

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY252984
Inspection date	06 December 2007
Inspector	Gillian Sutherland
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 2003. She lives with her husband and two children aged 12 and 11 years old in Bebington, Wirral. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house, plus the bathroom upstairs is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding eight children, the majority of whom attend on a part time basis. The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children. The family has a cat, a cockatiel, a dog and fish as their family pets.

The childminder attends local parent toddler groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a wide and varied range of activities and experiences, both indoors and outdoors, which promote being healthy. They develop their physical skills as they access age appropriate toys and resources in the childminder's outdoor play area or as they visit the nearby parks and toddler groups. Here children access the larger play and climbing equipment and in the parks they have the wider open play spaces to run around in.

Outings to places of interest further a field are also included in the daily activity programme and photographic evidence was seen of the children on a visit to Liverpool.

Appropriate documentation is used to record all accidents and parents countersign each entry. Regarding medication, the childminder ensures that parents provide written consent before any medication is given to the children. The childminder has a first aid kit which is easily accessible to her, and which she checks regularly and replenishes items as required.

Children are cared for in a home that is extremely warm and welcoming to them, where they learn about the importance of good health and personal care as part of their daily routine. For example, children are encouraged to wash their hands after playing outside, participating in a messy play activity, and always before snack and mealtimes.

Children learn about healthy eating as the childminder introduces them to healthy foods and snacks. Children's individual dietary needs are made known to the childminder prior to care commencing, and specific needs are recorded on their enrolment form. This ensures that children are looked after in accordance with their parents' wishes and their individual dietary needs are met. The childminder discusses fully the range of snacks and meals that she provides, with parents as part of the pre-admission discussion.

A choice of drinks, including water, is available to children at meal and snack times and is also freely accessible to them at any time during the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play safely whilst in the care of the childminder. The main room downstairs which is used for childminding is long and allows children to freely self select the toys and resources they want to play with, thus promoting freedom of choice. For example they may participate in a quieter, more creative activity using the dining room table whilst others choose to play a different game or watch some appropriate television programme at the other end of the room.

To ensure children's safety, the childminder has taken steps to minimise potential risks or hazards and where appropriate safety equipment has been fitted. Examples of such equipment includes safety gates fitted across the doorways into the lounge and also into the kitchen area and children have no access to hazardous products or substances in the bathroom. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they go up and down the stairs as they go to the toilet and access the hand washing facilities. Children being cared for have no access to the other rooms upstairs.

Smoke alarms have been fitted on each level of the house, and the childminder is aware it is her responsibility to ensure they are checked regularly and in working order. Children practise fire drills, thus ensuring they are aware of evacuation procedures which would be implemented in the event of a fire.

Children are taught about stranger danger and road safety issues as they go out and about with the childminder. The childminder has the contact details of the children with her as they go on their outings, thus enabling her to contact their parent immediately if necessary.

Children are protected as the childminder has a sound knowledge of safeguarding children and she has the appropriate contact details of who she would contact should she have a concern about a child in her care. The childminder has attended child protection training in the past and has devised a written policy which is shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very content, happy and thoroughly enjoy their time at the childminder's home, where they relax and settle quickly into an environment which is very warm and welcoming to them. Children's individual needs are responded to as the childminder recognises the individuality of each child. Children become increasingly independent as they self select the toys they want to play with from the varied range of resources. The toys and resources are all stored in different sized tubs and baskets thus ensuring they can be easily accessed.

All children spend their time purposefully and the childminder ensures they are stimulated and challenged. Their time is organised as the childminder provides them with a varied range of activities to gain their interest. Children are supported in the activity programme as the childminder, is involved and interested in their play and ensures that the activities provided are challenging and fun. For example, she is helping them with their Christmas preparations as they make their cards using a variety of different craft materials.

Children enjoy looking at books with her and the childminder talks to the children as they play with the different resources. She introduces number and letter work into their play activities through counting as they build, story telling and singing of different rhymes.

The childminder provides a range of sensory materials for children to access and these include creating objects made from dough and pastry. Children enjoy painting and some of these are taken home with the children either at the end of the day or at various times throughout the year. For example if children have made a gift for their parents for Easter or for Christmas then these would be kept until they break up for that festivity.

Good adult-child interactions are very supportive of their early communication skills. The children are making good progress in communicating and developing language skills. The childminder is introducing them to the concept of sign language, which ensures they become aware of the different ways people or children communicate with each other.

Children eagerly participate in creative activities and delight in exploring a range of such activities. Examples of creative activities undertaken include making collage pictures and as the children go on walks through the local woods with the childminder they might collect some leaves which when dried may be used for a collage activity. Children's efforts in all activities are praised when appropriate, thus, raising their self-esteem.

The childminder is eager to extend the activity programme depending on each child's abilities and she has begun to keep individual record books, which contain samples of the children's work and also photographs of them participating in some of the very varied range of activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are made to feel very welcome in the childminder's home. Each child's individual needs are fully discussed with parents prior to care commencing and information gained is recorded in their personal file and used when planning the daily activity programme. As a result, the childminder is very knowledgeable about the children in her care and ensures that their individual needs are met.

Children's behaviour is very good. The childminder leads by example, speaking to the children politely and praising them appropriately during their play, thus, raising their self-esteem. The childminder supports children's learning about behaviour through setting clear, consistent boundaries and providing simple, age appropriate explanations. Children's behaviour that is inappropriate is dealt with by the childminder using age appropriate strategies. The childminder always discusses the strategies she uses with parents prior to care commencing, and this results in achieving a consistent approach to managing unwanted behaviour.

Children learn about the different needs of people in their own environment and also in the wider community. For example, the children have some resources which reflect positive images of diversity. Children celebrate a range of different festivals and the childminder has sought knowledge and expertise from friends to introduce this aspect of care into the activity programme.

Children benefit from the positive partnership the childminder has established with parents. Parents receive helpful information about the service as they are given a copy of the childminder's policies and procedures. Details about the children's individual needs are requested before the placement begins, helping the childminder to meet children's individual requirements.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an environment where they are made to feel at home. The childminder fully discusses her policies and daily practices with parents as part of the pre-admission discussion, thus, promoting partnership with parents. The childminder ensures that documentation used complies with the requirements of Ofsted.

The childminder ensures that all documentation relating to childminding is easily accessed and available for inspection. The childminder's registration certificate is on display, a daily register is maintained and includes the times of arrival and departure for each child cared for. Documentation is stored in such a way that it is easily accessible and also ensures confidentiality for the children and their parents. The childminder is fully aware of how long records relating to childminding should be kept.

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 two actions were raised and the childminder was required to ensure the correct adult to child ratios are met at all times and to obtain written permission from parents before administering medication to children. Both of these actions have been met, with positive effect on children's welfare and safety.

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):

- continue to develop children's records to show individual children's progress and to inform the planning for their future development

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