

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	312194
Inspection date	21 August 2007
Inspector	Judith Anne Kerr
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 1990. She lives with her husband and 15-year-old daughter in the Droylsden area of Tameside. Minded children have access to the whole ground floor of the childminder's house and the first floor bathroom. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children and is currently caring for a total of eight children on a variety of placements. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local adult and toddler group and takes children to the park.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean home where the childminder implements effective hygiene procedures. They are beginning to understand the importance of good hygiene habits, such as washing their hands at appropriate times of the day. This minimises the risks to children of

cross infection. Children's health is further prioritised as the childminder understands the issues surrounding the safe storage and administration of medication. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and makes agreements with parents that care will not be provided for sick children. First aid equipment is stored in an appropriate box and items replaced as necessary. Records of accidents and medication are maintained. These are shared with parents, but not always in a way respecting confidentiality of information.

The children enjoy a varied range of activities which contribute to their good health. They have the opportunity to develop purposeful control of their bodies. For example, they dig for treasure in the sand and enjoy the zip wires, thus developing coordination and balance. A good selection of outdoor play equipment in the garden and regular visits to local parks promote children's overall physical development as they climb, jump, swing and run around.

The childminder's clear understanding of a healthy diet is beneficial to the children. The meals which are provided support their physical well being and development, as they are well balanced and nutritious. The children enjoy helping to make some of their own food. They enjoy making pancakes on Shrove Tuesday and fairy cakes which they then ice and decorate. Children's individual dietary needs are recorded and respected at all times. For example, some children only have Soya milk. This ensures that children's individual needs are met and parents wishes are respected. Children are continually hydrated as drinks are freely available at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a very well maintained home where the childminder gives a generally high priority to safety. Toys and resources are set out each day. These are varied, suitable and allow children to make choices and develop their independence. The childminder carefully monitors children's choices of toys to ensure they are safe and appropriate for their stage of development.

The childminder has taken many positive steps to ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where they are able to move around freely and confidently. There is a written evacuation plan which is practised with the children so they are not at risk in the event of a fire, sockets are covered and the smoke alarms are tested on a regular basis. However, although a fireguard is placed around the fire in the lounge it is not secure and a drain in the garden is accessible. These may pose a risk to children's safety. Children are beginning to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe as the childminder explains boundaries. For example, she reminds the children that they must follow her instructions when crossing the road and always be strapped in securely in the car. This helps to reinforce their understanding of road safety.

The childminder has the required documentation in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. For example, she has a written policy which she shares with parents and a good understanding of child protection issues and procedures. This ensures children are well protected from harm and abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children share warm relationships with the childminder. She spends time on the floor talking and playing with them. She offers children lots of appropriate physical contact in the form of

cuddles, and speaks in gentle tones and smiles. As a result, the children are happy, confident and secure in her care. Young children benefit from routines which are consistent with their experiences at home and this helps them to settle.

The childminder makes good use of local amenities, such as the park, canal and the local museum, to provide a variety of different play and learning environments for the children. This increases their awareness of the world around them as they feed the ducks and find out how people lived in the 1930s and 1940s. Children are able to mix with other children when they visit the local toddler group. This allows them to access different resources, socialise and become confident.

Children are provided with a wide range of age appropriate activities, such as painting, collage, funky foam pictures and chalking. They clearly enjoy the play opportunities and recollect the fun they had as they discuss recent activities, such as washing the toys and hand printing. Children's independence is fully promoted. The childminder promotes early communication skills by repeating sounds and words when babies and young children are learning to talk. Children's mathematical skills are enhanced through daily activities, such as counting the bricks and playing games to identify opposites including in and out, big and small and front and back.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a range of opportunities which help them learn about the wider community. For example, there are dolls, books and play figures available which reflect our diverse society. They celebrate festivals, such as Chinese New Year by making cards and talking about Chinese customs, such as eating with chopsticks. As a result, children learn about differences in society and develop an awareness of society as a whole. The childminder has a positive attitude towards the inclusion of all children and works in close partnership with parents to ensure the individual needs of all children are well met.

Children behave very well and respond to the consistent boundaries set by the childminder. She speaks to the children in a calm and sensitive manner. For example, she reminds the children why it is important to be kind and care for one another. Children's confidence and self-esteem are promoted as their efforts and achievements are continually celebrated. The childminder thanks the children for tidying away the paint when they have finished painting. The children show care and concern for one another, such as when older children help younger children with mixing paint colours for the desired effect.

Children benefit from the high quality relationships that the childminder has developed with parents. The progress of young children is discussed and reviewed frequently to ensure consistency and continuity of care. Daily informal discussions at the end of the day keep parents well informed about the provision, their children's activities and progress. Written thank you notes and cards from parents demonstrate high levels of satisfaction with the service provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the childminder's good organisation. The children feel at home and at ease in a well arranged environment. The daily routine offers a good balance of adult-led activities, free play and quiet times. The childminder ensures children have sufficient space in

order to play in comfort. Children are comfortable in the welcoming surroundings and have settled in well.

The childminder is committed to improving the high quality of care she provides for the children. To support her professional development she attends ongoing training, such as first aid and child protection. All adults with access to the children are suitable and ratios of adults to children are met at all times. This helps to keep children safe.

All the required documentation is in place which helps to promote continuity of care for the children and maintain their health and well being. However, when asking parents to countersign records, the childminder does not ensure confidentiality is maintained.

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 agreed to maintain an attendance register, record existing injuries and provide resources reflecting equality of opportunity. An up to date register of attendance is in place, existing injuries to children are recorded and a range of resources reflecting equality of opportunity are provided for the children. As a result, children's safety is further prioritised and they can begin to understand the society in which they live.

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 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 good. 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):

- minimise hazards to children from the fire and hearth in the lounge and the drain in the garden
- review the procedures for maintaining confidentiality when parents are countersigning records.

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