

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	322797
Inspection date	26 July 2007
Inspector	Susan Janet Lee
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 was registered in 1991. She lives with her husband and two adult daughters in a detached property in Atherton, Wigan.

The through lounge, playroom, conservatory, kitchen and bathroom on the ground floor are used for childminding purposes. There is a rear garden available for outdoor play. The family have a dog and a cat as pets.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently caring for eight children, of whom five are aged under eight years. She is able to take and collect children from the local primary school and she is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained environment. They stay healthy because the childminder exercises good hygiene practices to minimise the risk of cross infection. The children learn about personal care routines as they wash their hands at appropriate times of the day. The childminder has displayed a bright poster in the bathroom reminding children to wash their hands after using the toilet. Children are familiar with this routine and they know they need to wash their hands to make sure they are clean and there are no germs. Effective arrangements are in place regarding the care of pets. The childminder has a good understanding of childhood illnesses and exclusion periods; ensuring appropriate measures are in place when children are ill.

The childminder works in accordance to parents wishes regarding the provision of food and drink. The children develop an awareness of healthy eating and are well nourished as snacks and meals are mostly healthy and nutritious to help aid children's growth and development. The children are able to independently quench their thirst as drinks are readily accessible to them.

Babies are able to move around freely to develop their gross motor skills such as sitting, crawling and walking. The childminder supports the babies well in their exploration. Babies benefit from routines that are consistent to their experiences at home as the childminder follows their individual sleep patterns. Older children develop good self help skills as they use the bathroom independently, help themselves to a drink and help to tidy up. They are confident to express their feelings and make their needs known. The children have opportunities to enjoy and develop their physical skills as they play in the garden, visit the park and a soft play centre and go to the farm to feed the horses on a regular basis; all of which contributes to their good health and physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in a homely environment. Space is organised to accommodate the varying needs of children of different ages. There is a good selection of equipment and furniture allowing babies and older children to play rest and eat in comfort. The childminder provides a wide range of resources to meet the needs of the children being cared for. She rotates the toys to add variety and also uses a toy library to enhance children's experiences. Resources are stored in boxes at child height in the hall, lounge and playroom enabling the children to initiate their own ideas.

The childminder has taken all reasonable steps to ensure that the environment in which children are cared for is safe and secure. She has considered an escape plan but this has not been practised with minded children so they do not develop an awareness of what to do in the event of an emergency such as a fire. The childminder supervises the children well enabling them to play safely and independently. She encourages children's understanding in keeping themselves safe through the use of age appropriate explanation. Older children know that certain toys must be kept away from the younger children as the small parts pose a hazard to them.

The childminder has an understanding of child protection matters. However, she is unsure of whom to contact to make a referral and this compromises her ability to effectively deal with any concerns she may have.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children have access to a wide range of resources and activities that help them develop their physical, intellectual, emotional and social skills. They are happily engaged and occupied. The children also benefit from activities outside the home as the childminder utilises local amenities, such as the park, a soft play centre, parent toddler group; helping to widen children's experiences and give them opportunities to socialise with their peers.

The childminder spends time playing and talking to the children. She sits at the same level as the children as they play and takes a genuine interest in what they do and say. The childminder shares warm relationships with the children, who are happy and secure in her care.

Babies begin to find a voice and listen and respond as the childminder listens intently when they attempt to communicate and responds in gentle tones; reinforcing early speech patterns. She offers lots of positive physical contact by means of hugs and cuddles, and children openly seek reassurance from her when they feel they need to. Very young children enjoy exploring natural materials such as shells, brushes, wooden spoons and pumice stones. They use their senses to explore the items. For example, they touch the shells with their fingers and feel the texture of the bristles on the brush by stroking their face with the brush. Toddlers make connections as they build a tower using different sized beakers. They manipulate the beakers until they fit and then they stack the beakers upwards in descending size order.

Older children clearly enjoy their time with the childminder. They talk about having lots of interesting things to do and never being bored. They comment that they enjoy playing with their friends and that the childminder is nice and looks after them well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder gathers information from parents about their children's individual needs to help her to be in a position to best meet these needs. The children develop an awareness of their local community through trips out to local amenities. They also have access to a range of books, puzzles and small world resources that help to promote a positive attitude and help the children to develop an awareness of our diverse society. The childminder demonstrates a positive attitude towards children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The childminder uses age appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour and acts as a good role model to the children. As a result, the children develop an awareness of what is expected of them and they are polite and behave well. The children develop a sense of belonging. On arrival, they enter with ease, wave to their parents and go happily to play. They are able to make decisions as they choose what to play with. Older children show care and concern for the younger children.

The childminder shares good working relationships with parents, who are greeted warmly on arrival. She encourages a gradual settling in period working with parents to meet children's

individual needs; helping them to feel secure. The childminder shares information with parents on a daily basis to keep them informed about their children's activities.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

All persons over 16 living in the household have been vetted; helping to protect children. The childminder attends training to further develop her childcare practice. She has a valid first aid certificate ensuring she has up to date awareness of what to do in the event of an accident or minor injury.

The record of children's attendance shows that ratios are maintained to promote children's care. The childminder organises space, time and resources appropriately to meet children's needs.

All required records are in place and these are well organised. The childminder maintains children's individual records to ensure confidentiality.

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 recommendations were agreed in relation to children's access to resources, natural materials and toys that reflect diversity.

The childminder has improved children's access to toys; helping them to develop choice and independence. She has extended the range of natural materials to develop children's sensory experiences. Toys that reflect diversity have also been extended; helping to develop children's awareness of the wider world.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted have received two complaints that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards.

Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 1 (Suitable person) and National Standard 6 (Safety). The concerns were originally shared with another agency. A childcare inspector from Ofsted Early Years then visited the provision on 31 October 2006. Actions were raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

The provider informed Ofsted about a situation in relation to National Standard 7 (Health). A Child Care inspector visited the setting on 19 April 2007. One action was raised in relation to National Standard 7, and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains 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

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 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):

- practice the emergency evacuation plan with minded children
- develop knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures.

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