

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310728
Inspection date	04 February 2008
Inspector	Lynne Naylor
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 1996. She lives in Southport with her husband and two adult sons. Children are cared for on the ground floor of the property. They have access to a playroom, kitchen, dining room and toilet. The garden is available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years at any one time. She is currently minding seven children under eight years, of which five are under five years. The family has a pet dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health and welfare are of high priority to the childminder, who ensures they play in a clean environment. Children learn from an early age the importance of good personal hygiene through effective well organised daily routines. The thoughtful provision of a small step enables children to use the toilet and wash basin comfortably. Children dry their hands on fluffy white

towels which they place in a bin for washing after every use, therefore preventing cross-contamination.

The childminder has devised an excellent range of policies and procedures, which are shared with parents, to support her childminding practice. For example, children who are infectious are not allowed to attend in order to prevent the spread of contagious ailments to other children.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate, which means she can give appropriate care to children if there is an accident. She is meticulous about recording any accidents in a log book, which is then brought to parents' notice.

Children bring their own main meals, which are both healthy and nutritious and the childminder heats them safely. Children develop an understanding of the importance of a healthy diet through carefully planned activities and conversation. For example, they buy and examine unusual fruits, such as pomegranate and papaya, cutting them open to see what they look like inside and comparing them to a poster that is displayed in the kitchen. Children drink plenty of water throughout the day as the childminder is vigilant about ensuring they always have a drink of water to hand.

Children enjoy regular fresh air and exercise, necessary for their well-being, when walking to and from school. Children play outside in the garden or visit the local playground where they enthusiastically explore apparatus suitable for their age and stage of development. Children enjoy music and dance activities indoors. Their fine motor control is actively encouraged through routines and activities. They manage to use cutlery well and operate small toys effectively, such as train sets and role play toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in a secure environment. They move around confidently and high priority is given to their personal safety. The childminder takes precautions to prevent accidents, for example, by using socket covers and stair gates in areas where children could be at risk.

Children's craftwork and photographs are displayed for others to see. This makes them feel valued and secure. They have easy and safe access to an excellent range of toys and resources appropriate for their age and stage of development. Toys are maintained in very good condition as the childminder does visual checks of toys and resources to ensure there are no broken parts that could harm children. Children travel safely on outings in a double buggy that has a harness for each child. The childminder does not use her car, preferring to walk to school, toddler groups and the park.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of child protection issues and keeps all relevant reference material close to hand. Children's welfare is promoted within the setting as the childminder has a reciprocal arrangement with another local registered childminder to leave children in each other's care in the case of an emergency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are encouraged to be independent from a young age. For example, the childminder supports children as they wash their own hands and encourages them to put on their coats and

boots before going outside. Children are thoroughly absorbed in their play. They skilfully use paint pens and chunky chinks to create works of art at the easel. They manipulate dough using a range of tools, naming the shapes of cutters as they use them. Children use scissors with increasing control as they snip pieces of dough off a sausage shape.

Emphasis is put on children developing the breadth of their skills, knowledge and understanding. Children respond enthusiastically to the activities the childminder provides each day. Children use mathematical language, such as 'in front of' and 'behind' as they play with the train track. The childminder is very skilled in encouraging young children to express themselves. She constantly talks to them, asking them questions and encouraging them to explore. The children clearly understand what is being said and respond appropriately, repeating new words as they communicate with her and each other.

Children spend time concentrating on self chosen activities that are stimulating and educational. Access to an excellent range of toys and equipment enables them to explore and develop their skills. Children express themselves effectively and participate enthusiastically in activities, such as role play. Meaningful observations of children's development are undertaken by the childminder and these are shared with parents.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to learn about the world they live in. They visit the library and attend a regular toddler group where they socialise with others. Outings and activities introduce children to other cultures, for example, they travel around the local area by train to visit museums in the city and feed squirrels at the nature reserve. Their appreciation of other cultures is enhanced by the books, toys and puzzles that reflect different cultures. At Chinese New Year, children use chopsticks to pick up their fruit at snack time. On Shrove Tuesday, they make and eat fruit pancakes. Children have opportunities to look at books and play with figures that depict characters with disability.

The childminder is particularly skilled at supporting children. They receive plenty of cuddles and develop a sense of belonging whilst in her care. She has developed a close and loving relationship with them and they look to her for support. Children are positively encouraged to share and take turns. They are beginning to develop a good understanding of what is right and wrong. The childminder has developed very good strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour, such as using distraction. Consequently, children are well behaved and play together harmoniously.

The childminder has developed superb relationships with parents. They are kept informed of how their child is progressing both verbally and in the form of a daily diary. This ensures children's needs are met and all relevant information is shared with parents. The childminder has recently begun recording the children's development and progress. She keeps notes of observations, children's work and photographs and intends to use these to produce a record of achievement for parents to keep.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. Children play safely in a home that is very well organised. They receive excellent adult support that helps them feel

secure and confident. The day is very well planned, allowing children time for quiet and active play.

Children benefit from being cared for by a qualified and experienced person who is committed to attending childcare training and development courses. Having recently attended training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework, she has put in place an effective system to record and assess children's development. Information kept about children is relevant and helps promote their welfare and ensure they are fully supported in reaching their potential.

The childminder has developed substantial policies, documents and records that support her very good childcare practice. She is meticulous in her record keeping and ensures her records are purposeful and effective. She organises her paperwork effectively to ensure it is confidential but easily available if needed. Children's welfare is promoted within the setting as the childminder has suitable contingency plans in place to cover absences and to ensure children always have appropriate supervision.

The high quality of the provision means that 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, two recommendations were raised. The provider agreed to formalise a complaints procedure and increase children's access to resources that reflect disability.

Following the last inspection, the childminder has addressed the recommendations. The complaints procedure is in line with regulation and shared with parents. Resources, such as books and figures depicting disability, have been bought. Children use the figures with the small world equipment. Activities such as being blindfolded also raise older children's awareness of disability and prompt discussions about other people.

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 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