

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY348261
Inspection date	03 October 2007
Inspector	Margaret Patricia Mellor
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 2007. She lives with her two children aged five and 10 years in Liverpool. Children use the whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home for their care and play experiences. There is a secure, fully enclosed garden for children's outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children aged under eight years at any one time. There are six children on roll aged 10 months to five years, and two children aged 10 years. She walks to collect children from school and takes them places. She regularly attends the library and childminder drop in sessions.

The childminder receives support from the local authority and an experienced childminder. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and local childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, comfortable and homely environment, meeting their needs very well. Younger children develop their awareness of simple personal hygiene through their daily routine and as the childminder sensitively helps them with wiping noses. Older children build on their awareness through gentle reminders about wiping the toilet seat and washing their hands. The childminder, herself, consistently follows good health care practices, for instance, wiping down surfaces, nappy changing and cleaning the toys. Children have their own towel and face cloth, and babies' cot linen is changed daily. This also helps to prevent the spread of cross infection and safeguards children's well-being.

Children's interest in a healthy lifestyle is nurtured and encouraged. They enjoy a range of wholesome foods freshly prepared by the childminder so children are well nourished. They relish a wide variety of fresh or dried fruits as snacks, increasing their awareness of a range of different tastes and textures. The childminder is keen to share healthy eating ideas with the children through discussions and practical activities, for instance, making fruit smoothies or kebabs with the vegetables they grow. Children independently help themselves to drinks, learning to listen to their bodies when thirsty, and younger children develop their coordination as they drink from their feeder type cup.

Children love to be active, responding gleefully as they run in the fresh air, splash in puddles, push or ride on wheeled toys, climb and bounce on the trampoline. They continue to develop their coordination and spatial awareness skills as they explore rhythm and movement to music. Toddlers have lots of fun as they crawl through the play tunnel and babies' eagerness to be active is encouraged by the childminder. She encourages them to bear weight on their feet, stimulating walking. Children relish painting and their fine motor skills are further enhanced through threading beads, lacing, crayoning and eating finger type foods. Children are able to be active or restful, according to their respective needs.

Children's health is safeguarded because the childminder ensures that they use sun creams, wear hats and have plenty of drinks on hot days. She has a relevant first aid certificate and regularly reviews the contents of the first aid box so that children's minor injuries are dealt with appropriately. There are effective procedures for sharing information about children's dietary needs, so that parents' wishes are respected and children stay healthy. The childminder acts in their best interests when they are ill and stores medication in an accessible place out of children's reach. This is well supported by a detailed sick child policy and medication records.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and well maintained environment. The childminder's home is spacious and affords plenty of natural light. Children play with a broad range of toys and equipment that are suitable for their age and stimulate enjoyment. The childminder follows effective health and safety procedures for checking the resources so that children remain safe. She creatively organises the space, promoting children's self-esteem as they independently self-select play materials that appeal to them from the toy boxes at child height. Children sit together in comfort and the child sized furniture promotes children's independence. They enjoy a variety of safe challenges on the portable toys and large play equipment in the secure garden.

Children move freely and safely in the childminder's home because there are good safety arrangements. All the necessary safety equipment is in place, for instance, safety gates so children cannot wander into areas that may compromise their well-being. The childminder carries out a daily premises checks to effectively address any areas of concern. Children sleep in safety and comfort because the childminder regularly checks them and is close at hand to respond to their awakening. There are effective procedures for keeping children safe and well whilst enjoying outings.

Children learn aspects of personal safety as they regularly practise what to do in the event of a fire. They build on their awareness through the childminder's gentle reminders about picking up toys so they do not trip and hurt themselves. They colour in worksheets about fire or road safety and happily hold onto the 'walking bus' rope on school runs. Children's well-being is further protected because there are effective procedures for the collection of children in an emergency. The childminder has a copy of the local booklet 'Your responsibilities if you have a concern about a child' and the procedures should she wish to report a concern. She has accessed safeguarding training and prepared a policy statement.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have a fun time in the childminder's home and are progressing well in all areas of their development. They are involved in a range of play opportunities, which actively engage their interests. This is supported well because the childminder is adapting activities to promote the under three's learning and development. Children begin to explore using their senses as they taste the different fruits, listen to music, and respond gleefully when feeling the paint or running their fingers through the sand. They begin to concentrate, for instance, putting simple puzzles together. They enjoy singing rhymes with actions and love to look at picture books. The childminder consolidates children's learning through repetition, for instance, colour and shape recognition, whilst playing with the blocks.

