

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY269456
Inspection date	28 September 2007
Inspector	Anne Mort
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 2003. She lives with her husband in Horwich, near to Bolton. The whole of the ground floor and the first floor bathroom of the childminder's house are used for childminding. The rear yard is not used for outside play but children are taken to the local park and to outside play venues on a regular basis. The family has a cat.

There are three children on roll. The childminder uses her vehicle to transport children to and from the local school. The childminder takes children out on a regular basis to visit adult and toddler groups and activity play centres.

The childminder holds a relevant early years qualification and is presently studying for a degree in Childhood Studies. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is currently working towards the Quality First Award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children rapidly develop their understanding of good hygiene practice. They are protected from the risk of infection because the childminder is an excellent role model to them. She presents a consistently high level of hygiene practice and ensures suitable equipment is in place. Children are animated and enthusiastic about keeping themselves healthy and use the step, child-sized toilet seat and toiletries to promote self-help skills. Children are very aware that washing their hands at various times throughout the day prevents the spread of germs and use cleansing hand gel when on outings. The childminder's nappy changing procedure also presents as excellent practice in preventing the spread of infection.

Children's health and physical development are thoroughly promoted and are part of the childminder's planning. Indoors, children actively contribute to their own development and have ample and equal opportunity to practise small muscle control. They use play dough, pencils, crayons, paint, collage materials and bubble blowing equipment. The clear floor space encourages children to learn how to control their bodies as they practise walking steps, handling skills and clamber on and off the child-sized furniture. Planning takes in children's all-round development. There is full encouragement for children to be active. They are taken out to activity centres and toddler groups where they can access large play apparatus to develop large muscle control. They happily talk about going swimming and remember their walks with the childminder.

Meticulous and detailed documentation is maintained to fully inform parents of any issues relating to health and safety. Children's health is further supported by the childminder's sound knowledge of first aid. A robust system is in place to record all accidents and the administration of medicine. The childminder gives paramount consideration to children's well-being and arranges for a back-up service of family members or a registered childminder should there be a need for adult help. Parents are aware of this and have signed to acknowledge their agreement.

Children's needs for a diet that promotes their health and physical growth are fully met. They have a high level of awareness about which food is good for their bodies and which food to avoid. This is due to the childminder's outstanding organisation and innovative teaching about healthy food options. The childminder takes full account of parental wishes and of children's special dietary needs or requirements.

The childminder gives high priority to the safety of food preparation and presentation and has attended a course to keep her knowledge base updated. Children are presented with a variety of good quality, home-cooked meals and snacks, made whenever possible from fresh produce. For example, there was lunch of vegetable bake and, where this was not enjoyed, a supplement of beans and toast was quickly made to ensure all children ate at midday. Children enjoy their lunch with the childminder, who presents this time as a chatty, sociable occasion.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are thoroughly safeguarded through the childminder's paramount concern and excellent practice. Safety is given the highest priority and safety equipment is in place. Children play in rooms that are exceptionally clean and tidy and the childminder checks her home and car on a daily basis. Children have the use of the lounge as a quiet area for rest and relaxation. They

play in a designated playroom with furniture and resources specifically placed to keep children safe. For instance, there is clear physical space in the rooms for the youngest children to practise their walking skills, control their bodies and bend to pick up and put down toys. There is neat storage of toys and equipment and children choose what to play with. Children's belongings, coats and shoes are neatly stored as coat hooks are available at the entrance to the playroom.

Toys and books are stored within easy reach. Children select activities from a variety of interesting and challenging resources. Children's learning is given full consideration, as is their age and stage of development. They play with dolls, people figures, jigsaws, stacking containers, play dough, bubble containers, large and small vehicles, shape sorters, construction and creative materials. Younger children handle items that they can explore in their hands and are safe to put to their mouth. Children play in comfort as a child-sized table, chairs and settee are available to them. Children's physical skills are developing rapidly and the childminder offers varying levels of support to encourage enjoyment and safe exploration.

Children's welfare is additionally promoted through the childminder's extensive knowledge and proactive skills with regards to their safety. For instance, risk assessments are carried out to identify hazards with regards to the use of equipment and space within the home, together with consideration given to outings and the use of transportation. In addition to this, there is a written emergency evacuation procedure and children practise fire drills.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of child protection issues. Her vigilance and awareness in this area enhances the high standard of safety and security experienced by children in her care. She has taken part in a child protection course and holds relevant documentation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely well cared for and thoroughly enjoy their time in the childminder's home. The nurturing environment and the childminder's sensitive, very caring nature increases children's sense of trust. As a consequence, they are totally secure and build a strong sense of self. Children's all-round learning and achievements are enhanced. The childminder is highly skilled. She uses her exceptional understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and of the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' to provide first-rate care and education to children. The childminder uses her training exceedingly well to record a child's development and to note the steps needed to take a child's learning a stage further. Each child has a development file to maintain confidentiality and parents can view and discuss these with the childminder. There is also a daily diary sheet that illustrates to parents a child's dining, sleep and toileting pattern throughout the day.

Children show great enthusiasm in play and develop an excellent attitude to learning. This is because the childminder devotes her time to playing with the children and her fun and enthusiastic approach enhances their desire to take part in activities. They are engaged in a wealth of activities that are exceptionally well matched to their needs and interests. Their care and learning is significantly promoted due to the childminder's planning which is rich, varied and imaginative, offering children the opportunity to engage in both stimulating experiences and quiet reflective play inside and outside of the childminder's home.

