

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY282980
Inspection date	17 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 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 2004. She lives with her husband and two children, aged 13 and eight, in the Grappenhall area of Warrington. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed front and rear garden for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and attends local toddler groups. There are currently seven children on roll, ranging in age from two years to 11 years. The family have a variety of pets, which include two cats, guinea pigs, a rabbit and a parrot.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's physical and emotional health is exceedingly well promoted because the childminder gives utmost priority to healthy eating, fresh air and exercise, independence in personal hygiene and feeling part of the family. The childminder expertly incorporates good health through the routines and activities of every day. For example, children find their toothbrushes and practise their teeth cleaning, first on a toy dinosaur and then on themselves because the childminder

cleverly weaves this into their play. Likewise, subtle reminders, her own example, reference to posters, and constant explanations as to why, all help children to adopt hygienic practices. As a result, children are confident about using the toilet from an early age, wash and thoroughly dry their hands on individual hand towels after messy activities and using the toilet, take regular drinks from their water bottles and wipe their hands and faces after lunch. Throughout, the childminder offers help, emotional support and explanation, so that children are inspired and join in enthusiastically with hygiene routines.

Children enjoy regular daily exercise because they walk to school and nursery in all weathers and they play outside both at the front and rear of the house. They ride on cars, tricycles and scooters on the front paved area and play on the decking and grass at the back when it is dry. They also walk along the canal and visit parks and farms to use climbing apparatus and experience nature. All this exercise improves their coordination and promotes their physical health. The indoor accommodation promotes children's health very well because it is warm, spotlessly clean, varied and welcoming.

Procedures and documentation are highly effective in supporting children's health. First aid supplies are ready to use and the childminder has an up to date paediatric first aid qualification. She keeps detailed written parental consent for all medications given and records of all accidents and medication administered. Information about any special dietary needs is sought through enrolment forms at the beginning of each placement, refrigerator temperatures are monitored and logged, and the week's menu is displayed and discussed. As a result, children's health is robustly supported and information about it is meticulously shared with parents through home diaries.

Children enjoy an excellent diet, incorporating organic and home made foods and a wealth of varied fruits, vegetables, soups, dips and main meals. Varied sources of carbohydrate include bread sticks, wholemeal bread, pita and pasta, while proteins include eggs and goats cheese. Children sit at a table for meals and are successfully encouraged to try tasting many new flavours, some of which they have had a part in making themselves, such as fruit kebabs. Sugars are minimised, for example, by putting extra fruit into cake recipes. As a result, children are very well nourished and are willing to try diverse foods.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely safe in the care of the childminder because she meticulously plans and provides for safety both indoors and outdoors. The house has been expertly adapted so that the play room and kitchen incorporate a toilet area and provide ample safe play space, supplemented by use of the lounge/diner and conservatory for specific activities in a different environment. There is room for a small low table and chairs for little ones to sit at in the kitchen as well as ample floor space and large table areas for exploratory, construction, and messy play. The childminder ensures that she can see or hear children wherever they are and the wealth of resources are tidily and accessibly stored in labelled baskets at child height so that children can easily put away toys before choosing another game. Throughout the day, the childminder is highly vigilant and takes all available opportunities to teach children about safety issues. For example, as pre-school children role play with a toy kettle and dolls, she reminds them not to let the babies near the kettle because the water will be boiling hot and scald them.

Documentation is excellent and supports children's safety exceedingly well. There are risk assessment documents used for use of the home and garden, for trips and for contingencies,

such as building work in progress on the house. This means that all eventualities are anticipated and safe practices adopted. For example, simple outdoor play rules include advice not to play on the decking when it is wet, not to lift the tunnels and tents off the ground, not to push little ones too hard on the swings and reminders that only one child should be on the trampoline at a time. Children are also kept safe in the event of an emergency because the childminder has robust plans and procedures ready to use. For example, regular evacuations from the house are practised and logged, so that children are competent and know what to do. Similarly, a pack of child details with photographs are stored near the exit and carried on trips, along with a first aid kit and contact details for the childminder's reserve minders, so that emergency services or hospitals could access all necessary information about the children if an emergency occurred.

Children are very well protected from abuse because the childminder has an excellent and up to date knowledge of safeguarding procedures and the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. She keeps all up to date reference materials in a file and has safety and child protection policies which parents sign. She is experienced and professional in working sensitively with children, parents, families and social services, to ensure that children are properly protected and supported where there are concerns for their welfare. She knows how to minimise the possibility of allegations being made against her and knows what to do if an allegation were to be made against her.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are exceptionally happy and secure and are making outstanding progress because the childminder is well-prepared, dynamic and highly skilled at providing rich, varied and imaginative play experiences. She fully understands each aspect of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the six areas of learning and provides a wealth of activities which enhance all aspects of children's development. She plans general themes, such as autumn, and then links various activities to these. For example, children collect leaves one day and when they have all been dried out, they play a discovery game, feeling inside the bag of leaves to 'discover' hidden toys and objects to discuss. They also make seed bird feeders and hang them in the garden, watching the birds coming to eat from them on subsequent days. The childminder is dynamic and inspiring, never missing opportunities to help children enjoy remembering and making links between their many experiences. For example, they talk about how they tracked a heron along the canal the other day and the diverse animals they saw at the safari park they visited. These conversations inspire and link with their role play, music making, story choices and art work. At the same time, they help children make very rapid progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their sense of time and place.

