

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	304394
Inspection date	07 August 2007
Inspector	Sue Anslow
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 1994. She lives with her two children aged 13 and 11, in Knutsford. The whole house, with the exception of the childminder's bedroom, is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding one child under five full time and two children over five, outside school hours. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children and attends a number of groups and play facilities for young children, during the week. The childminder occasionally works with another childminder.

The childminder is a qualified teacher and holds an appropriate early years qualification. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and recently completed their Quality First quality assurance scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because the childminder follows highly effective procedures and practices which meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. The childminder's animated and enthusiastic personality ensures children learn about their health and good hygiene practices by talking, explaining and encouraging the children's active involvement. They happily wash their hands and brush their teeth, following the signs and pictures displayed above the sink. They are shaded from the hot sun under the gazebo outside. Sick or injured children are managed extremely well by the childminder who has current first aid and food hygiene certificates. Parents are advised about the exclusion of infections for the protection of the other children, and any medication is administered and recorded correctly. A healthy lifestyle is promoted through children's ability to explore, test and develop their physical control with a variety of indoor and outdoor experiences. They walk to and from school, visit the local park to play ball or use the playground equipment and play lots of physical and musical games at home. Younger children attend local toddler groups which offer an excellent variety of physical play as well as social contact with other children and adults. They are becoming adept at using their fine motor skills as they draw, paint, roll out dough or pour tea for their dolls.

Children enthusiastically learn about food and the effects on their bodies. The childminder actively involves them in the preparation of meals and snacks and they thoroughly enjoy making their own pizzas or vegetable soup. A varied four week menu, with accompanying recipes, keeps parents informed of exactly what their children are having each day and a range of fruit and vegetables are served. Children enjoy choosing which piece of fruit they are going to have for their snack, from the fully stocked rack in the kitchen. They help wash the apple and count how many pieces they want. Access to fresh drinking water is constant because the children have their own drinking bottles with them all the time. The childminder has an excellent understanding of children's individual needs and requirements, gained in consultation with parents, which ensures each child's needs are respected.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where easy access to all toys and equipment is given high priority. This allows the children to make their own choices and their independence is significantly enhanced as they move from room to room or outside into the garden. Children's enjoyment and delight in the varied activities they undertake is evident from pictures and photographs displayed in the playroom. Posters showing letters, numbers, shapes, days of the week and the weather inspire children to ask questions and copy what they see in their own drawings and early writing attempts. Children use high quality equipment, appropriate to their age and stage of development, which enhances their learning and enjoyment in all areas and protects their safety. Excellent use is made of natural play materials, such as sand, water, junk modelling and things they find on their walks, which they use to make pictures and collages.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because the childminder is extremely vigilant, provides close supervision and thoroughly risk assesses all areas to be used by the children. Garden gates are checked before children go outside to play and a notice reminds parents and visitors to close the gates behind them. The childminder has an excellent understanding of how

to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. Smaller objects are put at higher levels on the shelf unit so children can only access toys and equipment which are safe for their use and the alarm on the back door alerts the childminder if the door is opened when children go to use the toilet nearby. Children are kept extremely safe on outings because the childminder has good sound procedures in place for the children's protection. Reins or wrist straps are used as appropriate and children wear wrist bands with the childminder's phone number on them, if on an all day outing. Children have extremely good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe as they explain what to do if the 'fire bell' sounds and how they cross the road safely. Children's welfare is very well protected by the childminder who has sound knowledge of child protection procedures and informs parents of her role and responsibilities through clear notices and written policies. Male members of the family and visitors are made aware of their roles with regard to 'safe play' with the minded children and any existing injuries are recorded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time spent with the childminder and engage well in a broad range of exciting and stimulating activities which promote their all round development. Teaching and learning are consistently high because the childminder's enthusiastic and inspiring personality motivates and excites children to use their imaginations and curiosity. Excellent use is made of relevant guidance, such as 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum, to enhance the planning and evaluation of appropriate activities for all children.

Children's needs at various ages are extremely well met with the childminder providing a fun and challenging environment, conducive to effective learning. Children are actively encouraged to try new things, such as preparing their own snacks, pouring drinks and making pictures out of natural things they find in the countryside. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas enthusiastically as they join in a diverse range of exploratory and sensory experiences. They create things with paint, paper and dough, explore what happens when they rub a balloon on a woollen jumper and watch snails slide across the path.

Children are extremely confident and self assured because of the close and caring relationship with the childminder. They are supervised, supported and encouraged with animated praise and enthusiasm, making each activity exciting and stimulating the children's imaginations and curiosity. Children are proud of their clean hands and sparkly teeth when they are able to perform these tasks independently. They often choose to stick their pictures on the wall to show their parents, explaining how they traced round the leaf shape themselves.

The childminder has a clear understanding of each child's individual needs and interests, which ensures the comprehensive range of activities suit their various ages and abilities. Optimal challenges lead to all round progress in children's learning and development and any areas which need extra attention are made fun and exciting so children learn quickly. Excellent written activity plans are devised for each week which are varied and imaginative. Visits to local play facilities so children can have social contact with other adults and children, and trips to the library to look at books or listen to stories, significantly enhances children's enjoyment, excitement and interest.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are highly valued as individuals. They show a very positive attitude to others and gain a good understanding of the world around them through the exceptional variety of activities and resources available, as well as positive encouragement and sound teaching by the childminder. An excellent range of toys and books with images of people who look different from themselves, ensure children's understanding of diversity and respect for others. Children's welfare is superbly promoted because the childminder consults closely with the parents and others on any issues of concern or particular requirements. All children are welcomed and integrated into the home environment where they participate in all activities to the level of their ability. This promotes their all round development and ensures a positive sense of self-esteem.

Children's contributions and achievements are highly valued and rewarded which contributes to their self-esteem and self confidence. Behaviour is well promoted through meaningful and enthusiastic praise and positive role modelling by the childminder. Children are thanked for helping or taking turns with another child, and proudly show off new skills or their pictures on the wall. Children have a positive understanding of right and wrong as they learn to care for each other and their environment. An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to the children's well-being. Parents views about their child's needs and interests are actively sought before the child starts at the childminder's, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Parents are given full information about the service offered and daily reports on how their children are progressing and enjoying themselves. The childminder works extremely closely with parents to support the child's learning, involving them in the monthly activities and explaining all aspects of the children's care and routines. Useful magazine articles and recipes are shared and a complete profile of the child's time with the childminder, along with photographs, is given to each family when they leave.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by the exceptional quality of organisation and management techniques of the childminder. The home is well organised, bright, warm and inviting for young children, with a wealth of play materials easily accessible to meet all their needs.

The childminder is highly motivated and committed to enhancing her knowledge and skills in child care, for the benefit of all the children. She is a qualified educational audiologist and has completed the National Vocational Qualification in child care. Further relevant training courses, close contact with the local primary school and the completion of a recognised quality assurance certificate ensure the childminder is able to offer children a range of outstanding and innovative activities.

Excellent kept records and relevant documentation is clear, up to date and reviewed regularly. These ensure the children's health, safety and progress is well promoted and managed superbly.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder was asked to obtain written permission from parents to take their child's photograph.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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:

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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