

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 310557
Inspection date 08 February 2008
Inspector Elizabeth Margaret Grocott

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 1991 and lives, with her husband and three children aged 14, 21 and 22, in the Bootle area of Liverpool. The whole of the ground floor of the house and the bathroom on the first floor is used for childminding. There is an enclosed patio garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children and is currently minding five children on a full and part-time basis. She takes and collects children to and from local schools and has a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3 in childcare.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely clean and tidy home where the risk of infection is minimised through the childminder's effective cleaning routines. Children are encouraged in hygienic practices, such as hand washing before meals, and after toileting and messy craft activities. Their health is further protected, as children who are infectious, are not minded and

an exclusion period is in operation for some diseases to prevent the spread of infection. First aid training is up-to-date, enabling the childminder to respond appropriately in the case of an accident. All the required records for accident and administration of medication are maintained.

Children thrive because they are provided with a well-balanced range of nutritious, home-cooked snacks and meals that contribute significantly to their understanding of a healthy diet. They enjoy cereals, toast and fruit for breakfast, fish, homemade oven chips and beans or a roast dinner at lunchtime and salad sandwiches and fresh fruit at teatime. Fresh drinking water is made available at all times helping children to develop healthy habits. Their understanding of a healthy diet is further promoted as they play a bingo game about healthy foods and grow some of their own vegetables.

Children have regular opportunities to be in the fresh air as they walk to and from schools and groups and play in the childminder's garden and at the local park. Here they swing, slide and climb, developing their upper body strength. In the childminder's patio garden, they play with balls, tunnels and tents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are comfortable and secure in their surroundings. Space is well organised to allow them to move freely and independently around the home. Younger children can rest undisturbed. Safety gates are provided where hazards may occur and risk assessment of the indoor and outdoor area minimises accidents. Children cannot leave the premises unnoticed as the front and back doors are secure and locks are inaccessible to children. However, the time between checking of smoke detectors and practising evacuations of the property are insufficient to ensure children's safety.

All children have access to a superb range of quality toys and resources, which are suitable for their ages, and stages of development. These are rotated from storage to provide variety, fun and interest. Very young children select from rattles, shakers, pull along toys, soft books and musical items. The childminder also provides children with opportunities to learn about the wider world through her resources.

Children's welfare is promoted because the childminder has a clear understanding of her responsibility towards protecting children from abuse or neglect. She is clear about the possible indicators that would raise her concerns and demonstrates a good understanding of the appropriate action to take should she be concerned. She has recently completed relevant training and has policies and procedures in place to guide her practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very settled, happy and benefit from the high level of care provided by the childminder. She provides them with many exciting and stimulating experiences that promote all aspects of their learning and development. For example, they enjoy water play as they clean the utensils from the role-play, dress up in Turkish clothes and make bird feeders for the garden. The childminder ensures that toys are rotated to give children variety and provide new challenges. She continues themes that children undertake in nursery. For instance, a project on houses. Children cut items from catalogues and put them in the relevant rooms of the houses, making a collage.

Children enjoy art and craft activities and develop their creative skills. They use paint and play dough and learn about printing techniques. Children also like to pretend and the childminder organises face-painting activities. The childminder understands how young children learn and encourages them to develop and enhance their listening and language skills by talking to them and looking at books with them. She uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework effectively to inspire progress. Resources are provided that encourage imaginative skills, such as providing large cardboard boxes in which children hide. A den is constructed outside for children to play in.

The childminder is skilled in knowing when to allow the children to explore the play resources independently, and when to step in to support them and extend their play. She is aware of the need to support children's preparation for school and provides opportunities for children to learn about colours, shapes and numbers. Consequently, children achieve extremely well as the experiences they are offered support them to do things that challenge their capabilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are provided with an excellent range of resources, which reflect positive images of diversity. These include dolls, dressing up clothes, figures with disability aids, books, posters and games. This helps children to understand the diverse society in which they live. They celebrate Chinese New Year, making Dragons, cards and dressing Chinese figures in traditional costumes. Children's knowledge about the world in which they live is further developed as the childminder encourages them to grow some of their own food, such as golden tomatoes, strawberries and broad beans.

The childminder's knowledge of learning difficulties and disabilities is impressive. Through her own personal experience and some training, she has a vast knowledge of different conditions, agencies that can offer support and practical solutions to managing some types of disability. She has an excellent awareness of the stages of child development and is quickly able to recognise any delays in reaching milestones. The childminder works closely with parents or carers if a child causes concern. Children's needs are understood and met very effectively by the childminder. She is aware of and can identify how she needs to support children in order for their progress to be maximised.

The childminder's expectation of children's behaviour is high and she is consistent in her approach. If children misbehave, strategies used help children to understand that certain behaviours are not acceptable. These are well suited to their ages and abilities. Praise is offered regularly as a means of reinforcing positive behaviour.

An exemplary partnership with parents is developed contributing significantly to children's well-being. Daily diaries are completed for all children, giving parents full information on what their child has done and achieved. Photographs illustrate this. A detailed brochure provides parents with a comprehensive guide to the childminding service and its policies and procedures. Parents are extremely happy with the service they receive and describe the childminder as very trustworthy, conscientious and caring.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy, safe and well cared for. They have a varied curriculum to enrich their learning experiences. Children benefit from an exceptionally well-organised routine and a childminder who strives to increase her professional knowledge. She has completed a recognised level three childcare qualification. She attends many relevant short courses in order to keep updated in the childcare field. The childminder is highly motivated and shows an enthusiastic level of commitment in the service she provides for children and parents.

All regulatory documentation and paperwork is recorded meticulously. The childminder is exceptionally well organised and has developed substantial policies, procedures and documents that support her excellent childcare practice. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the childminder was asked to provide opportunities for parents to receive regular information on their children's progress. This has been done by means of a daily diary which details the activities, sleep patterns and food intake of each child. This helps parents to be well-informed.

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 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):

- ensure that practice emergency evacuation of the premises and checks on smoke detecting equipment meet with fire safety recommendations. Review risk assessments to ensure a child cannot become locked in the bathroom.

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