

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	315082
Inspection date	04 February 2008
Inspector	Sylvia Cornock
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 outstanding. 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 two grown up children in the Great Sankey, Warrington. The whole of the ground floor with the exception of the family lounge is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five years who attend full days for part of the week. She attends local toddler groups and is a member of Warrington Childminder's Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because their physical, nutritional and health needs are very well met as a result of effective procedures and practices employed by the childminder. Children enjoy an excellent range of activities and experiences indoors, outdoors and away from the childminding setting which actively contribute to their very good health and well-being.

Children are cared for within a very clean and hygienic environment. The childminder employs very effective and thorough hygiene routines and procedures, which ensure children are kept healthy at all times. Very effective procedures are in place in relation to the personal hygiene and hand washing of the childminder and minded children. Children understand the purpose and need to keep themselves healthy and are actively encouraged to wash their hands before meals, after using the toilet and after certain activities. Older children are knowledgeable on why they need to complete these tasks, because of germs. Children independently carry out these tasks with little need to be reminded. Younger children are supported in these tasks by the childminder who displays excellent hygiene procedures in the nappy changing routine.

The childminder ensures that all accidents and administration of medication is recorded appropriately. She has comprehensive written policies on accidents, medication and a sickness policy which is shared with parents and carers. This ensures all children are cared for within a very safe environment which is free from infection.

Children enjoy a range of very healthy and nutritious snacks and drinks throughout their minded day. Children enjoy meal and snack times which are well conducted and offer the children healthy choices. During the inspection children enjoy their lunch which they help prepare and is of healthy options, including a choice of fresh fruit. Children access drinks on a regular basis throughout the day; they are confident to ask for snacks and drinks when feeling hungry or thirsty. The childminder liaises closely with parents and carers regarding meal provision, allergies, preferences or needs on religious grounds. Children are only offered healthy snacks and drinks which are free from additives.

Children are developing competent physical skills and abilities which are particularly well promoted through access to excellent opportunities, both within and away from the childminding setting. Regular opportunities are made available during indoor and outdoor play for children to develop and build upon their existing good skills and range of physical abilities. Children develop their small physical skills as they complete draw and complete jig-saws with dexterity. They complete craft activities developing hand eye coordination and finger control. Large physical activities are very well provided for and as a result children's physical skills and abilities are developing well. Children practise climbing and balancing skills as they successfully use climbing frames and slides, and other outdoor apparatus. They negotiate a small step to the outdoor area. At the time of the inspection minded children successfully used a range of creative materials, tools and musical instruments in their role play activities.

The childminder has a very good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and uses this well to plan activities and support children under three years of age.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an environment where their safety is given a high priority as the childminder completes regular risk assessments, identifying possible risks or hazards and actively taking prompt action with utmost importance. This ensures children are cared for in a very safe, secure and supportive environment. Children can access the garden and the outdoor play space which has been designed to be child friendly and very safe. The childminder liaises closely with parents and carers, discussing children's individual needs in terms of their safety, allowing them optimal challenge to develop new skills. The use of suitable safety equipment, such as safety gates, to prevent accidents ensures children's safety and well-being are promoted.

The childminder conducts daily checks of both indoor and outdoor play space prior to the children's arrival; this significantly enhances their safety. High priority is given to close supervision at all times and particularly when using the garden. Children develop physical skills of independence through the childminder's superb detailed planning and supervision. Well written policies and procedures with regular discussion and evacuation practice of the premises gives children a clear understanding of the importance of staying safe in an emergency.

Children confidently select toys from the range set out for them, from storage boxes and from those offered to them by the childminder. Children access an extensive range of toys and equipment which is age appropriate, safe and hygienic. The regular checking of furniture, toys and equipment ensures that the children are kept very safe at all times.

Children are very well protected because the childminder has an excellent understanding of child protection policies and procedures; this actively contributes to children's safety and well-being. A written policy which she shares with parents and carers ensures children's welfare is given a high priority. Parents and carers are made aware that the childminder's ultimate responsibility is the safety and welfare of the children she cares for.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy, settled and relaxed in the company of the childminder. They are motivated, eager and actively participate in and enjoy the activities and experiences offered to them. Children are extremely confident and self-assured because of the excellent support and encouragement they receive from the childminder, for example, as they engage in their chosen activity using programmable toys and construction kits. Children are confident and relate very well to each other. The childminder is enthusiastic and experienced, she uses her wealth of experience to plan an extensive range of opportunities and activities, which are organised around particular themes of interest. Children benefit from the childminder's highly skilled ability to balance her time interacting with children effectively and at appropriate moments, for example, leaving children to develop their own drawings and colourings. Younger children benefit from the childminder's excellent understanding of how children under three years develop and learn. Older children have well planned opportunities to promote and develop their existing skills and learning.

