

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	312111
Inspection date	05 November 2007
Inspector	Shirley Leigh Monks-Meagher
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 has been registered since 1998. She lives with her adult son in a three bedroom property in the West End area of Ashton-under-Lyne. Her premises are close to schools, the park and shops. Children have access to the ground floor rooms, which include a bathroom, and the rear and side secure, flagged gardens.

She is registered to provide care for six children under eight years and currently has six children on roll. However, this includes three children aged eight years and over. Children attend for a variety of sessions. She walks children to, and collects them from, the local school. With parental permission children are taken on outings and to local facilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and well maintained home. The childminder follows sensible hygiene practices, which help to prevent the spread of infection and ensure children stay healthy. For example, she washes her hands and cleans work surfaces before preparing

food. She demonstrates her understanding of protecting children from cross-contamination which can make them poorly, for example, by using their own individual feeder cups and ensuring comforters, such as dummies, are cleaned appropriately before each use. However, her practice is inconsistent, dummies fall on the floor and are not always cleaned and a child drinks from another's drink bottle. The childminder takes it off the child, explains why and provides their own cup but does not clean the spout before allowing the original child to drink from it. Children learn about basic personal hygiene as part of their daily routines. They use soap when washing their hands, after using the toilet and before their dinner.

Children are well nourished and their health is promoted because they are provided with a choice of healthy meals and snacks. Children choose healthy snacks, such as grapes and yoghurt, and enjoy freshly prepared meals. Children learn to enjoy nutritious food as part of a healthy lifestyle during relaxed, social mealtimes, where they sit together comfortably and eat at their own pace with sufficient time to develop their skills.

All children enjoy a good range of physical activities which contribute to their good health. They have regular opportunities to walk on trips to the park, to local shops and to facilities in the area. They play, in the fresh air, in the childminder's garden with large and small equipment, such as bikes, bats and balls, promoting their strength and coordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are welcoming to children and parents. Children have a clear sense of belonging as they move around the setting confidently and express their needs and thoughts freely. For example, children know where to find toys and resources and ask for items they require. Children are developing initiative. They make choices from activities and a good selection of quality toys and resources. These are mostly stored in the outdoor shed and rotated regularly by the childminder to stimulate children's interest. A selection are stored on shelves in the rear hall. However, these are piled precariously towards the top of the shelves and pose a risk to children's safety. Large tubs of toys for younger children are placed at floor level in the living room for easy and safe access. The wide range of toys, equipment and resources help children make progress in all areas of their development. They are clean, well maintained and comply with safety regulations.

Children are safe and secure. The childminder undertakes risk assessments of her premises which generally identify and minimise hazards. Doors are kept locked or bolted, ensuring children cannot leave the premises alone and unwanted persons cannot enter. Fire safety equipment is in place and an emergency evacuation plan has been devised. Children are gaining an awareness of how to keep themselves safe within the setting and on outings through discussions, activities and routines. For example, older children know not to open the front door and all children learn about road safety.

Children's welfare is safeguarded. The childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues. She is clear about her role and responsibilities to keep children safe from harm and neglect. She has a policy statement, which she shares with parents, relating to her responsibilities to the children in her care. She knows the procedures to follow, and who to contact, in the event of a professional concern about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and secure in the childminder's home and are developing confidence. They enjoy a warm, close and supportive relationship with her which contributes to their sense of belonging. They enjoy being with the childminder, snuggling up to her, smiling, laughing and chatting. They are eager to share their efforts and achievements with her and respond well to her warm tones, praise and smiles. They are confident in their interactions with her, enabling them to express their wants and needs in a safe and supportive environment. For example, they ask can they have the doctor's bag and express their need for the toilet.

The childminder has a good understanding of the children's individual abilities and stages of development. Children explore using their natural senses. For example, they visit the park to learn about autumn and collect sticks and fallen leaves. Children make sense of their world through imaginative play. For example, they pretend to be the doctor, using the stethoscope perceptively and writing prescriptions. Children identify shapes they are drawing on a chalk board and make good attempts to independently write their name on their work by using their understanding of letter sounds. The childminder supports and encourages children's learning effectively. Discussions between her and the children enhance their learning and understanding because they are encouraged to consider what they are doing, predict what may happen next and are given time to think things through and 'have a go'. Children widen their social circle and learn about their environment with visits to the local groups and the library. Children spend their time purposefully.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. They are made to feel welcome in the setting and their individual needs are effectively met. Children learn about their local community and the wider world. They regularly visit the park and toddler groups. Their understanding of diversity is enhanced through discussions, activities and a range of play materials which challenge stereotypes and positively portray similarities and differences. As a result, children are developing a positive attitude towards others.

The childminder acts as a positive role model for children. She is kind, speaks positively to them and is sensitive to their needs. Her good use of praise and encouragement boosts children's confidence in their abilities so they feel good about themselves and develop positive self-image. Children's efforts and achievements are celebrated. Children behave well and respond to the consistent boundaries, that are set by the childminder, in an age appropriate way. They are developing an awareness of right and wrong, and how to take turns and share resources.

Good working relationships with parents and carers contribute to children's well-being and welfare. The childminder gathers a wealth of information from parents about their children's requirements and interests and as a result has a good understanding of individual children's needs. She ensures that parents know how their children are progressing, through daily discussions and by the sharing of children's work.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel at home and relaxed as they play comfortably in a warm and welcoming environment. They benefit from effective adult support which successfully fosters their confidence, learning and enjoyment.

The childminder is committed to professional development and attends regular training, which enhances the quality of care and education she offers to children. Interesting activities, a balanced day and consistent routines significantly contribute to the positive outcomes for children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and their disposition and attitudes.

The legally required documentation which is required for children's health, safety and well-being is well organised and suitably maintained. Storage arrangements ensure confidentiality and security are observed.

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 provide a first aid kit.

An appropriately stocked, up to date first aid kit is easily accessible during childminding hours. Children's health and welfare are better protected.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received concerns relating to National Standard 1: Suitable person and National Standard 11: Behaviour. The concerns were originally shared with another agency. An Ofsted inspector visited the provider on 20 August 2007. Actions were raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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):

- improve consistency of hygiene practices which minimise cross-contamination, for example, with dummies and feeding cups
- improve the organisation of the children's toy shelves to minimise risks to 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