

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 961239  
**Inspection date** 29 January 2008  
**Inspector** (Kate) Kathryn, Jane Ryder

**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](http://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 1989. She works alongside another registered childminder. Childminding takes place from her co-worker's house in the Failsworth area of Oldham.

The whole of the ground floor of the co-childminder's home, including toilet facilities, is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The co-childminder has a dog, which does not come into contact with minded children, and there is also a separately fenced off area in the rear garden.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and when working with her co-childminder may care for a maximum of eight children under eight years. There are currently seven children on roll who attend various sessions, including before and after and school holidays.

The childminder is a member of Oldham's Early Years Childminder Network.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because the childminder follows appropriate hygiene practices to minimise the risk of cross infection. For example, she assists her co-worker to clean the play areas during operational hours, such as making sure tables and kitchen work surfaces are clean and wiping up any spills. Sleeping children are provided with individual bed linen which further contributes to the prevention of cross infection. Children learn the importance of personal hygiene as the childminder reminds them to wash their hands before sitting down to eat their snack and to brush their teeth after lunch. The childminder has attended first aid training and is able to protect children in the event of an accident. She is knowledgeable about keeping detailed medication and accident records.

The childminder provides children with good opportunities for physical play and exercise. Children frequently visit the local park and have weekly walks to the library. They enjoy the many opportunities to play in the garden, where they can explore space and large equipment, such as climbing frames, a play house and pedal bikes.

Children learn about healthy options as the childminder, in conjunction with her co-worker, provides a range of nutritious snacks, including fruit and bread products. Children sit with the childminder at low level tables and enjoy a relaxed, social atmosphere whilst they eat snacks of toasted bread and fresh fruit. Children independently quench their thirst as they help themselves to their own cup during the day filled from a jug of filtered water. The childminder has attended training to promote healthy eating and holds a healthy eating award certificate.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a homely environment. Areas of the home are effectively organised to provide space for different activities, such as quiet and active play. There is a very good selection of toys and equipment available, allowing children to play, rest and eat in comfort. In the main, toys are stored within children's reach, which enables them to develop independence, select their own play and initiate their own play ideas. Children develop a strong sense of belonging as low level tables and chairs are provided. In addition, they can easily access the coat hooks to hang their outdoor clothes on.

The childminder has a good understanding of safety issues, and alongside her co-worker takes all reasonable steps to ensure the environment is safe and secure for caring for young children. She provides public liability insurance and helps to carry out risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor environments. However, a container of recycling items, such as glass and tin are accessible in the rear garden and this impacts on children's safety. The childminder helps children to develop an awareness of what to do in the event of an emergency, such as a fire, and regularly practises fire drills so that children become familiar with evacuating the premises.

The childminder has a written child protection statement. She has an appropriate awareness about possible signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect and knows to keep written records. She is less clear about the referral procedure but has all the relevant guidance to hand as well as the advice of her co-worker.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the company of the childminder and they are content and relaxed with her. She interacts positively and spends time talking and playing with the children. The childminder sits at the children's level as they play, and supports and guides young children to help them succeed in their activities. She works well with her co-worker to ensure that children are well supervised and experience play opportunities relevant for their age and stage of development. For example, she supervises the younger children, whilst her colleague cares for the older children.

The play environment is organised effectively so that children can move freely and make independent choices about their play. A wide range of exciting activities are planned which results in children being very motivated, interested and involved in their play. For example, they make bubbles as they blow through straws into bowls of water. Young children are well supported as they investigate different activity centres. They are encouraged to persist in trying to push buttons that create sounds. They develop good hand-eye coordination as they twist, turn and even push their hands through holes. Young children have good opportunities to explore sensory play as they feel the different textured items in the basket. Older children enjoy using their imaginations as they pretend they are at the supermarket and fill their baskets with beans and pasta. Children have good opportunities for physical play and have fun playing with a range of equipment in the garden.

The childminder, in conjunction with her co-worker, plans some weekly play activities. Some activities routinely take place, such as weekly trips to the library, toddler groups and to the local garden centre where children enjoy the experience of eating in a café. Other activities often reflect a theme and library books are used to extend ideas. Photographs demonstrate a wide variety of activities. For example, model making, baking, planting and growing seeds, and pond dipping. The childminder plans trips out during the school holidays and children have enjoyed outings to the airport, using a variety of transport on the journey, such as buses, trains and trams.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's needs are well met within the setting as the childminder knows individual needs well and has an appropriate awareness of the different stages of child development. Children are beginning to learn about differences in society and the wider community through play experiences and resources. The childminder helps children to value others as they celebrate less familiar festivals, such as Chinese New Year and children visit the library to find out which animal reflects the year they were born. Children have opportunities to visit places in the local community, such as the park, library and toddler groups. Children feel respected and part of the setting as individual lockers are provided for them to store their personal possessions and pictures.

The childminder speaks positively to children at all times and manages their behaviour by using appropriate methods. Children are learning to act responsibly. For example, a child immediately apologises without adult prompting after catching another child with a small world figure. Children's efforts and participation are rewarded by praise, encouragement and 'well done' stickers from the childminder.

The childminder promotes effective partnerships with parents. For example, she has offered valuable support by taking children for their immunisation injections. Information is shared in a number of ways, such as through informal conversations, written policies and procedures, photographs and development tick-lists. Registration and insurance certificates are displayed, along with basic weekly play plans for parents to see. The childminder has good knowledge regarding keeping a complaints log and alongside her co-worker has prepared a recording system. Parents have recently provided the childminder with letters of commendation, praising her for providing a warm and welcoming environment and for making a difference to their children's development.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder works in a co-minding capacity with another registered childminder. Together, they share most of the roles and responsibilities with regard to the care of children. However, she generally takes the lead for taking children to and from school, taking young children to toddler groups and preparing some snacks. The childminder has attended a number of short training courses since her last inspection and she is currently nearing the completion of a level 3 qualification in home based child care. She is fully aware of informing the regulator about significant changes or events, such as a change of surname.

The childminder plans her time and resources well to ensure children have access to a wide range of interesting activities, both inside and outside the home. The childminder and her co-worker work extremely well together. For example, one supervises an activity suitable for older children, whilst the other plays with the babies. This ensures that children receive good levels of interaction and support. Space is well organised to provide an accessible environment for children, which helps them to develop their independence and enables children to be comfortable and at ease in her care.

Documentation meets the requirements of the National Standards and is shared with parents appropriately. Written agreements are drawn up between parents, the childminder and her co-worker. In addition to the policies and procedures, the childminder has begun to monitor children's development and she keeps individual written records. This keeps parents fully informed about all aspects of their children's care. The childminder's certificate of registration is openly displayed.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the time of the last inspection the childminder was asked to review and update documentation regularly. Contracts between the childminder, her co-minder and parents are periodically reviewed and all other documentation is in place and up to date. This ensures good levels of communication exist between the childminder and the parents.

### **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 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):

- take steps to minimise the hazard relating to the recycling box being accessible to children
- develop a strong understanding of whom to contact if concerned about a child's safety from abuse.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)