

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	500241
Inspection date	26 November 2007
Inspector	Mary Kilroy
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 1994. She lives with her adult son. The family live in Manchester. The whole ground floor and the upstairs bathroom of the childminder's house are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed front garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five. She walks to local schools to take and collect children and attends carer and toddler groups.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She holds a certificate in Early Years Education and is a support childminder.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are provided with a choice of healthy and nutritious meals to help them to grow. These comply with individual dietary requirements, which are noted and are regularly reviewed to

keep children healthy. The childminder provides for individual dietary needs and she uses her inclusion checklist to ensure all children's needs are met very well. Children are encouraged to try new tastes and are helped to make healthy choices, and older children can access fresh drinking water freely. Snacks include fresh and dried fruit and the childminder makes it interesting by describing 'juicy tasty apples' and discussing why drinking water is good for you. Children are reminded to drink frequently after strenuous exercise and during hot weather. Children too young to ask are regularly offered drinks to ensure they are well hydrated. They gain independence and a sense of belonging from helping to cook porridge and enjoy preparing snacks, and the childminder knows that this encourages them to be interested in their food and eat well.

All the children are good eaters and the childminder states that they 'Will try everything.' They enjoy trying different tastes and textures and experimenting with food, such as trying dried fruit in the porridge. The childminder recognises that children eat better with others and makes mealtimes a happy, social occasion. Older children discuss individual dietary requirements with her and are beginning to understand that others have different requirements for health, religious or cultural reasons. The childminder allows for personal choices and knows individual children's likes and dislikes very well.

Children are beginning to understand about the importance of good personal hygiene routines to keep themselves healthy. They discuss washing hands after using the toilet and playing out, and before setting the table and preparing food. They know why they need to use a tissue and understand that germs need to be trapped in the tissue and disposed of quickly. Children are learning that hands need to go over mouths when coughing. They see a clean home and good practices and are developing good patterns and routines to follow to remain healthy. However, the childminder was not fully aware of the circumstances in which food poisoning is a notifiable disease. Children in nappies wash their hands with the childminder after each change to help them to establish good practices for the future. Individual personal care items help to create a sense of emotional well-being and belonging. Children use individual utensils, such as cups and have their own towels and know and recognise their own items. This further develops their understanding of how to prevent the spread of infection.

Children enjoy outside play and physical exercise through playing in the front garden, on large apparatus in local parks and during visits to under fives' groups and on nature walks. This develops children's strength, confidence and coordination. The childminder talks to children about what they need to have to be healthy and they know that fresh air and exercise help them to remain so.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, safe, welcoming environment. They have space to move around in comfort in the well organised and stimulating surroundings. Children are learning about staying safe through routines, discussion, songs and activities. Older children's need for privacy in the bathroom is respected to encourage their self-help skills. The childminder has a good balance of child sized and adult furniture; resources and rooms are well planned to meet children's needs.

Children stay safe as the childminder has good risk assessments which cover all areas of the provision and the premises, inside and out, being checked daily for safety. All age appropriate safety equipment, such as high chairs and reins, are in place and used inside and on outings.

Children stay safe as the childminder has a secure and effective policy for emergency evacuation which is practised with them and they are confident when it is used. Older children know and understand the procedure and are beginning to take some responsibility for their own safety by participating and through discussion afterwards. Children benefit from sleeping downstairs as part of the evacuation plan, which has an effective fire escape route, agreed with the fire department. Sleeping children remain safe through the vigilance of the childminder, who regularly checks them. Very young children know why they need to wear safety helmets when riding their bikes. Children benefit from gentle reminders and prompts from the childminder to 'be very careful' and 'climb safely on the boxes'. They practise road safety skills using cars, trains and car mats and know what goes on the road and the pavement.

Children understand about road safety at an appropriate level. Those too young to understand the Green Cross Code learn the simple rules when outside, such as holding hands, looking and listening, standing safely on the pavement and taking turns to press the crossing button. Inside, they know rules around safety, such as not to climb on the table and to play carefully with small items, keeping them away from mobile babies. Children know about people who help them in the local area, such as policemen and the crossing patrol. They are learning about stranger danger at an age appropriate level to help them to keep safe. The childminder checks the identity of callers before admitting them and older children understand that they should not open the front door by themselves.

The childminder has good understanding of Safeguarding children issues and updates her policies and procedures in line with the flowchart. She demonstrates good understanding of signs and symptoms of non-accidental injury to children. Good relationships built between the childminder and parents ensure that sensitive issues can be discussed more easily and parents are good at passing on relevant information that may affect their child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are stimulated and enthusiastic about their play activities and are given good choices and excellent opportunities to learn in all areas of play. Superb and thorough planning ensures that all children's needs are met well and they are very good learners. The childminder demonstrates sound and thorough understanding of children's development and knows that they learn best through first hand experiences. She states that she loves the 'Birth to three matters' framework and her parents love it, too. Parents are provided with a spare copy of the framework during the settling in period and use it at home, also, at their request. There is a good balance of adult led and child initiated activities. The childminder is skilled in gauging the degree of support needed and intervenes well to extend play and offer suggestions. Children are encouraged to investigate, explore and discuss their stimulating surroundings. The childminder provides a rich, varied, flexible environment where children feel valued and are confident to take the play activity in whatever direction they choose. Young children count naturally throughout the daily routine, such as at snack time, counting 'three plums for three girls.'

