

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131975
Inspection date	02 January 2008
Inspector	Christine Stimson
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 May 1995. She lives with her partner and two adult children in a house in New Malden. Her home is located in a residential area within walking distance of a mainline station, a park and local schools. All areas of the home are used for childminding, although children generally play in the downstairs part of the home. One of the bedrooms is used for children to rest in travel cots and there is an upstairs bathroom for childrens' use. A fully enclosed back garden is available for outdoor play; the family have a pet cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding five children on a part time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have opportunities for physical exercise whilst in the childminder's care. They regularly visit the park across the road where they use playground equipment, practise their ball skills and chase after each other, running off excess energy. Regular attendance at toddler groups

encourages children to practise their pedalling and manoeuvring skills on tricycles and sit and ride cars. Children's fine motor skills are developed as they are given opportunities to use paint brushes, crayons, glue sticks and other one handed tools during their regular art and craft sessions within the childminder's home and at toddler groups.

Parents provide the food for their children and the childminder makes sure it is re-heated according to parents wishes. Meal and snack times are social occasions with the childminder sitting alongside the children, chatting about events and encouraging them to eat the food provided. The childminder makes sure children's drink beakers are refreshed frequently to prevent them from becoming thirsty.

The childminder is first aid qualified and this, together with a well stocked first aid box and prior consent to take children to hospital in an emergency ensures children's health is supported. Children are beginning to understand about the importance of good hygiene practice as the childminder has established routine hand washing prior to eating, after being in the garden, after messy play and after children have used the toilet. Older children are provided with their own hand towels whilst younger children dry their hands on paper towel. This helps reduce the risk of cross infection.

The childminder has a system of recording any medication administered to children and a system to record accidents that happen to children whilst in her care. This includes a procedure to ensure parents are informed on the day. This supports children health and well being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

All areas of the childminder's home are clean, well maintained and suitable for children. Children play in the downstairs part of the home using the front and back rooms at will. Toys are stored in boxes on the floors, enabling children to self-select items that interest them. A suitable range of toys and resources are available to children and the childminder joins them in their play if her presence is required.

The childminder has taken steps to ensure her home is safe for children; for example, she covers all accessible sockets, keeps dangerous substances out of the reach of children and makes sure her premises is secure. The childminder has devised an emergency escape plan for her home and practises this with the children periodically. This enables children to learn how to leave the premises quickly and safely. The childminder's home is protected by smoke alarms and there is a fire blanket in the kitchen. However, this is not hanging according to the manufacturers instructions.

If there is a concern relating to child protection issues the childminder is aware of the action to be taken and has guidelines in place to help her in this task. However, these guidelines were issued a while ago and need to be brought up to date in order to fully protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder makes sure children take part in a variety of activities each week. They are taken on regular outings to toddler groups; in the holidays they go further a-field to museums, aquariums and farms. Children are also regular visitors to local parks. These outings give children

confidence to explore areas not familiar to them and to meet other children of a similar age. There is photo evidence of children on outings to farms, having picnics and attending other children's birthday parties. Photos also show children proudly standing by their art work displayed in the childminder's home. This shows the childminder values the children's work, which boosts their self-esteem.

The childminder has developed close relationships with the children in her care and spends time playing with them, extending their vocabulary by chatting to them about their experiences; for example, children sit having their lunch and discuss with the childminder whether cats receive any presents from Father Christmas.

Children's independence is encouraged as the childminder gives children responsibilities appropriate for their age; for example, children collected from school who have reading as homework read their books to the little ones, who make an appreciative audience. Younger children are encouraged to pick up their toys before meal times, which helps them develop a respect for the resources being used.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of their community by being taken out and about within the local area and by attending various toddler groups on a regular basis. Here children mix with others, some of whom are from different cultures. Resources within the childminder's home help children to appreciate diversity as they play with dolls of different genders and from various ethnic groups. Books children access have positive images of people with disabilities and children enjoy reading these with the childminder.

The childminder makes sure she meets all the children's individual needs. She talks to parents about this prior to children starting with her and makes notes of their needs on child record forms. Children behave well, enjoy their time at the childminder's home and are interested in the activities provided. A calm constructive atmosphere is established with children busy playing with toys that interest them. Children are encouraged to understand right from wrong and are made aware of the childminder's expectations. She does this by talking to those children who have understanding, reminding them of her boundaries. Younger children learn as the childminder uses a firmer tone of voice with them or uses distraction to stop them from coming to harm.

Parents and the childminder enjoy good relationships. The childminder does not keep a daily diary for the children in her care, preferring to spend time at the end of the day talking to parents about their child's day. Parents are asked to inform the childminder if their children have not slept well so she can gauge when to let them rest; this ensures continuity of care. The childminder helps children to settle in by initially allowing the parent to accompany their child in her home for about half an hour and then encourages them to leave their child in her care for an hour whilst they go shopping. The hours are extended day by day and this procedure usually takes place a week before placement.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is well organised and provides a range of play opportunities for children. A routine has been established to ensure children have time for active play and relaxation according

to their needs or inclination. They benefit from a routine that accommodates individual needs, in a home that is organised and where they are cared for by a skilled and experienced childminder.

All records and regulatory documentation is organised so that it assists the childminder in providing a good standard of care. However, the daily attendance record shows children's contracted hours rather than their actual attendance hours. This means it is not an accurate record of children's attendance. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection three recommendations were made to improve the care for children. Since then good progress has been made. Children's health is now supported as the childminder has updated her first aid qualification by attending a 12 hour course in line with the requirements in the National Standards. The childminder has also requested written permission from parents to take children in her car; this supports children's well being. Parents are now informed verbally about the activities their children participate in. Outings that involve children going further a-field to places like farms, aquariums and museums are listed on the contracts signed by parents to show they have been informed.

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):

- ensure the fire blanket in the kitchen is accessible at all times
- make sure children's accurate times of arrival and departure are recorded in the attendance register.

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