Children access a brightly coloured playroom, specifically furnished to accommodate children's play and stimulate their interest in a dynamic way. The childminder ensures that resources are of an excellent quality and neatly stored, so children can be independent and choose for

themselves. The childminder plans a broad range of interesting activities, based on books, themes or celebratory events, which greatly extend children's learning. Children engage in early reading skills and remain interested and motivated due to the childminder presenting good quality books. Children rapidly come to know how to use a book and that pictures and written words carry meaning. Their understanding and use of language are making rapid progress because the childminder shares books and activities with them, using stimulating conversation. Children show high levels of confidence and their memory recall is rapidly developing. They happily relate how they worked on the attractive displays on the wall and what activities they engage in at the childminder's house and in their own home life.

Children are competent and enthusiastic learners due to the childminder's own enthusiasm in presenting meaningful and challenging activities. For instance, children use their imagination and a variety of tools to create various shapes in play dough. They use paint on their fingers, on the edges of toys and on the wheels of cars to print circles and lines. They use deep breaths to create huge soap bubbles with the bubble-making equipment and delight in trying to count them and catch and pop them. They learn to think for themselves how to operate toys to create the desired sound and movement. Children are taken to various venues outside the childminder's home where they can learn about the wider world, for instance, trips to the town and to the local park and woods. Children's visit to the theatre is part of the childminder's planning as are 'story walks', where local nature reserve rangers provide outdoor walks in relation to a particular story book. These visits are given value and incorporated into plans for promoting conversational skills, using dressing up materials and developing children's artistic abilities. Children also have the opportunity to play with children of a similar age and use large physical play apparatus in their visits to activity centres.

The children benefit greatly from the childminder knowing them well and responding to their needs and personalities. She creates and sustains a very happy atmosphere in which children's learning is significantly enhanced. Children spend their time purposefully and thoroughly enjoy exploring a wide range of play materials that offer optimal challenge.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder is dedicated and fully committed to the children. She treats each child with care and respect and they benefit from a childminder who notes and acknowledges when they are behaving well. Children develop a huge amount of confidence and positive self-esteem through the interaction care and attention they receive from the childminder. They are given timely praise for their attempts at independence, for instance, when visiting the bathroom and for paying close attention when the childminder is speaking to them.

Children use a meaningful range of resources, such as dolls, role-play clothing and jigsaws, and take an active part in activities that promote a positive view of the world and allow them to understand the needs of others. The children are aware that they sometimes forgo a visit out and that the money saved is then sent to a needy child abroad. Information regarding the child is displayed on the world map with a photograph of the child and the flag of the country. Children talked about this child and announced that she needs to buy chickens. When visiting the local town, children are aware that the childminder purchases a magazine to help people who do not have a job. All children are welcome in the childminding facility and the childminder has an excellent understanding of equal opportunities. Additional resources are provided, if necessary, to ensure all children can take part in the activities.

Children's behaviour is exemplary and they say the words 'please' and 'thank you' spontaneously. This is due to the childminder working in a calm, consistent manner where children know what is expected of them. Children talk about the colourful poster on display. This illustrates the positive rules of the provision whereby children learn to be considerate to others. Children can freely choose where to play and what to play with. The childminder is extremely skilful at taking a child's understanding a step further as she uses the resources and age-appropriate and stimulating language to enable the children to think for themselves and have confidence in their own abilities.

Continuity of care is significantly promoted through the childminder's valued relationship with parents. She gives paramount importance to the exchange of information. Parents note on documentation all relevant details about their child. They give written consents to establish agreement before a child starts in the childminder's care. The childminder is proactive in informing parents about her childminding provision and presents an attractive, fully informative book that details her own knowledge and experience, together with the aims and objectives of childcare and a copy of policies and procedures. The attractive noticeboard in the hallway illustrates topical information, planning for the week, the menu available to children and a newsletter about the provision. Parents know how to make a complaint as the policy invites them to speak to the childminder, put their concerns in writing or take them to an outside agency, such as Ofsted.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's welfare is fully supported by the childminder's knowledge of keeping children safe, especially from persons who have not been through a vetting procedure. She is extra vigilant when on outings with the children. Continuity of care is securely established as the childminder arranges for a back-up service from persons already known to the children.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. Children are fully settled and completely at ease in the environment. They have access to all ground level rooms and have ample space for free movement and safe exploration. The childminder manages her time very effectively, for instance, preparation of meals before children arrive.

The childminder's extensive knowledge of the National Standards ensures all paperwork is established. Information about children is recorded and the highly organised development files held for each child are shared with parents. There is also verbal communication on a daily basis as a child is brought or collected.

Meticulous documentation is used to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. All policies and procedures relate directly to the planning and delivery of an excellent childminding service. They are robust and fully support the expert practice of a knowledgeable and skilled practitioner. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the childminder was asked to take steps to ensure that the unsecured shed and plastic bags used for storage posed no hazard to children. In addition to these, the childminder was to update paperwork and develop her knowledge regarding child protection issues.

All of the above have been fully addressed. The rear yard is not in use for children's play and storage procedures do not include the use of plastic bags, thus enhancing children's safety. Children's health and welfare are fully promoted as parents have given written consent that the childminder may seek emergency medical advice for their child. The childminder is fully aware of her role in child protection issues and has undertaken a relevant course to update her knowledge base.

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