compromised. Many are stored at low level to allow children to select what they want independently. Additional resources are stored in a very well organised manner, allowing both children and the childminder to easily access what is required. Children are confident to ask for equipment which they cannot select by themselves.

A high level of understanding of child protection issues is held. The childminder ensures she keeps up to date with training and implements good procedures to keep children safe. All required documents and guidance are available and contacts for the Local Safeguarding Children Board are in place. This ensures that children are protected from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children play a dynamic part in the setting. They are animated and enthusiastic as they make choices about their activities and care. Wherever possible, they share responsibility for decisions about the provision, actively contributing ideas for the activities which everyone can take part in.

One day each week is planned as baking day and children look forward to choosing a recipe, making a list of ingredients which they buy together from the shops and then making their treat to take home at the end of the day. Although the older children often select the recipe to follow, the childminder ensures that all children are involved in the preparations and the baking activity, providing support as required.

The range of activities and resources offered to the children are excellent and cover all areas of children's development. A flexible plan for the month ahead is prepared by the childminder. A general theme is selected, such as colours or numbers and activities are planned to suit children's individual needs and interests. As a result, children are motivated and make many good links in their learning.

The childminder spends her time talking and playing with the children. She is interested in them and what they do. Children become fully engrossed in an art and craft activity where they explore a variety of textures and materials which they can select to glue onto their pictures. After this children play imaginatively, feeding their dolls, going shopping and talking on the telephone, before they sit with the childminder for a quiet story. Further activities which are regularly provided include painting, modelling with dough, dressing up, musical activities and visits to toddler groups and places of interest within the local area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder recognises children as individuals and meets their differing needs very well. She provides children with good quality interactions and significantly enhances all aspects of children's development. A high priority is given to developing and encouraging children's independence and self-esteem. Good behaviour is valued and encouraged which results in

children interacting well with each other. Methods for dealing with inappropriate behaviour are sensitive, consistent and effective.

Children develop a good understanding of the wider world through an extensive range of meaningful and interesting activities. The childminder carefully plans activities around particular festivals or cultural events. To celebrate Chinese New Year children made paper lanterns, ate spring rolls and prawn crackers as part of their snack time and shared calendars depicting images and information about the celebrations. During their routine visits within the local community children's understanding of diversity is well developed.

Partnerships with parents is very effective. Well maintained, detailed documentation and regular verbal communication keep parents informed of all aspects of the service, and of their children's activities and progress. Parents, who have positive views about the service provided, are listened to and their wishes are taken in to account by the childminder. Parents of young children have daily diaries which keep them up to date of all aspects of their child's day and the childminder includes parents in activities that children are involved in. Samples of children's work and photographs are sent home on a regular basis.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. The home is warm and welcoming which enables children to relax in the care of the childminder. This means they are confident to initiate their own play and build positive relationships with the childminder, other children and members of the childminder's family.

The childminder is extremely committed to providing a safe and caring environment in which children can progress in all areas of their development. Through regular training and personal development, such as attending courses in child protection, exploring emotions, health and safety, equality and diversity and promoting positive behaviour, the childminder ensures that her understanding of childcare initiatives are up to date. This means that children's safety, health and well-being are thoroughly promoted at all times.

Space and resources are organised effectively to meet the needs of the children and to ensure close supervision at all times. All records are accurately maintained and detailed documentation, policies and procedures are in place.

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, a recommendation was made for the childminder to continue to develop her knowledge and understanding of child care practices. By attending training courses on a regular basis, attending relevant meetings and acting as a representative for the local childminding support group, the childminder ensures that her knowledge of childcare initiatives are up to date and she is continuously striving to further improve her practice.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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