Children access a wide range of stimulating activities and experiences, both within and away from the childminding setting, which support the growth of children's development across all areas. During the inspection children are highly motivated and actively engrossed in imaginary play. They use their imagination when using the extensive range of dressing up clothes, including multi-cultural which are of excellent quality and support their play very well. They complete craft activities developing hand eye coordination. They use a variety of equipment, toys and different areas of the available space to create their individual play. Children are animated and excited when adults present take an interest and listen carefully to what they are saying and join in with them in developing their play. Access to very good resources and interaction from the childminder sustains children's interest and enables them to successfully develop their play.

Children's behaviour is excellent. The childminder encourages children's behaviour and achievements through the use of positive praise and encouragement. This positive praise encourages children to persevere and practise skills. The childminder uses positive language to actively encourage children's enjoyment, pride in their achievements and confidence.

Children develop very good large and small physical skills through planned activities. They practise climbing and balancing skills during outdoor play, movement and hand-eye coordination skills during indoor activities, such as craft activities, using construction equipment and completing jigsaws with dexterity. Children experience the wider community as they play outdoors, go for walks, visit local parks and other places of interest. Children are extremely happy and interested in their play. They confidently explore their environment and eagerly interact with adults and each other. Their independence is very much encouraged as they help prepare the table for lunch and tidy away toys and equipment.

Children make excellent progress in all areas of their development. They achieve very well because the childminder uses her knowledge and skills to provide high quality care and education for the children. The childminder has attended several childcare training sessions and makes excellent use of the knowledge she has acquired to help children make progress. She is very dedicated and creates a vibrant and stimulating environment. There is a wealth of toys, resources and displayed materials which children can freely access.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is effectively used and the children's achievements are celebrated and documented in a variety of ways. The childminder records their progress through photographs. Activities are planned and topical themes introduced with excellent use of supporting materials. Children flourish in their communication skills. The childminder promotes their language skills and she constantly talks and listens to children. During play she skilfully uses excellent questioning and echoes young children's speech to encourage them to use language for thinking.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are welcomed and have equal access to all activities and experiences offered which are stimulating and age appropriate. Children play cooperatively together sharing and taking turns with activities and equipment and develop an understanding of others and 'differences'. Children access an extensive range of resources that reflect multi-cultural and disability issues. Children's understanding of others is encouraged through well planned themes and spontaneous activities. Children's natural curiosity and questions are dealt with in a sensitive and considerate manner. The childminder's written equal opportunities policy and practice ensures children's equality of opportunity, including children with additional needs or disabilities.

Children are very happy and content in their play which is seen as children play happily together and chat with one another, the childminder and inspector. Children's self-confidence is evident and is very well promoted as they receive lots of positive praise and encouragement from the childminder, resulting in their enjoyment and contentment. Children's behaviour is excellent, which is as a result of the childminder's support and encouragement. Children are very well behaved because the childminder is clear about the need to promote children's positive behaviour and self-esteem. She has produced a written behaviour management policy which she shares with parents and carers.

Children benefit greatly from the excellent partnership with parents and carers. Children's individual needs and requirements are discussed carefully and in detail with parents and carers prior to placement and on an ongoing basis as they develop new skills and achieve milestones in their development. Successful relationships with parents and carers support the children's development very well. Thank-you cards and letters from parents and carers demonstrate their appreciation and positive care and education the childminder provides their children. Feedback

on children's development and general well-being is given on a regular basis in an informal, verbal way on a daily basis. Parents and carers have the opportunity to view the many photographs of children's activities and observe their child's development. Parents and carers have access to information on what the childminder has to offer, information about Ofsted, the complaints procedure and records. They also have individual folders containing the childminder's policies and procedures. The childminder provides a folder of leaflets on all areas of childcare for parents, such as information on the new car seat laws, illnesses and many others.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are cared for within an excellent very well planned and organised environment. Children access toys, equipment and activities which are planned and prepared prior to the children arriving, enabling children to feel welcome, confident and happy. Children confidently access and are involved in a range of interesting and age appropriate activities both within and away from the childminding setting. The childminder has, and continues to undertake, appropriate training to enhance her existing very good practice and knowledge, enabling her to provide high quality childcare.

All legally required documentation and records relating to the minded children are retained, ensuring that the childminder is able to care for children in a safe and confident manner. Children's individual needs and requirements are well known and discussed with parents and carers prior to their child starting, ensuring their individual needs are well addressed and provided for. Children's safety and well-being are given high priority as the childminder obtains parental consent for several aspects of her care. The childminder holds a current first aid qualification, helping to ensure that children are cared for safely, and that any incidents or accidents are dealt with in an efficient and prompt manner.

Children's care and learning is promoted and their progression monitored by the childminder. Regular evaluations of practice against the outcomes for children, ensure children are extremely well cared for. The childminder is very clear about her role and responsibility in providing a high quality service to the children and their family.

Observations relating to the child's minded day, development and general well-being are fed back to parents and carers in an informal, verbal way as they collect their children at the end of their minded day. The childminder also completes learning and play information sheets for parents enabling them to know how their child has spent their day. Children benefit from the excellent communication between the childminder, parents and carers.

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 fire safety precautions by providing a smoke alarm on the ground floor. The childminder has installed a smoke alarm on the ground floor. This enhances children's safety and well-being.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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