

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	306210
Inspection date	26 October 2007
Inspector	Elizabeth Margaret Grocott
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 satisfactory. 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 1992 and lives with her husband and son aged 19 years, in Wallasey on the Wirral peninsular. The whole of the ground floor of the childminders home is used for childminding. On the first floor, the bathroom and front bedroom is used. There is an enclosed patio garden for outdoor play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding eight children on a part time basis. She walks to local schools to take and collect children and also attends parent and toddler sessions. The childminder is a member of the National Childminders Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is fostered through effective hygiene routines. For example, older children have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands after using the toilet. All relevant health documentation is in place, although the childminder has not requested parents to complete the permission slips for her to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. The childminder has up to date knowledge of first aid training to enable her to respond to accidents

and to administer appropriate treatment to children. However, the current first aid certificate is not available.

Children are beginning to develop an understanding of healthy eating as the childminder provides a balanced diet including fresh fruit and vegetables, which the children help to prepare. Fresh drinking water is always available to the children to enable them to remain hydrated at all times. All children's dietary needs are discussed with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met.

Regular use of the outdoor environment enables children to enjoy fresh air. They enjoy trips to the local park and to the shops and the local schools. Children rest and sleep according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a clean, well maintained and organised environment which is thoughtfully arranged to allow children to play safely and securely indoors and outdoors. Most resources for the toddlers are at their level so they can choose their play activities. Resources for older children are stored in higher cupboards which are easily accessible to them, but prevent much younger children coming to any harm from small pieces. All resources are in good condition.

The children are protected from potential hazards effectively because the childminder has completed a visual risk assessment to minimise all risks. The childminder has put safety measures in place, such as stair gates and fireguards. However, the childminder leaves the keys in external doors, meaning it may not be possible to leave the house if a child removes the key. Children learn how to keep themselves safe as they follow established routines for road safety and regularly practise an evacuation from the property.

The childminder has a clear knowledge of child protection issues and knows how to report any concerns. This protects the children's well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very confident and at ease with the childminder who knows them well and creates a friendly and homely environment. They settle easily when they arrive, talking to the childminder about what they have done at home or school. Children's individual needs are well met because they take part in a variety of activities they find interesting and enjoyable, such as baking and dancing. Children show initiative as they choose their own resources and equipment from a vast range. These are located in easily accessible storage boxes. Two younger children play alongside each other at the table with small world resources, whilst two older children listen to their favourite music, making up their own dances. The youngest child rides up and down the hall in his favourite car under the watch full eye of the childminder. All children are purposefully engaged and very happy.

They are encouraged to interact and socialise with each other by the childminder, who provides a range of educational opportunities for all children, such as shopping for fresh fruit, when children choose which fruit they would like and then pay for it. They take the fruit back to the childminders home and make fruit salad. This is an activity all can be involved in, no matter what the child's age or ability.

The childminder has an excellent knowledge of child development and uses her knowledge to provide a stimulating environment for children to learn and develop new skills. A 3-year-old child, who plays with some small world resources, learns how to set the table correctly with knives and forks. She talks about the colours of the flowers she is putting on to the table and says her favourite colour is pink. The children have a celebratory party for children who are starting school. They dress in high visibility jackets, learning about road safety and go with the children to visit the new school. Children's confidence and self-esteem is promoted as they are offered praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements. Photographs of parties, favourite outings and play topics, enable the children to revisit past experiences, once again affirming that they are valued by the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with respect and well cared for as individuals. Children feel supported because their needs are very well met and they are cared for appropriately in a welcoming home environment. Children's individual routines are adhered to and discussed with parents to ensure consistency of care. Children who have medical needs are very well supported.

A wide range of resources and activities, are available to the children, plenty of which promote the diversity of the modern world. These are gently integrated to help educate the children encouraging them to accept and value similarities and differences. The childminder teaches the children to be kind to one another and to respect their toys. Children feel a sense of belonging because of the familiar daily routine and are very 'at home' with the childminder. They behave well and respond to the boundaries set, such as putting toys back in boxes when they finish playing with them and before moving on to the next game.

The childminder has built strong relationships with the parents. She works closely in partnership with them and communicates daily to ensure consistency of care is maintained. Parents are provided with an informative contract which includes information about her policies and routines. This contributes significantly to children's well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting is homely and well-organised which helps to support children in their play and learning. Children enjoy individual attention from an experienced childminder who enjoys spending time talking to them and being involved in their play. The childminder is in breach of a regulation by not taking positive steps to safeguard children within the setting with regard to any person over 16 living in the household submitting to a vetting procedure. However, as household members are not on the premises during childminding hours, it means that children's safety and well-being is maintained.

Records pertaining to the care and welfare of children are stored confidentially and kept up-to-date. However, the attendance register is marked in advance meaning it is not clear which children are present and when. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the childminder was asked to ensure there was a policy for sick children which was discussed with parents. She was also asked to make sure the daily register clearly showed when children were absent. Since then the childminder has included a policy as part of her contract and this is discussed with parents to make it clear when children should and should not attend. However, the way the daily register is filled out does not make it clear which children are present and when. This remains an area for improvement.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking all household members once they reach 16 and make sure that daily registers clearly show when children are present
- make sure that all records are available for inspection and permission is sought from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment
- ensure that all external doors can be easily opened in the event of an emergency.

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