

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	312222
Inspection date	06 August 2007
Inspector	Ann Law
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 1992. She lives with her husband, one adult daughter, one daughter aged 12 years and her grandson aged five years in Dukinfield, near Ashton-under-Lyne. The whole ground floor is used for childminding, with toilet facilities and a computer room on the first floor and there is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time. She is currently minding nine children under five years during the day and six children over five years, before and after school and in the school holidays. She walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children. She attends various local parent and toddler groups and takes children to the local library and park. The family have a dog and a number of rabbits. The childminder holds the Certificate in Childminding Practice and the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 qualification in Early Years Care and Education. She is a member of Tameside Childminding Network and is currently working towards Pathways to Quality in Tameside, a quality assurance scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a very clean and well maintained environment. The childminder implements effective procedures for nappy changing and provides children with liquid soap and individual hand towels for hand washing. This ensures that any chance of cross-contamination is effectively minimised. Although the childminder has a written policy which states that medicines will only be administered upon the written instructions of the child's guardian, she has failed to obtain this and this is a breach of regulations.

Healthy and nourishing snacks and meals are provided for the children and a weekly menu is displayed to this effect. This also provides good information for parents regarding their child's diet over the week. The childminder cleverly introduces mathematical concepts into meals when the children make shapes of their food for a 'shape picnic'. The children made star sandwiches, had square cake and round cucumber. Garden games at home, including a trampoline, a rocker and a climbing frame, facilitate children's physical development and regular outings are undertaken to the local park and field.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very safe environment where the childminder identifies and minimises all risks. Many safety items are in place, such as a fireguard, safety gate and plug socket covers, allowing children to move around safely, freely and independently. Older children are allowed to use the computer on the first floor, however, there is no security system fitted to ensure that as they are out of direct sight of the childminder they cannot access any inappropriate websites. A wide range of age-appropriate and well maintained toys, resources and furniture are attractively presented for the children to self-select from, promoting their decision making skills.

The childminder pays good attention to fire safety and has ensured that the fire evacuation procedure has been discussed with the children. This means that the older children are very aware of the procedures, including if they are in the computer room on the first floor. The childminder has a secure understanding of her responsibilities within the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures for child protection. She has recently attended an updated training course and holds all of the required documents and procedures. Accidents are well managed and the records are shared with parents to facilitate children's safety and continuity of care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the care of the childminder. The attractive designated play area in the home is well used by the children and they confidently select activities of their choice. For example, older children enjoy imaginative play as they imitate being in a beauty salon and arrange each other's hair. The good use of the space available for childminding means that various activities can take place at the same time, thus meeting children's individual needs very well. Younger children enjoy playing with small world toys spread out over the floor in a different room and this play is not interrupted as other children have plenty of other space to play in.

The childminder keeps a detailed general diary evidencing that a good variety of craft activities take place in the home and some of the children's artwork is displayed on the walls for all to admire, promoting their self-esteem. Many outings are undertaken, for example, to Stamford Park and on walks in the local area. Children enthusiastically describe a recent walk with the childminder and her dog, when they enjoyed searching for butterflies and spotting stone statues of hedgehogs and ladybirds along the way. In this way, children are developing their knowledge of the natural world and of their local community.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children experience a strong sense of belonging in the home as they see their artwork valued and displayed by the childminder. They are all very aware of which is their own hand towel and proudly show them to the inspector. The childminder has attended many courses related to disability awareness and inclusion and has a good range of toys and resources which promote differences in a positive manner. This means that children are becoming aware of the diversity of our society.

The childminder encourages children to work out minor disputes themselves, for example, an argument over the play house door. In this way, children are learning respect for each other and negotiation skills. A very informative prospectus is provided for parents, including a wide variety of written policies and procedures, sample menus and daily activities. This ensures that parents gain a clear insight into the service to be provided for their children, allowing them to make an informed choice of childcare provision.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has a high level of commitment to continual improvement and personal development. She holds two Level 3 qualifications in childcare and regularly attends a wide variety of childcare related training courses. The childminder is a member of a childminding network and is a buddy for new childminders. In this way, she passes on her considerable skills and expertise to new childminders.

The majority of the required documentation is in place, the exception being related to health. This is all well organised and easily accessible. Although the childminder has informed Ofsted in the past of changes to adults in the home, a recent change was overlooked and this is a breach of regulations.

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 asked to ensure that accident records are fully completed. These now include all the required details and have enhanced the record keeping.

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 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):

- ensure that parents give prior written permission and instructions to administer medication to children
- review the security systems on the computer to ensure that children cannot access any inappropriate websites
- ensure there is a system in place to inform Ofsted of any significant events, namely any changes in the persons over the age of 16 years living in the household.

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