

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	160874
Inspection date	27 March 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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children, aged seven and eleven, in a house in New Malden. The whole of the premises are used for childminding; children play and rest in the downstairs areas and use the bathroom facilities in the upper part of the house. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding four children on a part-time basis. She walks and drives to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends local parent toddler groups, the library and regularly visits local parks, farms and zoos. The childminder is a member of the local childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have plenty of opportunities for physical exercise both indoors and out. They spontaneously dance and sing along to music tapes or radio stations playing softly in the

background. Children take part in physical activity by using apparatus in the childminder's garden, choosing from a selection of tents, tunnels, skipping ropes, bats, balls, hoops and a small trampoline. They are regularly taken to toddler groups where they acquire physical skills on tricycles and sit-and-ride cars. Children's fine motor skills are developing well through regular art and craft activities, both in the childminder's home and at toddler groups.

The childminder has devised a sick child policy that is shared with parents and this makes it clear she will not care for children who are sick, ill or infectious. This limits the spread of infection. Children who have minor accidents whilst in the care of the childminder have their injuries treated effectively, as the childminder has an up-to-date first aid qualification and maintains well stocked first aid boxes, one for indoors and one for outings. The childminder ensures all parents give written permission to take their children to hospital in an emergency, which prevents any delay in treating a child.

Children's health is supported as the childminder has an awareness of good hygiene practice. For example, she sprays the nappy changing mat after each use with an antibacterial cleanser. Children wash their hands after using the toilet, before meals and after messy play. Paper towels are provided for children to dry their hands and this helps to reduce the risk of cross-infection.

Children's health is important to the childminder. She makes sure children receive the food parents provide for them, re-heated according to instructions. Children are provided with fruit snacks each morning and plenty of drinks throughout the day to stop them becoming thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a home that is clean and where there is plenty of space for children to play. Both the front and back rooms are used by children and toys are stored in boxes at child height, enabling them to make choices in their play. The childminder checks all toys and equipment regularly to ensure these are maintained in a clean and safe condition. The fully enclosed garden is suitable for children; sheds are kept locked and there is plenty of grass for children to play on.

The childminder has taken steps to ensure her home is safe for children. Smoke alarms are in working order, there is a fire blanket in the kitchen, and regular practice of the evacuation procedure ensures children learn how to leave the premises quickly and safely. The childminder uses gates to prevent children from accessing the stairs unsupervised and ensures electric sockets are covered. However, sharp knives are kept in a drawer in the kitchen at child height; this compromises children's safety.

Children's welfare is protected by the childminder's understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow if she has a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have regular opportunities to take part in art and craft activities. They explore their senses whilst playing with play dough, jelly and shaving foam and have opportunities to use glue sticks, paint brushes and pencils. Children enjoy cooking sessions with the childminder; photographs show them stirring ingredients into large bowls using wooden spoons.

Children are taken out and about by the childminder. Whilst looking at photographs of their recent zoo trip, children recalled being scared by the lion roaring, talked about the dragon puppet show they attended, and laughed about the elephant squirting water from his trunk. Children regularly attend toddler groups with the childminder, where they gain confidence amongst other children and adults.

Children have access to play materials that encourage their development, such as puzzles, construction kits, dolls and books. Children are happy and relaxed in the childminder's care and benefit from conversations with the childminder, who extends their vocabulary and gives them time to express themselves. Children are confident in the childminder's care. They are encouraged to be independent, helping the childminder to clear away toys after they have played with them and feeding themselves whilst sitting at the table.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of the local community and wider society. The childminder takes them to parent and toddler groups and other childminders' homes, where they play with other minded children. She regularly takes children on visits to the local park, farm and zoo, during which they meet people from other cultures and of all abilities. The childminder has a limited range of resources that represent people of different cultures and occasionally uses the local toy library, borrowing dolls that represent people from various cultures. However, there are no positive images of people with disabilities. The childminder is aware this is an area she needs to improve on.

Children are well behaved and are given clear explanations about boundaries within the home. Praise is freely given for positive behaviour and this reinforces children's confidence. The childminder is skilled at defusing situations and offers distraction to younger children to avoid inappropriate behaviour getting out of hand. Older children are encouraged to develop a positive approach to helping others, as the childminder gives them small responsibilities for younger children. They also help set and clear the table at meal times. All children are encouraged to help tidy away their toys, and, in the summer, they help the childminder wash dolls and the outside play equipment.

Good communication between parents and the childminder ensures consistency of care. The childminder prepares a daily diary for children under the age of three which she shares with parents. The childminder takes time to talk to parents each day, exchanging relevant information to ensure continuity of care. Completed questionnaires show that parents are very positive about the care the childminder provides for their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder organises her documentation well and uses it effectively to support the welfare of the children. Parents are informed of all aspects of the provision and relevant permissions are sought. For example, consent is in place for all children to have photos taken, sun cream applied and to travel in the childminder's car. Children's personal details are kept up-to-date and stored confidentially. The childminder has clear procedures for recording necessary information, such as attendance and medication given to children.

The childminder is aware of how to keep children safe and healthy, but needs to give attention to the safe storage of sharp knives in the kitchen area. The childminder provides children with plenty of good quality toys, but resources relating to diversity are limited. The daily routine is organised around the needs of the children and offers time for relaxation, outings and active play. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, a recommendation was raised to provide children with an appropriate range of activities and resources to teach them about people's differences and similarities, including people with disabilities or special needs. Since then some progress has been made; the childminder has some ethnic dressing up clothes in her resources and a few books showing people from different cultures. She occasionally uses the local toy library, borrowing dolls that represent people from various cultures. However, there are still no resources that show images of people with disabilities. As a result, a recommendation has been raised for the purpose of this inspection.

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):

- make sure children cannot access the sharp knives in the kitchen
- continue to develop resources and activities that teach children about diversity.

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