

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 307391
Inspection date 23 August 2007
Inspector Susan Janet Lee

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 1996. She lives with her husband and two adult children in a semi detached property in Walkden, Salford. The childminder has a childcare qualification and a nursing qualification and she has also completed the Quality First assurance scheme. Her husband is an assistant who supports his wife, if required, in emergencies.

All areas of the ground floor and first floor are used for childminding purposes. There is a rear garden available for outdoor play. The family have a pet dog.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently caring for eight children who attend on a variety of placements. She is able to take and collect children from the local primary school and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very well maintained environment. They are protected from infection as the childminder is very active in promoting good health and hygiene. She has an excellent understanding of the importance of exercising good hygiene practices to minimise the risk of cross infection. For example, she provides individual towels for the children and has excellent routines for cleaning equipment and resources. The children are involved in and enjoy helping to clean the toys. They learn about personal care routines and they wash their hands independently after using the bathroom. Highly comprehensive policies are in place ensuring effective measures are in place when children are ill.

The childminder has attended food hygiene training and she has an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating. She has recently worked with parents to develop a new menu, taking into account children's preferences. The menu is well balanced, wholesome and nutritious to aid children's growth and development. The childminder encourages the children to try new tastes and textures and she ensures they have opportunities to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. As a result, the children are well nourished. The children grow strawberries, lettuce, peas, tomatoes, radishes, courgettes and baby corn in the garden and these are used as snacks and also to accompany meals. The children are able to independently quench their thirst as drinks are readily accessible. The childminder encourages the children to drink more in hot weather.

The children have lots of opportunities to enjoy and develop their physical skills as they have open access to the garden on a daily basis. They enjoy playing in the garden under a large sun parasol to protect them from the sunshine on hot days. The children learn about their bodies and develop good control and coordination as they have access to an extensive range of outdoor play equipment. They also benefit from visits to the park, a soft play centre, a farm and a country park. Photographic documentation shows the children playing outdoors at a farm. They have fun playing giant snakes and ladders on the lawn and they manage their bodies well to enable them to walk on low swinging logs and to climb ropes. All of which contributes to their good health and physical development. The childminder recently planned an activity to develop children's awareness of nutrition and also to allow them to have exercise. They visited a local country park and participated in a treasure hunt for healthy food items in the fresh air. They were rewarded at the end with a fruit smoothie and fresh fruit. The children then enjoyed craft activities which developed their understanding of foods that are healthy and foods that are not so healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The children are cared for in a very warm, welcoming and homely environment. Children's artwork, posters and information are displayed throughout the home and this makes the environment bright, stimulating and informative for parents, children and visitors. The children benefit from a dedicated playroom which is well equipped with furniture and resources which are labelled. There is an extensive range of equipment and furniture available allowing babies and older children to be able to play rest and play in comfort. The childminder provides a superb range of resources to help the children progress in all areas of their development. Toys are used well to promote children's play and learning and they provide challenge. A lovely range

of natural materials are presented in treasure baskets and this enables babies and older children to enjoy exploring using their senses. All equipment, furniture and resources are checked on a regular basis to minimise risks to children. All items are of very good quality, safe, clean and of suitable design.

Comprehensive policies and risk assessments are in place for the internal and external environment. The childminder has an excellent understanding of safety and she has taken all steps to ensure that the environment in which children are cared for is safe and secure. Children are protected from the dangers of fire. The childminder recently requested a visit from the fire safety officer to check that all the arrangements for fire safety in her home were appropriate. The childminder checks smoke alarms and records her findings and she also practises the evacuation procedure with children once a month and uses different exits on each occasion. As a result, the children develop a good understanding of what to do in the event of an emergency such as a fire. The childminder keeps children safe on outings. She has a secure understanding of the importance of children using car seats and she also takes all appropriate items to cover any eventuality. The children wear wrist bands and brightly coloured tabards to make them more visible when on outings. The childminder dedicates time supervising the children and this enables them to play safely and independently. She encourages their understanding in keeping themselves safe through daily routines, discussion and play activities. The childminder encourages older children to begin to take responsibility for their own safety. For example, she shows them how to fasten themselves into their care seat and then checks to make sure it is done correctly.

