

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	505088
Inspection date	20 August 2007
Inspector	Marina Anna Howarth
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 1994. She lives with her husband and adult son in Coppice, near Oldham. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, with toilet facilities located on the first floor, and there is a fully enclosed rear and front garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time. She is currently minding 4 children under five years during the day and one child over five years, before and after school and in the school holidays. There are four children over eight years whom she minds on a part-time basis. She walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler group and takes children to the library and park. The childminder does not offer overnight care for children. The childminder is working towards an endorsed quality assurance scheme.

The childminder is a member of The National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained environment, where the childminder actively promotes good hygiene practice by implementing regular routines for cleaning the home and equipment. Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves healthy through personal hygiene and care and taking responsibility for themselves. For example, they are aware that they need to wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before meal times. The children are able to wash their hands without assistance as they are aware of the location to independently access items which contribute to their health and well-being, such as the booster step and soap, which contributes to their health and well-being.

Children are alert and well rested as the childminder gives high regard to their individual routines for rest and sleep. Sleeping and resting arrangements are facilitated in the living room. As a result of this, children are comfortable and refreshed, and their continuity of care is ensured.

Children are learning about healthy eating as the childminder provides them with a healthy selection of snacks. Their individual dietary needs are met because the childminder works well with parents, who are kept informed through verbal communication. Snack and meal times are treated as a social occasion, where all children are given the opportunity to sit together and relate to each other whilst they are eating. This is enhanced further by the childminder who sits with them and allows them to make choices and educates them during meal times. Children's independence is encouraged as they are involved in setting the table and enjoy helping to prepare their own snacks.

Children are offered a choice of refreshments throughout the day which ensures they are well nourished and hydrated. Their independent skills are being encouraged as they select their own drinking vessels.

Children are alert and healthy because the childminder provides them with daily opportunities for physical exercise and fresh air, which she ensures is enjoyable and meets their developmental needs. As a result of this, the children enjoy indoor and outdoor activities. For example, they go on daily walks to and from school, go on nature trails and attend a large, indoor soft play centre, which helps them to develop control of their bodies and contributes to their health. They are given opportunities to use climbing apparatus, bats, balls, skittles and skipping ropes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a child focused, welcoming environment where their developmental needs are met through the provision of a broad range of safe, good quality resources. These are organised well and located in storage units which enable children to have independent access and view them easily. Children are learning about hygiene and cleanliness as the childminder actively involves them in helping to clean resources through the provision of water play.

Children's safety is of high priority to the childminder. Risks are identified and effectively minimised through the completion of regular checks. Children are being actively encouraged to learn about their own personal safety. For example, they are aware of not leaving toys on the floor so people do not trip over and hurt themselves and they assist when tidying up. When

they are away from the premises they are aware of road safety. For example, one child explains the 'Green Cross Code,' stating that she 'stops, looks, listens and thinks before crossing the road'.

Most fire safety procedures are in place as there are smoke alarms fitted to every level of the premises. These are checked on a regular basis and are in working order. The childminder has a fire blanket which is located in the kitchen, and she has devised and practised an emergency evacuation plan. However, this has not been practised for a long time. As a result of this, children are becoming less familiar with the routine and any potential problems encountered cannot be identified.

Children are protected well. The childminder has all the required procedures and documents in place to ensure their welfare is safeguarded and promoted. She has a good understanding of child protection procedures in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and secure while at the childminder's home. A warm, loving relationship between the childminder and children is evident as they respond and interact positively together. The childminder listens to and values what they say, and has a very good knowledge and understanding of how children develop and progress. For example, when a child asks for some puzzles, the childminder responds by providing a selection.

Children engage well in a broad range of activities to foster their all round development. For example, the childminder uses a combination of planning activities in and out of the home, such as visiting the local play group, accessing the library and resource centre, visiting parks and soft play centres. Children are also given daily opportunities to select toys and resources of their choice.

Children engage confidently in their self-chosen activities and play happily and co-operatively together. For example, the childminder has assisted them in creating a large tent, using blankets and furniture. The children have set out a play kitchen in the tent, and later it becomes a library when they fill it with a selection of books.

Children are provided with consistent routines that offer stability, familiarity and opportunities to experience new things, and they clearly thrive on the attention they receive. For example, one child takes delight in showing the childminder a puzzle she has completed. The childminder crawls into the tent to look at it, she gives praise and asks questions about the puzzle which the child enjoys answering.

Children are interested and involved in their play and are given opportunities to pursue their own interests. For example, they talk about different types of holidays which leads onto camping. They then decide they wish to create a tent. The tent becomes a house, then a library, then a play area where they take a variety of toys.

Children have access to a broad range of equipment and activities which enables them to acquire new knowledge and skills. The childminder extends their play experiences by using the toy library and accessing facilities within the local community, such as soft play centres and toddler groups. As a result, children are never bored as there is always something interesting for them to do.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well because the childminder works in very close partnership with parents. There are effective systems in place which ensures that information is shared on a continual basis. For example, the childminder ensures that verbal communication takes place on a daily basis. She is in the process of implementing a new system where she intends to monitor and record children's achievements through observations, examples of the children's artwork and photographs. As a result of this, children are ensured continuity of care and are fully included into the life of the setting.

The childminder actively respects and values children as individuals. She encourages them to be aware of the wider world through the provision of resources which reflect positive images and diversity. All children within the setting are involved and included as they are given the same opportunities to learn through play. Children are made to feel welcome at the setting and are confident with a strong sense of belonging. For example, they move freely around the childminder's home, are able to access toys and resources independently and are aware of the location of items. Toys and activities are set out prior to their arrival and the childminder gives high consideration to the children who are attending. For example, the older children enjoy drawing and creative activities when they arrive in the morning so she ensures a table is set out with a selection of creative activities.

Children are learning to understand about responsible behaviour as they follow the positive role model set by the childminder. Each child receives praise and encouragement. The childminder demonstrates an in depth knowledge with regard to individual needs, and as a result there is a close bond between herself and the children which is evident throughout all aspects of care. Children's behaviour is good, as they are made aware of clear boundaries set by the childminder and are encouraged to look after their environment and their peers.

The childminder has developed good relationships with parents. She values and respects their opinions. As a result, children's individual needs are given a high priority and met, ensuring there is consistency of good quality care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder plans her time and resources well to ensure children have access to a range of stimulating, fun and interesting activities both inside and outside the home. Space is well organised and child focused, which provides children with a welcoming, accessible environment enabling them to develop their independence. This also ensures children have a sense of belonging, they are familiar where things are kept and move confidently around the setting content and at ease.

All documentation is kept in accordance with the National Standards and is used effectively to promote the safety, care and well-being of the children. These are shared with parents during the gradual admission process. The exchanging of information is given high priority on a continual basis. This ensures that parents are kept fully informed about all aspects of their children's care and the good quality service provided.

The childminder has a high level of commitment to attending further training and updating her skills and knowledge. She has recently attended an introduction to the 'Birth to three

matters' framework, which is being reflected in her practice. As a result, younger children continue to benefit greatly from her continued development and good understanding of good childcare practice.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was requested to build on existing arrangements with parents and make available a complaints procedure, and a procedure to follow if an allegation of abuse is made.

The childminder has devised a written complaints procedure giving details of the regulators contact details, which all the parents have signed in acknowledgement of receipt. As a result of this, parents are aware who to contact for advice and support if they have any complaints regarding the service she provides.

The childminder has also attended a child protection training course in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and she has the relevant procedures in place to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse made against herself or family members.

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

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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):

- ensure that the emergency fire evacuation procedure is practised on a regular basis with the children.

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