

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY285106
Inspection date	29 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 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 2004. She lives with her husband and son, aged six, in Grappenhall, Warrington. There are 13 children presently on roll. The whole of the childminder's house is available for childminding although the downstairs is more usually used and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and has a car available for other trips. The family has a cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is good because the childminder is proactive about providing advice and support to children so that they can learn to live healthily. This includes teaching babies and toddlers to use wipes and tissues. Children also learn to wash their hands before eating meals and after playing outside or using the toilet, prompted by a sign at their height in the toilet. Healthy snacks and meals are offered in accordance with the childminder's nutrition policy. Daily fresh air and exercise are offered in all weathers and children are quickly learning to play their part in looking after their own health and hygiene. They do this by enjoying role play and

real experiences of growing vegetables and fruit, food tasting and preparing healthy foods. The childminder also keeps a clean home and minimises cross infection by using clean bedding, towels and employing hygienic nappy changing procedures.

Children are well protected from becoming ill through good sickness policies and procedures to ensure this. First aid supplies are ready to use and the childminder has food hygiene and paediatric first aid qualifications. She keeps written parental consent for emergencies and for all medications given, including the administration of first aid and temperature reducing medication if required. Parents sign all records to acknowledge each entry indicating that they have been fully informed in every case.

Children enjoy a healthy balanced diet, details of which are available to parents in the form of sample menus in the childminder's portfolio. Plenty of fruit, vegetables and good quality meat and fish are used. Small treats, such as crisps, or plain biscuits are occasionally enjoyed if parents are in agreement with this. None of the children currently attending have dietary needs or allergies, but information about this is sought through enrolment forms at the beginning of each placement and the childminder has a good understanding of food intolerances and food allergies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe and secure both indoors and outdoors because the childminder places importance upon this area of her responsibilities, has written a safety policy and is committed to teaching children how to keep themselves safe. The indoors is made safe for children through use of safety gates, locked exits, cupboard locks where dangerous substances are stored, hearth guards, accessible radiators on low and regular logs to check fire detection equipment. Children enjoy large amounts of varied and safe floor and table top play space utilising all the downstairs of the house. The kitchen is safe for children to use so that they are involved in all aspects of the daily routine, while ample toys and resources are available for children to choose, set up and use, both in the play room and the lounge. Outdoors, there are verbally agreed safe arrangements for playing on the guarded large trampoline, but the glass in the shed poses a hazard to children if it is broken during play. Children are taught how to walk near roads and canals safely and height appropriate car seats and boosters are used when children are travelling by car.

Children are very safe in an emergency because contingency plans are thorough. Emergency escape plans, back up plans and lost and uncollected child policies are written and known in detail. The children already know the two back up childminders who would come to care for them if an emergency befell this childminder and children's contact details and a first aid kit are always carried by the childminder. Children are well protected from abuse because the childminder is confident that she is able to put appropriate child protection procedures into practice if necessary. She has a child protection policy which is communicated to parents and she also knows what to do if an allegation of abuse were to be made against her.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and secure and are making positive relationships because the childminder is welcoming, enthusiastic, well-prepared and she actively encourages children to share and cooperate together with her. She has developed an excellent understanding of how children

learn through courses, study and experience and she writes individual assessments and activity plans to help children to make the next steps in their learning and development. For example, she is currently helping different individual children to learn to play together with others, to walk and to recognise days of the week, more numbers and colours, and to toilet train. To achieve this, she is providing suitable resources and talks to children as they play about what she wants them to learn next. She extends and develops what they are naturally interested in, so that the sounds of planes overhead or the arrival of the post are all used as fun opportunities to develop understanding of how things work.

Children really enjoy playing with varied toys, such as construction toys, cars, trains and the domestic role play kitchen. The childminder builds upon this, for example, getting out the play ironing board and washing machine if children are playing with the dolls. Equally, she may also stand back and allow children to develop their own imaginative play ideas, noticing what children know and can do. Natural objects are also used in the form of treasure baskets, which the childminder has put together for children to handle and experience a variety of textures. Equipment to encourage babies to walk is in use and children's fascination with motion and flight is being capitalised upon by creation of car slides and marble runs so that children do not resort to throwing toys. As a result, children quickly learn and develop because they are so well stimulated. The childminder also makes sure that she knows what individual children are learning about in all the venues they attend and supports the continuation of this through providing relevant, but different activities. She completes individual progress records for younger children, but has not started yet to complete these with all children in attendance.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children in the setting have developed a strong sense of belonging and feel extremely secure because the childminder creates a home from home atmosphere where each child's individual needs are carefully considered. Having fun is high on the agenda, but so are good manners and respect for each other's feelings and possessions and the childminder's home and its contents. Children have equal opportunities to access all toys without any gender bias and positive images of disability and various cultures are put across through discussion, books, crafts, toys and appropriate television programmes. As a result, children care about each other and take responsibility for their play environment. They do not touch the ornaments or stand on the furniture. Instead, they enjoy the attention, praise and encouragement that they get when they play and cooperate well together.

Children's needs are met well because partnership with parents is successful. The childminder is open and communicative with parents and spends time giving and receiving effective feedback from them. Daily routine diaries are completed if parents find this useful and an incident record is used if there are significant incidents of unwanted behaviour. A full set of policies and consents are made available to parents to give them useful details about how children will be cared for under the National Standards. There are good policies for equal opportunities, particular needs, behaviour, partnership with parents and complaints. All of these are given to parents, along with details about how to contact Ofsted. Parents find the service child centred and superior and feel that they too are supported in their parenting role.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of all children and is building upon her child care knowledge and experience over time. She has completed numerous relevant training courses and continues to attend relevant training courses, for example, on healthy lifestyles, creative crafts, observing children, 'Birth to three matters' and celebrating diversity. She is undertaking a National Vocational Qualification in child care to level four and is able to undertake detailed analytical observations upon children in her care from which she can successfully plan and provide for individual children's next steps. The childminder is also enthusiastic about the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly for the planning and linking of all areas of children's experience and the documentation of their progress.

The childminder is well organised, having a clear sense of purpose and direction and using her time and resources very well to support children's care, learning and play. The play space and resources themselves are accessible and children can access and make good use of them. The childminder has written aims for her service and ensures that children can participate alongside her in all the routines of the day so that they are learning about their own safety and health and are acquiring good social skills. Good written child details, consent forms and contracts are detailed and well organised so that they are quick and easy to refer to. This ensures that all children have their individual needs met and are well stimulated.

The childminder's policies and procedures work very well in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. There are clear and relevant policies on all aspects of the National Standards and all records of medication, accidents and incidents are organised and accessible. However, the daily register is not always completed as children actually arrive and depart which means that it could not be relied upon in the event of an emergency.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two recommendations made at the last inspection in 2005. The childminder needed to make the hearth in the lounge safe, which has been effectively undertaken using close fitting foam. Secondly, written parental consent for any necessary emergency medical treatment was needed for each child on roll. This has been obtained, along with other necessary consents, using consent forms designed by the childminder and signed as appropriate by parents. These improvements secure children safety in the setting and their health in the event of any emergency.

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

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):

- make the glass in the garden storage shed safe
- ensure that the daily register is accurate and up to date at all times.

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