

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	301472
Inspection date	04 December 2007
Inspector	Carol Ann Dixon
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 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged 16 and nine years in the Greenfield area of Oldham. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a shared area to the rear of the property for outdoor play. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends local toddler groups and takes children to the park and the library.

The childminder is registered to care for six children. She is currently minding seven children under eight years who attend for varied sessions. The childminder has a cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because the childminder actively promotes and supports all aspects of children's health. They develop a good awareness of the importance of personal hygiene and independently wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Liquid soap and individual towels are used and this helps to minimise cross-contamination. The arrangements

for first aid and emergency medical treatment meet all requirements and protect children. The accident records include good detail about the exact location of injuries and any action taken. The childminder acts in the children's best interest when they are ill and by doing so also protects others in her care from illness and infection.

Children have lots of opportunities to participate in a wide range of physical play activities that help them develop good control and co-ordination over their bodies. They look forward to playing at the park and using the climbing frame and wheeled vehicles at toddler group. These activities provide plenty of fresh air and exercise, and are supportive of a healthy lifestyle.

Children's parents provide their main meals, which are stored and served according to instructions. The childminder supplements their diet with healthy snacks, such as toast and fresh fruit. Fresh drinking water is readily available for children to quench their thirst. Children are finding out about healthy eating through discussions and play. They enjoy making healthy snacks for the dolls using the play fruit and food.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder constantly raises children's awareness of how to keep themselves safe through gentle reminders and explanation. For example, children are reminded of the boundaries when playing in the park to ensure they can be safely supervised. Younger children demonstrate how to come downstairs safely after visiting the bathroom. All fire safety and detection equipment is in place and the childminder has devised an emergency evacuation procedure. However, this has not been practised with the children to ensure they know how to vacate the premises quickly and safely and to highlight any problems that may be encountered.

All safety equipment is in place, such as plug socket covers and a stairgate to prevent children's unsupervised access to the kitchen. This ensures that potential hazards are minimised. Well thought out procedures are followed for outings so children's safety is assured. For example, children know to cross the road together and wait to do this with the school crossing patrol. A good variety of safe and suitable toys and resources are provided for the children and they make full use of these in their play. Children are able to make informed choices about what they wish to play with as the resources are effectively organised at their level for them to access. Toys and resources are clean, well maintained and are systematically checked for safety. Children are cared for in a very welcoming, well organised and child-centred environment. Their creativity is displayed for them to see and this shows the childminder values their contribution, promoting the children's self-esteem.

The childminder has a sound awareness of possible signs and symptoms of abuse and of her responsibility to report such concerns to protect children. However, she does not have up to date information of local authority safeguarding procedures. Her willingness to make notes on existing injuries and to discuss these with parents ensures that the safety of the children in her care remains a priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children's day is well planned to provide a wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities that stimulate their interest and development. Good use is made of local amenities to extend the children's play and learning opportunities. They look forward to trips to toddler groups,

local parks and walks around the community. Attendance at toddler groups provides opportunities for children to mix with other children and play with a wider range of resources and activities. Children's development of language is promoted extremely well and they are becoming increasingly skilful communicators. They enjoy looking at books and listening to stories, constantly chatting to the childminder. The childminder provides children with opportunities to paint, draw and play with dough. She has identified that she wishes to develop further opportunities for children to explore a range of natural and sensory activities as explained in the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Children enjoy selecting their own resources from the broad range available and this helps to develop their independence. The children are purposefully occupied and enjoy using their imaginations as they play. At the inspection children enjoyed threading buttons, completing puzzles and playing with dolls. They use their imagination as they dress the dolls and cover them with a blanket to put them to sleep. The children also enjoy working together on large scale creative projects, for example, making models from boxes. Children explore the local environment as they go on nature walks to collect specific items such as leaves, feathers and conkers. Children relish the challenge of completing jigsaw puzzles and posting shapes in shape sorters. They carefully match and manipulate the pieces into place and then select a different puzzle to complete.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Good use is made of local amenities which helps children to develop a sense of belonging and begin to be aware of their local community. Children access a range of resources which further enhances their understanding of wider society. However, activities for them to learn about the religious and cultural beliefs of others are limited.

Children are kept busy, receive lots of meaningful praise and encouragement and behave well. The childminder skilfully negotiates with children to help them learn how to share and take turns. Consequently, children cooperate well and are thoughtful, considerate and well mannered.

The childminder has an effective partnership with parents. Children benefit from continuity, their care is agreed with parents through discussions and written contracts. Positive steps are taken to keep them well informed about all relevant policies and procedures. Daily verbal feedback keeps parents up to date about their child, progress and any issues. However, a system for recording complaints has not been created. This omission has not adversely affected any child thus far, but it means that there is no clear evidence recorded to show how the childminder responds to any complaints or suggestions.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised, happy and child friendly home. The childminder sets out resources on the floor and in large storage containers so they are easily accessible. Children confidently explore their surroundings and choose the toys and activities they want to play with.

The childminder has positive relationships with children and organises her day so she is able to spend lots of time with them. This ensures they are well supported and receive lots of encouragement and attention. Childminding records and documentation are clear, up to date

and stored securely. Written records are used to underpin the care provided and are agreed with 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 the childminder was asked to improve records of accidents. This has been fully addressed thereby ensuring that parents are fully informed of any accidents and treatment administered to their child.

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 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):

- practise the fire evacuation with the children so they are familiar with emergency procedures and any potential problems can be highlighted
- improve knowledge of local authority safeguarding procedures
- ensure children have access to a range of activities which reflect diversity and raise their awareness of other cultural celebrations
- increase the range of sensory activities for younger children as explained in the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- maintain a record of complaints.

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