Children are happy and relaxed. They relish the childminder's close contact as they play with the toys or show signs of tiredness. They begin to learn to cooperate and are motivated, relating well to each other and the childminder, who spends time talking, listening and playing with the children. Younger children begin to develop a strong sense of 'Me, Myself and I'. They smile at their reflection in the mirror, respond to their name and enjoy playing with their fingers or toes. They are developing their awareness of their physical needs, such as when tired or hungry. Babies love to babble, responding gleefully when making repetitive sounds. Toddlers begin to appreciate the company of others through regular visits to the childminder drop in sessions. This provides children with very positive experiences to play sociably alongside one another and with each other, whilst the childminder is close by for reassurance.

Children are developing their awareness of technology. They delight in playing with the toy telephones, cash registers and oven. A computer is also available for children to use, promoting their hand-eye co-ordination through fun learning experiences. Older children competently manoeuvre the mouse to click on pictures and match shapes. The childminder provides interesting activities to encourage children's curiosity and investigation skills. Children learn about living things through the vegetables they grow, feeding the goats on visits to the farm and eagerly examine bugs with magnifying glasses. They are encouraged to develop their creative skills and freely express their own ideas and feelings through art and craft. They have plenty of fun as they do collage pictures, decorate cakes they bake and spontaneously role

play. Children happily display their art work in the childminder's home fostering a welcoming environment for themselves and their parents.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's self-esteem is nurtured and the childminder forms close and caring relationships with children. The effective equal opportunities policy ensures that all children are valued as individuals and joining in the day's activities. Children begin to develop positive attitudes towards others as they play with different nationality dolls, small world toys and look at books. They enjoy celebrating special events in their own lives and begin to learn about other cultures through festivals, such as Chinese New Year when they make a dragon together. However, there are few resources reflecting positive images of disabilities so children's awareness of people in the wider community is not fully promoted.

Children are confident, at ease and very happy in the childminder's home. Their sense of belonging is promoted well as they happily select activities, which help to make the environment relaxed, bright and attractive to them. The childminder manages children's behaviour well, providing a very positive environment where children are encouraged to feel good about themselves. She is very attentive, using plenty of praise to acknowledge what children have done well. Children play happily together as they willingly take turns and younger children begin to develop the concept of sharing.

Children settle well and happily join in the activities because the childminder works closely with parents to ensure she understands children's individual needs and home routine. Parents are given a set of policies and procedures about the childminder's activities as part of the enrolment procedures. There is good ongoing sharing of information. The childminder takes time to write in the children's diary about their day and chat to parents about their development.

Questionnaires welcome parents' comments on how they perceive the care and how activities can be improved, reassuring parents that children's interests come first. This meaningful relationship between home and the childminder enhances children's continuity and the quality of care offered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for as part of the family in a warm, stimulating and homely environment. The childminder creatively organises the space with a good balance of activities, allowing for both active play and relaxation. Children gain confidence and have plenty of fun pursuing activities that appeal to them. They enjoy good levels of individual support, clearly reflected in children's happiness, confidence and sense of belonging. The childminder plans the activities well, affording children a balance of home based care with outdoor visits, when they meet up with others.

Children benefit from good adult support. The childminder has completed an approved local authority registration course. She accesses resource materials from the internet to support activity planning, but is not fully familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She draws on the knowledge of an experienced childminder and regularly attends the local childminder network meetings, contributing to the quality of care offered.

Children's well-being is safeguarded because the childminder has prepared well written policies and effective procedures so that they are not left unattended with non-vetted persons. She has accessed first aid, sleep success and safeguarding training, helping to provide an effective service for the children. All the necessary regulatory daily documentation is maintained well, stored with regard for confidentiality and made available for inspection. Children's continuity of care is positively nurtured through the regular sharing of information with parents.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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.

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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):

- improve upon the range of resources that promote children's awareness of people in the wider community
- continue to develop knowledge of child development for children aged under three years.

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