

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	315796
Inspection date	18 October 2007
Inspector	Susan Janet Lee
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 1993. She lives with her husband and two children aged 15 and 19, in a semi-detached property in Farnworth near Bolton.

The lounge, playroom and kitchen on the ground floor and the bathroom and the small front bedroom on the first floor are used for childminding purposes. There is a rear garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently caring for six children. She is able to take children to and collect them from the local primary school. The childminder has completed the Quality First Assurance scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder has attended training relating to food hygiene, healthily eating and nutrition. She has a good understanding of the nutritional value of foods and she records this information

on the menu for parents' information. The children are well nourished and develop an understanding of healthy eating as the childminder provides snacks and meals that are well balanced and nutritious, helping to aid children's growth and development. Photographic documentation shows the children visiting the greengrocers shop and being able to choose what fruits they would like for snack. The children are well hydrated and are able to independently quench their thirst as drinks are readily accessible to them.

The children are cared for in well maintained premises. They stay healthy because the childminder exercises good hygiene practices to minimise the risk of cross-infection. For example, she provides individual towels for the children and she follows good standards of hygiene when changing nappies to help protect the youngest children. The children develop an awareness of personal care routines as they wash their hands at appropriate times of the day. The sick child policy ensures effective measures are in place when children are ill.

The youngest children are able to sleep and rest according to their needs providing a secure environment. They benefit from lots of positive physical contact, eye contact and interaction during personal care routines, such as nappy changing. The children have lots of opportunities to enjoy and develop their physical skills. They are able to learn about their bodies and develop control and coordination as they have access to a good range of outdoor play equipment. The children walk to and from school in the fresh air, play in the garden, and visit the park and other places of interest, all of which contributes to the children's good health and physical development. Photographic documentation shows the children visiting a farm and watching the cows being milked and also enjoying a walk in the woods in a country park.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a warm, homely environment. The childminder organises space well to accommodate separate active and quieter activities. There is a good selection of equipment and furniture available allowing toddlers and older children to play, rest and eat in comfort. The childminder provides a wide range of resources to meet the needs of the children being cared for. She also uses the library and swaps toys with other childminders to further enhance children's play experiences. Toys are stored at child height in the playroom, allowing even the youngest of children to freely choose what they want to play with. This helps children to initiate their own ideas and develop choice and independence. Equipment and resources are cleaned and checked on a regular basis to minimise risks to children.

The childminder takes positive steps to minimise hazards in her home as she conducts regular safety checks and uses safety equipment, such as safety gates and a fireguard. Most areas used for childminding purposes are safe. However, the footpath in the garden poses a hazard to children. The childminder supervises children well enabling them to play safely and independently. She encourages children's understanding in keeping themselves safe through daily routines, clear boundaries and age appropriate explanation and distraction techniques for the youngest children, and discussion. The children practise the emergency escape plan with the childminder so they develop an awareness of what to do in the event of an emergency such as a fire. Older children understand the importance of playing with small toys at the table so they are out of reach of the youngest children.

All required procedures are in place. The childminder has recently attended child protection training and she has a secure understanding of child protection matters and procedures. As a result, children are protected and their welfare is effectively safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder has attended training regarding the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She has developed children's files which chart their developmental progress and enjoyment. Their progress is illustrated with written observations and photographs. The children have access to a wide range of activities and first hand experiences and they are happily engaged and occupied. They also benefit from activities outside the home as the childminder utilises local amenities, such as the park, library, childminder drop in sessions and parent toddler group. Such activities help to widen children's experiences and give them opportunities to socialise with their peers.

The childminder dedicates time to playing and talking to the children. She sits at the same level as the children as they play and supports them well. The children have freedom of movement and are able to explore and investigate freely. The childminder shares close relationships with the children, who are happy, relaxed and secure in her care. She has a good understanding of children's individual personalities and needs and meets their needs well. Younger children begin to find a voice as the childminder nurtures their attempts to communicate. She listens intently when they speak using one or two words and responds in gentle tones, acknowledging the children and helping to reinforce early speech patterns.

The children make connections as they play with puzzles. They develop their hand-eye coordination and fine manipulative skills as they turn and rotate the puzzle pieces until they fit into the correct space. They enjoy being imaginative as they play with small world resources and imaginative toys. The children explore animals and insects. The childminder sings the nursery rhyme 'Incey Wincey Spider' and the children delight in using the spider to do the actions to the song.

The childminder offers lots of positive physical contact by means of hugs and cuddles. The children enjoy a quiet time with the childminder. They sit on her knee and the childminder puts her arms around them to give them a hug. The children respond by snuggling into her.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a consistent approach and manages children's behaviour well. She uses age appropriate strategies to manage minor altercations successfully and ensures the children are well stimulated to help prevent boredom. The childminder acts as a good role model. She is calm and patient and treats the children with individual care and respect. As a result, the children develop an awareness of what is expected of them from an early age. The children receive praise for their efforts and achievements, helping to develop their confidence and self-assurance. They develop a good sense of belonging. On arrival home from nursery, a child takes their shoes and coat off in the hall and happily goes to play with the other children. The children are able to make decisions as they freely choose what they want to play with. They clearly enjoy being with the childminder and they thrive on her interaction and attention.

The children develop an awareness of their local community through trips out and they play with a range of toys that promote positive images of race, culture, gender and disability. The childminder has previous experience of working in partnership with parents and other professionals to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

The childminder has developed a comprehensive portfolio which includes written policies and procedures. This is shown and discussed with parents at the initial meeting. Parents are given copies of the policies and procedures and they sign to confirm they have understood, helping to forge good working relationships and a shared understanding from an early stage. The childminder encourages a gradual settling in procedure to help children feel secure. Effective systems are in place to keep parents informed about their children's activities and development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is an enthusiastic and committed childcare practitioner. She has a high regard for children's well-being as she attends lots of training to keep herself up to date with current legislation and to further develop her childcare practices. The childminder has taken positive steps to ensure a valid first aid certificate is maintained, ensuring she has up to date awareness of what to do in the event of an accident or minor injury.

The record of children's attendance shows that ratios are maintained to promote children's care, learning and play. The childminder organises space, time and resources well to effectively meet children's needs and to ensure that all the children have access to all the resources and activities.

The childminder has developed comprehensive written policies and procedures and these work well in practice to positively promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. The childminder has a good understanding of the records to be maintained for childminding purposes. All required documentation is in place. It is well organised and stored securely to ensure confidentiality.

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 recommendations were agreed in relation to resources that reflect diversity, partnership with parents and documentation.

The childminder has extended resources that reflect diversity, helping the children to develop their awareness of the wider world. The childminder has informed parents of the latest policy updates and she has obtained written parental consent for the administration of medication.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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:

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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):

- minimise hazards to children outdoors (garden path).

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