All required policies and procedures are in place and the childminder has a very secure understanding of child protection matters and procedures. As a result, children's welfare is effectively safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has attended training in relation to the 'Birth to three matters' framework, Early Learning goals and also the introduction to the 'Early Years Foundation Stage'. She has an excellent understanding in these areas and plans and provides a wonderful range of activities and experiences to help children develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. The childminder plans activities using a themed approach. She observes children at play and uses this information to chart their progress and to plan future activities to meet children's individual needs. Written observations are very detailed and informative. The childminder has developed individual children's records to chart their development and she uses photographs to support and evidence children's enjoyment and progression.

Observation during the visit and photographic documentation shows the children are the children have access to a wealth of activities and experiences. They also benefit from activities outside the home as the childminder plans some lovely trips to local amenities and other places of interest. For example, the park, story time at the library, parent toddler group, and childminder drops in sessions, the farm, museums and the seaside. This enhances children's experiences and gives them many varied opportunities to socialise with their peers.

The childminder gives the children her undivided attention and gives their care and well-being a high priority. She shares very close relationships with the children, who are happy, relaxed and secure in her care. The childminder is spontaneous to the children's interests and she

interacts with the children at every available opportunity to extend their language and to challenge their thinking.

The children clearly enjoy singing along with the childminder and they are able to recite complex and repetitive songs, such as 'I know an old woman who swallowed a fly'. The children explore a large bowl of porridge oats. They initiate their own ideas and add shells and cars to the mixture. The children then use large wooden spoons to add water to mix into the oats. The children comment it is getting harder to stir as the mixture thickens. They then delight in using their fingers and hands to knead the mixture and they use good descriptive words to describe the texture.

The childminder turns on a bubble machine and the children are engrossed and delighted as they run and jump up to try to catch the bubbles.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Posters are displayed as a means of promoting equality of opportunity. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the importance of helping children to make a positive contribution. She treats the children as individuals and with care and respect. The children develop an awareness of their local community through their many trips out. They also have a wealth of opportunity to learn about themselves, other people and the world around them. For example, they have access to a wonderful range of resources that reflect diversity and they celebrate their own and other festivals; helping them to value and respect each others differences and similarities and develop respect for other people's cultures and traditions. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure that their children's cultural background and beliefs are respected and valued. She has a positive attitude towards children with learning difficulties and disabilities and has experience of working with parents and other professionals to meet children's specific needs.

The childminder is highly skilled in managing children's behaviour consistently, which ensures continuity for the children. She uses effective strategies that take into account the children's age, understanding and level of maturity and that also allow the children to deal with a range of emotions. She acts as a very good role model to the children; consequently, they are polite and behave very well. The children receive encouragement and praise at every opportunity, and as a result, they grow in confidence and self-esteem. The childminder provides a fully inclusive environment for all the children in her care. The children develop a very good sense of belonging and move around with great ease and confidence. They thoroughly enjoy being with the childminder and they thrive on her interaction and attention. The children show care and concern for plants and other living creatures.

The childminder has developed a comprehensive portfolio that includes very detailed policies and procedures. This is shown and discussed with parents at the initial meeting. Parents are given copies of policies and they sign to confirm they have understood; helping to forge trusting three way relationships and a shared understanding from an early stage. Highly effective systems are in place to allow parents to contribute to the evaluation of the service provided. The childminder develops questionnaires and then asks parents to complete these to help her monitor the service she provides. Comments from these questionnaires are very positive and show that parents are very happy indeed with the service provided, levels of care and activities afforded. Excellent systems are in place to keep parents informed about forthcoming events, their children's daily activities and developmental progress.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder is a very experienced childcare practitioner. She keeps herself fully up to date with current legislation and is totally committed to her continual professional development. The childminder strives hard to further develop knowledge and understanding. She has a very high regard for children's well-being and attends training and further studies to further develop her childcare practice. The childminder has a valid first aid certificate ensuring she has up to date knowledge of what to do in the event of an accident or minor injury. She is involved in supporting new childminders and is also a sponsored childminder.

There is a robust system in place to record children's attendance. This shows that ratios are maintained to positively promote children's care, learning and play. The childminder organises space, time and resources extremely well to significantly enhance children's care and to meet their needs effectively.

The childminder has developed detailed and comprehensive written policies and procedures, and these work very well in practice to positively promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. All required documentation is in place. This is very well organised for easy reference and stored securely to ensure confidentiality. The childminder consistently monitors the service she provides for children and their parents.

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 a recommendation was agreed in relation to documentation. The childminder has revised the wording in relation to written parental consent for transport.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 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 complaints 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

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