

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	402480
Inspection date	28 January 2008
Inspector	Valerie Craven
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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children, in a detached house situated in a cul-de-sac on Kingsmead, Northwich. There are three children under the age of eight currently on roll. Minded children have access to the ground floor of the premises including the playroom, lounge, kitchen-diner and toilet facilities. There is also a fully enclosed rear garden available for outside play. The family have a pet cat. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is exceptionally well promoted because the childminder implements thorough hygiene routines, such as encouraging children to wash their hands at appropriate times. Children as young as three are beginning to take responsibility for their own health and hygiene and confidently express their own needs and the needs of younger children. Children's individual routines are respected, ensuring that nappies are changed promptly and sleep patterns adhered to. Travel cots are available and children benefit from their own changing mats, bed linen and

towels to promote good health. The childminder's own hygiene practices are thorough and ensure that children are prevented from cross-infection or risk of illness, for example surfaces are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray. The family's pet cat is well cared for and parental permission is granted before children have contact with him, ensuring that he does not pose a risk to children's health. Written policies and procedures are well implemented and shared with parents, such as the medication and sick children policy, which protect children's health. The childminder maintains a first aid certificate at all times and has a well stocked first aid kit, which enables her to respond to children's needs appropriately. The childminder's home offers a warm, clean and comfortable environment in which children play safely. Toys are regularly cleaned and are in very good condition.

Children are very well nourished and are offered a variety of healthy snacks and home cooked meals. Snacks are prepared in accordance with children's individual preferences and the childminder is vigilant about children's dietary requirements. Children enjoy snacks of bread sticks, raisins, cheese and melon. A daily diary records what children have eaten to promote very good continuity of care with parents. Children learn about healthy eating through interesting activities such as collage and puppets. Children have access to water at all times in individual bottles, which ensures that they are well hydrated. Children are encouraged to take regular exercise and frequently visit parks and play barns. Younger children use small wheeled vehicles, swings and a slide in the garden. A variety of toys and activities are provided to help children to develop fine motor skills, such as threading wooden toys, using play dough and doing crafts. Children often go for walks and on outings, for example to the local park and to feed the ducks. Regular visits to childminder and toddler groups ensure that children have access to a wider range of physical activities in addition to those available at home. Children are very happy, well supported and emotionally secure, developing excellent levels of independence and confidence in the childminder's care.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and well organised environment which is appropriately maintained to promote children's well-being. The childminder ensures that the premises are secure by keeping doors locked and gates bolted. All rooms used by children are on the ground floor and a stair gate is in place to prevent access to the stairs. Children are kept safe because there are many features in place, such as door stoppers and socket covers which minimise risks. Children are kept safe because there are sufficient, clean equipment, toys and materials suitable for their age and stage of development. Children do not spend long periods of time at home as taken out daily. Parental permission is granted to transport children in the car, which is equipped with suitable child seats and is appropriately insured. Good supervision at all times ensures children's safety as the childminder is involved in children's play and offers support with planned and spontaneous activities. Children sleep in travel cots in the lounge where they can be frequently checked on and heard at all times. Children usually play in the playroom where they have access to some toys at low level, whilst others are stored on higher shelves and are available on request. Children able to independently select a variety of toys and activities such as dolls, prams, puzzles, books and wooden toys which are checked for condition and age appropriate. Child sized furniture is also available for toddlers to use. Children only use the kitchen for eating or art and craft work and sit at the table using booster seats with safety straps. All hazards are out of reach or in locked cupboards.

