

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	315017
Inspection date	16 October 2007
Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten

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 1997. She lives with her husband and two children, aged seven and nine years, in Woolston, Warrington. The whole house is used for childminding except for the childminder's and her eldest son's bedrooms. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and takes children to local parks. She currently has seven children on her roll, ranging in age from 18 months to seven years. The family have a cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's physical health is satisfactory because the childminder keeps a very clean home and manages the frequent arrivals and departures hygienically, by keeping all outdoor shoes outside or by the back patio doors. She undertakes good nappy changing procedures and teaches children to wash their hands after using the toilet, touching the cat or messy play and before

meals or baking activities. Children are also involved in helping to prepare, serve and clear up their snacks and in assisting with the laundry. In addition, role plays with the dolls and domestic play equipment support toddlers in learning about how to live a clean and healthy lifestyle.

Children are adequately protected from becoming ill through required procedures and records to ensure this. First aid supplies are ready to use and the childminder has obtained written parental consent for any emergency treatment, should this be needed. She keeps signed accident and medication records, but has mislaid her first aid certificate and is sure that this has expired. This is a breach of the regulations and compromises children's health if first aid is needed and the childminder is unsure how to administer it. Nevertheless, she is actively seeking a suitable course outside her childminding hours.

All children enjoy varied and daily fresh air and exercise because the childminder walks with them to school, pre-schools and to meet other childminders. They play in the garden regularly and visit local parks and shops on most days. Children have an adequate diet where fruit and toast is always available as a snack and where sugar reduced squash is drunk. However, children also eat fatty spreads on their toast and sometimes have chocolate biscuits, crisps and sweets once a week if parents are happy with this. Special diets and allergies are catered for and the childminder elicits information about these through her contract forms and discussion with parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor environment. They enjoy free movement downstairs, using the kitchen dining room and lounge where there is plenty of floor and table-top play space to pursue a good range of activities and games. The childminder keeps most resources upstairs, but brings a suitable selection downstairs for the children present. School-age children may choose toys or play in one of the upstairs bedrooms and all children can bring favourite toys from home if they wish. There are also good outdoor games and play equipment and regular craft and baking activities undertaken.

The childminder is vigilant and supervises children so that small ones cannot access small parts from games the older ones are playing. Smoke detectors, socket covers, fire blanket and safety catches on the kitchen cupboards assure children's safety. In addition, the rear garden is safe and children are taught how to cross roads and walk safely, practising this each day. The childminder has thought through, written and displayed her plans for emergency evacuation of children from the house. Children know that they should always keep the doors clear of bags and coats and should assemble on the front drive if there is a fire. Parents are also aware that the childminder would call upon her mother to provide emergency cover if anything happened which rendered her unable to mind the children.

Children are well protected from abuse because the childminder has a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and is able to make a referral to social services if necessary. She also knows what to do if an allegation is made against her, but she does not clearly make parents aware of her responsibilities for reporting child abuse concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very content and secure because the childminder provides a stimulating 'home from home' environment. The childminder knows each child's stage of development well and enjoys spending time helping them to consolidate and extend what they know. For example, she helps a toddler to practise her dexterity using the activity centres and to identify her facial features, pointing to one another's eyes, nose and mouth. The childminder talks to children, praises their achievements and provides them with varied and stimulating activity choices. For example, school-age children frequently make occasion cards or go out for picnics to the local park. They also enjoy quiz books and competitions which improve their problem solving and literacy skills. They frequently help with going to the fruit and vegetable shop or the general store to choose and buy provisions which they are going to eat. Wherever they are, the childminder uses her time profitably with children, talking, questioning and listening to them to extend their knowledge, understanding and social confidence.

The childminder is well informed about what children are doing at school and at other childcare facilities they attend and builds upon this as children talk and play together. For example, over snack after school, they talk about their day. The childminder also makes use of repetitive walking trips with imaginary games, counting, observation, meeting neighbours and singing as they go along, so that all the routines of the day are fun and useful learning experiences. As a result, children understand the world around them and are confident and sociable, understanding how to play and share together. Individual progress records are not made for children and the 'Birth to three matters' framework is not actively used, but children take home the things that they make.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children in the setting have a sound sense of belonging and feel secure because the childminder includes each one of them, gives them individual time and makes an effort to find out and provide what food, activities and toys they like. The children vary in age, but can play happily and cooperatively together making things, role playing, or playing outside in the garden. Children have limited opportunities to consider and value diversity because the childminder provides few books and games which present positive images of race, gender and disability. However, she has an open approach to equal opportunities issues and is sensitive to each child's individual needs.

Children behave well because the childminder leads by example when it comes to following the house rules and she is calm, vigilant and consistent in her approach when children need telling that they are being unkind. If necessary, time out is used, followed by a discussion with the childminder and a proper apology to the other persons involved. Documentation is in place to support consistency about behaviour management if necessary because the childminder has an incident record to document any incidents of unwanted behaviour and any injuries which children come with.

The childminder makes sound relationships with parents and they have confidence that she is patient and good at keeping their children well stimulated. The childminder asks parents to complete contracts and child particulars when children start and makes sure that parents see inspection reports. She uses daily verbal feedback to ensure that messages are passed on and parents are well informed about how their child has been. However, she is not keeping any

evidence of feedback from parents and does not have a record of complaints. The latter is a breach of the regulations. There have been no complaints to record and there has been no adverse impact upon the children minded. Nevertheless, parents are not informed about how to contact Ofsted or complain.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has a sound sense of purpose and direction and properly uses her time and resources to support children's care, learning and play. She spends all her time with the children and organises herself so that children have good opportunities to take part and learn about day to day routines for themselves. This ensures that children have their individual needs met and are well settled. The childminder completes the daily attendance register as children come and go so that in the event of an emergency it can be determined who exactly is on the premises.

The childminder gives due regard for the well-being of all children and has been childminding for 10 years. She has attended some relevant courses on lifting and safety, but seldom attends specific update training for childminders, due to various work commitments. She is not currently displaying her certificate and has not produced any policies or organised her documentation to advertise or explain how her service runs according to the National Standards. Child details, parent contracts and accident and medication records satisfactorily promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two recommendations made at the last inspection in February 2005. The childminder has improved her daily registration of children so that children's arrival and departure times are recorded as they come and go. This improves safety for children present should there be an emergency. However, the childminder has not been able to provide more play materials or activities which show children positive images of disability. This holds back the development of children's awareness, understanding and respect towards people with disabilities.

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):

- maintain a current first aid certificate
- ensure that a record of complaints is available and that parents know how to contact Ofsted
- display the registration certificate.

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