Individual children's progress is significantly enhanced because the childminder identifies and documents the steps each one needs to take in their learning. She makes excellent assessments and progress records, using photographs and written evidence of what children can do. She consistently attends to each child, talking, questioning, praising and reassuring them as they play, so that they receive optimal challenge and are exceptionally secure. For example, as two and three-year-olds role play with the dolls, she talks to them about potty training, milk feeds, story times and sleep positions, relating this to their new siblings, so that they are helped to understand and accept the attention their new siblings are getting at home. Each child enjoys a rich mix of outdoor, indoor, messy, craft, constructive and imaginary play, interspersed with numerous trips to museums, parks and places of interest. They are involved in setting up, cleaning, maintaining and clearing away activities too, so that they understand how things

work and can function as a considerate group. Throughout their day, they are exceptionally happy, often spontaneously singing, laughing, talking and making music in the positive, nurturing atmosphere which the childminder consistently creates.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children in the setting have developed an outstanding sense of belonging and feel extremely secure because the childminder creates a family based, exceptionally kind and nurturing environment where every child feels truly special. Photographs of every child, their family and the childminder's own family are displayed on the refrigerator door and frequently referred to throughout the day. In addition, children are reassured about who is coming to collect them and at what time. Every child is fully included and their individual needs and circumstances are taken into account and sensitively tackled through discussion and reminders, reassurance and humour.

Children are also taught and encouraged to consider each other. For example, the older ones have devised a behaviour rules poster which they have all decorated and signed with their hand prints and photographs agreeing to share and look out for each other. This is seen in practice as children get out the coats and shoes from the basket for their friends and help them get ready to go outside. Understandable links are made between home and the setting, so that children understand what behaviour is expected of them. For example, children are allowed to take home a favourite toy or book because they have been well behaved at handover time after a period of unwanted behaviour. Children are also surrounded by positive images of diverse cultures and different disabilities, while some of their activities help them respect, accept and help anyone who is in need. This atmosphere and ethos comes clearly from the childminder, so that children quickly stop any selfish behaviour when they remember that it makes the childminder unhappy.

Children's needs are met through excellent partnership with parents. The childminder offers first class verbal and written feedback to them. Children frequently take things home that they have made and home diaries for under threes detail news and important information about the child's day. In addition, newsletters are frequently sent out, questionnaires are periodically used to obtain parental feedback and a clear notice board shows parents routine information, insurances, menus and certificates. Relationships are professional, but warm, with full policies and procedures given to parents at the start of every placement and detailed consent forms for aspects, such as use of photographs. Detailed parent reference letters recently written applaud everything the childminder does, mentioning very high standards in health and safety, food, record keeping, play resources and routines. They also attribute their children's happiness, contentment, independence, good behaviour and rapid progress to her expert service.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder has a superior regard for the well-being of all children and is actively building upon her knowledge and experience over time. She has attended numerous training courses over recent years and continues to seek out up to date ideas and information from web based and reputable national sources to incorporate into her service. She maintains an impressive portfolio of training courses relevant to child care and has nursery nurse training. She writes regular critical evaluations of her service under the 'Every child matters' government agenda

and strives to improve children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

The childminder is exceptionally well organised and uses her skills in this area to support her childminding. She prepares food, written plans and progress records when children are not present, so that she is able to spend all her time in direct contact with children. She has produced a photographic library system showing the toys and resources available, so that children can choose things for the next day from the many supplies that cannot all be stored accessibly downstairs. Her inspiring focus upon the children's needs results in all routines of the day being turned into child centred opportunities for fun and learning. As a result, children are very independent, sociable, and can help each other. Detailed weekly planning and photograph albums of activities undertaken are used to ensure that variety and continuity are balanced. This enables children to have a wealth of interconnected experiences, be spontaneous, and have time to review and develop further challenges from the things that they have enjoyed and learnt.

Policies and procedures have been written for all aspects of the service and the National Standards and these are shown and given to parents. Alongside these are a series of consents for items, such as the keeping of progress records, sharing of information with other child care settings, involvement with pets and animals, walking to the childminder's home independently from high school, and emergency procedures. Together, these form detailed and individual parental agreements where every eventuality has been considered to enable a first class service to be given to every family.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There was one recommendation made at the inspection in September 2004. This concerned safety in the main bedroom because of a mirror there. It was confirmed from the manufacturer's documentation that the glass is in fact safety glass, but the upstairs rooms are no longer used for childminding purposes. Children's safety is therefore assured.

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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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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