Children are kept safe through procedures, for example, on outings children sit in a pram or use reins or wrist straps to ensure that they are close to the childminder at all times. They are

encouraged to learn how to keep themselves safe through good explanations of the procedures which are implemented. Registers are efficiently maintained to record arrivals and departures of children. A fire safety procedure is in place and sometimes practised, and smoke detectors and a fire blanket are accessible to promote children's safety. Children are protected due to the childminder having a good understanding of child protection. She is aware of the signs which may cause concern, has attended training and is aware of the correct procedures to follow if necessary. A number of policies, procedures and permissions are in place to ensure children's safety and well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy their time with the childminder. They are eager to participate in the variety of activities provided and confidently make choices about toys, games and activities. Children are encouraged to develop independence and confidently try to put on their own shoes as they dress up. Their confidence and self esteem is raised through good praise and encouragement, as the childminder speaks gently to children and has positive approach which allows independence whilst supporting where necessary to promote children's success. Children make good progress and have fun, as the childminder plans activities and experiences giving regard to age, interests, the seasons and the weather. A very good balance of child centred and adult led experiences ensures appropriate challenge for their age and stage of development, for instance children take lead in many activities and self select toys whilst the childminder facilitates their play by providing appropriate resources and support. For example, children confidently make marks with pencils and crayons, make collages using glue, materials and paper or choose books to share.

Children delight in using their imagination, for instance they dress up as sleeping beauty and dance with the prince, make picnics for the teddies, care for babies, make a book shop and enjoy painting and collage activities. Children's mathematical thinking is encouraged through the imaginative play as the childminder recognises opportunities for counting and number recognition. Children's social skills are promoted as they visit play groups, the library, parks and play barns on a daily basis where they are able to interact with other children. The childminder encourages the children to be polite, share and play together which helps to develop good relationships. Young children have access to a sufficient range of appropriate resources to promote enjoyment and development in the childminder's home and these are well supplemented by the planned daily activities and outings which enhance children's enjoyment at the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has an equal opportunities policy which demonstrates an inclusive attitude. Children are happy, confident and play a part in the setting as they make choices and suggestions for activities and games. They are well supported through positive relationships with the childminder and with each other. Children are encouraged to get along well together, take turns and share, and visit groups each day where they are able to socialise with others. Children are encouraged to learn about the wider world as they have access to a small number of toys and resources at the childminder's home, such as dolls, book and puppets. Appropriate care is given to all children as the childminder liaises with parents to ensure all records contain relevant information to meet children's individual needs. The childminder is happy to care for children

with learning difficulties or disabilities and has attended some training regarding inclusion. However, she has little training or experience in this area and is keen to further develop her knowledge in order to meet the needs of children.

Children's behaviour at the setting is very good because the childminder engages in play and sensitively encourages children to take turns, share and to speak nicely to each other. Children have very good manners and politely ask for things which they want to do, as the childminder responds positively and helps children to understand how they feel. Behaviour management strategies are agreed with parents and positively promote children's good behaviour and understanding of right and wrong. The childminder establishes good relationships with parents and offers written policies and procedures to ensure that parents are fully informed of her practice and expectations. Effective partnership with parents ensures individual needs are met well, which promotes stability through daily diaries, informal chats, scrap books of children's activities, regularly updated contracts and detailed information at registration. Many written permissions and well documented records promote effective continuity of care. Parents are also offered information such as web site addresses in order to promote good nutrition and hygiene at home.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder demonstrates an exceptionally positive attitude to meeting the standards and improving care and learning experiences for young children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends courses in order to improve her practice. She is very well organised and has written policies and procedures in place which are effectively implemented to promote children's welfare. She uses her knowledge to enhance the children's experiences through daily planned activities. Children at the setting also benefit from regular visits to local toddler groups the library and childminding groups.

All legally required documentation is in place and implemented well. This positively contributes to children's overall well-being as the childminder is able to respond well to children's individual needs and communicates well with parents. Medication and accident records are thoroughly maintained, signed by parents and available for inspection. The childminder's pro-active awareness of the standards and changes in requirements demonstrate her desire to provide good quality care for the children.

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 the childminder was required to discuss and agree with parents, the methods used to manage their children's behaviour and to review her system of recording medication to ensure prior written consent from parents. Both of these recommendations have been addressed to further promote children's health and welfare.

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):

- continue to develop skills and knowledge in caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, to enhance existing good practice.

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