Children are helped to make very rapid progress as the childminder encourages positive attitudes to learning and education and values all children's contributions. Play activities flow seamlessly into food preparation, baking and small household tasks, such as enjoying 'Goldilocks and the three bears' story, which the childminder makes great fun for children, before making morning porridge together. They use good mathematical language as they measure, pour and estimate

volume and quantity. Children can identify shape, such as the round bowls and enjoy saying 'Round and round and round!'

The childminder skilfully introduces new words and rich language to extend children's vocabulary and they are animated and clear talkers. They have excellent opportunities to enjoy a wide range of songs and stories and actively and enthusiastically contribute using props and puppets, such as in the 'Very Hungry caterpillar' story. The childminder enhances all aspects of the learning environment and makes it great fun, she improvises well, such as placing a toy bird on top of a high plant whilst singing a lovely version of 'I saw a bird at the top of the tree.'

The childminder uses excellent age appropriate monthly themes and introduces lots of sharing and caring family activities when children are very young or newly settling in. Good planning and everything linking to the 'Birth to three matters' framework ensures that all children's needs are met well and excellent partnership with parents ensures that they are learning rapidly.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's self-esteem and confidence is extremely good as the childminder uses opportunities, such as in the children's personal hygiene routines, to talk admiringly of differences in skin colour and texture of hair. Children learn to value and respect differences as the childminder provides toys, activities and artefacts that truly reflect society and show only positive images of all members of the community that make it up. They take part in activities that celebrate diversity. Children naturally and spontaneously hug and kiss one another and the childminder and openly discuss how they are feeling. They thoroughly enjoy being together. They discuss likes and dislikes in all areas and this leads on to people's different tastes and then to activities on valuing differences and stimulating role play. The childminder has completed inclusion training and uses this, and an inclusion checklist, to excellent effect to ensure that all children's individual needs are met to an exceptionally high standard throughout the provision. Children are starting to sign with the childminder and are, thus, learning that there are many ways to communicate effectively.

The childminder uses praise and encouragement effectively and consequently children feel safe to try out new skills, ask for help and experiment independently. The childminder is consistent and uses only positive methods of managing children's behaviour. Children understand the clear boundaries and simple rules in her home and are well behaved and happy. They understand what is expected of them and help to tidy up, do small household tasks and are learning to take turns and care for one another. Stimulating activities skilfully implemented by the childminder ensures that children are absorbed in their play and this helps them to behave well.

Children have first class opportunities to learn about the natural and wider worlds. The childminder provides a wealth of opportunities and a rich, varied and imaginative environment where all children make very rapid progress. Children learn about the wider world through artefacts, wall hangings, pictures from around the world and an inflatable globe. There are lots of opportunities to celebrate festivals, such as Diwali, handle and learn about Buddha and sample fruits from around the world. Children talk knowledgeably about crocodiles, reptiles and pet amphibians and are well supported in their learning by books, wall charts and highly motivated input from the childminder.

Children have good opportunities to learn about the natural world through first hand experiences, such as during trips to the park and on regular nature walks. They enjoy feeding squirrels and

ducks, digging, planting and observing the life cycles of mini beasts. They constantly discuss the weather, seasons and time at an age appropriate level. Children enjoy seeing the changing seasons in trees and plants, they compare colours of leaves and collect seasonal natural items for collage. This enhances children's tactile experiences as they explore the shapes and textures. They talk about the clothes that they need to wear in cold weather and enjoy finding their ears, noses and eyes.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of the children's backgrounds and solid relationships have been built with parents. Good exchange of information is observed and parents are extremely satisfied with the care and progress of their children. The childminder provides a warm and very welcoming environment for parents and children, and takes photographs so that parents can share in daily experiences with their child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are confident and settled in the well organised home environment. They are provided with a variety of good activities to promote their development and enjoyment. They play happily in warm and comfortable surroundings. Space is well organised inside and out and older mobile children are encouraged to be independent in safety.

All persons with access to the children are suitable and ratios of children to the childminder are met to keep children safe. Children have individual time with the childminder at appropriate times of the day to ensure their individual needs are met.

Children's care is enhanced by effective and efficient organisation. The childminder has comprehensive records and written policies that are up to date and shared with parents. All children make good progress and have their needs met through the effective planning of activities. The childminder develops her practice through attending childcare courses, which helps her understanding of child development and improves the service that she offers. She has an appropriate system for recording parents' complaints.

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, the childminder was asked to ensure that public liability insurance is in place and the certificate is available for inspection. This is now displayed in a prominent position where parents can see it.

She was also asked to review the contents of the first aid box and ensure it is kept appropriately stocked. This was completed and the contents are kept as required on the current first aid course completed by the childminder.

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

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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):

- improve working knowledge and understanding of the changes to legislation regarding notifiable diseases.

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