

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	403500
Inspection date	05 November 2007
Inspector	Frank William Kelly

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 was registered in 2001. She is registered to care for five children at any one time and is currently minding six children on a part time basis.

She lives with her husband, one adult child and four younger children aged 15, 13, eight and three. They live in the Aughton area of the market town of Ormskirk in West Lancashire. The whole of the ground floor is used for minding the children. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have a pet cat

The childminder holds a recognised childcare qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is part of the local network group of childminders and takes the children to the local library and other local places of interest on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children's health is promoted well as the childminder takes positive steps to help protect children from cross infection. Written procedures are in place should children be ill, require medication or have an accident. These are shared with parents to help them understand the importance of not bringing children to the setting when they are unwell keep them fully informed of daily occurrences, thus, promoting the consistent care for the children. Younger children are eager to show and discuss with visitors, which is their individual hand towel as they follow daily routines, such as washing their hands before snack time.

The childminder obtains information about the children's individual dietary needs and provides a well balanced diet, helping children to make healthy choices. They enjoy cereals and toast for breakfast, cod risotto for lunch and a variety selection of fruit, such as satsuma's, slices of apple and grapes. Fresh drinking water is freely available for children throughout their day and regular drinks including milk are offered at meal times.

Physical activity and fresh air are very much encouraged. Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily play. The childminder has obtained a selection of waterproof coats and footwear to enable the children to play out in the garden irrespective of the weather. The garden is well equipped with a range of climbing apparatus, swings and wheeled resources which help the children to foster their coordination, balance, strength and stamina. They visit a playgroup where they can ride the trikes and enjoy regular outings to the local bird sanctuary and parks. Indoors children have fun squashing and moulding the play dough, drawing and painting.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The home is warm and welcoming for children and adults alike as the childminder displays and organises the toys and resources in a child friendly and aesthetically pleasing way. The children have good access to lots of good quality toys, books and comfortable furnishings. These include a sturdy child sized table with chairs and a comfy sofa on which to sit and relax. There is a feeling of space and children enjoy spreading their play across the floor in all areas of the home

The children's safety has been considered and suitable actions taken to help keep them safe. This includes fitted safety gates to restrict access to the stairways and cupboard locks fitted where appropriate in the kitchen. The childminder is aware of the challenges that her split level garden may present to the children and has completed written risk assessments which identify how the children are to be kept supervised and safe. This provides children with opportunities to take risks as they develop their coordination skills. Visits by road safety officers at playgroup help children about how they can keep themselves safe. Full written risk assessments are completed before going on outings, which include checking that any transport, such as coaches used, have the required safety restraints.

Children are well supervised as the childminder keeps the children within her sight at all times and children resting are monitored by regular visual checks. An emergency evacuation procedure is practised with the children on a regular basis, thus helping them to understand what to do in an emergency.

The childminder has a secure understanding of child protection issues. She has attended additional training courses which enable her to confidently discuss the actions to be taken should she have any concerns regarding children's well-being and safety. Parents are informed in writing about the childminder's responsibilities as part of the information systems about her service. Relevant contact details are held should the childminder need to report any concerns. This and other information held is reflective of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder manages time effectively and plans a wide range of experiences in a flexible manner both within the home and out in the local community. Children enjoy a broad range of experiences that positively enhance their all-round learning and development. For example, they have visits to the zoo or to the local park to feed the ducks. They learn about helping others and being careful with animals as the childminder encourages the children to be gentle with the cat and involves them in fund raising events, such as the 'beep beep sponsored ride' and 'red nose day'.

The childminder is interested in the children and spends time with the children sitting on the floor and talking to them about their play. She asks spontaneous questions to help their developing language and counting skills. For instance, whilst playing with the plastic mini beasts, she repeats the different names of the insects and asks the children to count how many legs they have. The children eagerly engage their carer, often calling her to invite her to join in and see what they are doing. The children are very enthusiastic about all activities and routines. However, on some occasions, such as getting ready for snack the children become giddy and loud. They find it difficult to listen to what is being said and often talk over each other.

Children have good access to a wide range of resources including role play equipment, things to construct with, paper to mark make on, art and craft materials and small world figures. They are busy as they make choices about their play and move around the home with confidence and familiarity. They enthusiastically play the musical instruments making lots of noise and sound.

Children attending after school enjoy refreshments on arrival and then have several choices of activities from which to choose. These include relaxing and reading, playing outside in the garden or completing art work or playing board games. The childminder is conscious of the need for the children to be able to relax after a long day in school.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have a good sense of belonging. They are happy, settled and enjoy the company of the childminder. They receive lots of praise and encouragement, which actively promotes their confidence and willingness to make their own choices during their play. The children's self-esteem is further promoted and boosted as the childminder positively displays their creative work on the walls in the main play area of the home.

The childminder promotes equal opportunities very well. She understands the importance of providing children with a wide range of resources and experiences that help them learn about

their wider world. She does this by using the local childminder resource library and making available a wide variety of books, dolls and small world figures that present positive images of differing cultures, gender and disability. These resources are complimented by the childminders simple approach to helping children learn about similarities and differences. For example, on bonfire night she drew the children's attention to a Buddhist celebration also taking place on the same day. Explaining to the children how different celebrations take place around the world at the same time.

The children behave well as the childminder understands children's individual needs and meets them well. She presents a positive role model, as she gently encourages the children to be kind and respectful. For example, children are encouraged to share the rolling pins in the play dough and the grapes at snack time. They are learning to follow simple house rules and help to tidy up and care for their toys as they play. Children are praised and encouraged to care for themselves, their environment and toys. Children are learning about good social graces during their daily routines and younger children are beginning to use them spontaneously without prompting from the childminder.

Parents are very well informed about the provision as the childminder provides written information about her service including policies and procedures a copy of which is given to parents when children first start. Parents are warmly welcomed into the home and there is information available on display and in a childminding folder. The childminder's good relationship with parents and effective communication ensures that children's individual needs are identified and met.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The space within the home is well organised so that children can play, eat and rest in comfort and without interrupting each others needs. They have good access to their toys and books and the close proximity of the toilet and sink promotes children's growing independence and self help skills. Daily routines and planned activities also help.

The childminder is knowledgeable about her responsibilities regarding the National Standards and attends regular training, such as safeguarding children and first aid, to further promote the safe care for the children.

A set of informative policies and procedures are implemented practically on a day to day basis and contribute greatly the good outcomes for children. She is knowledgeable about the requirements of the National Standards and her responsibilities with regard to regulatory documentation. Overall, this is well maintained and contributes to the children's safety and well-being. However, there are some inconsistencies. At present there is no written consent for transporting children in a vehicle for one of the minded children and the complaints procedure does not identify the timescales within which any concerns will be responded to.

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 one recommendation was made relating to information within the complaints policy.

Since then the childminder has improved the parental partnership and the children's safety by including the name and contact details of Ofsted as the regulator. This policy is to be further improved under recommendations made within this report following changes to legislation since the last inspection.

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 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):

- during daily routines provide all children with a role and introduce more opportunities for children to listen to each other and practise taking turns when talking in a group
- ensure that all required documentation, such as consents for the transporting of children in a vehicle are in place for each child
- further develop the complaints procedure to include timescales within which they will be investigated as detailed within the amendments of the National Standards from October 2005.

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