

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	312065
Inspection date	03 January 2008
Inspector	Judith Anne Kerr
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 husband and five children aged 13, 10, five, two and four months in the Ashton Under Lyne area of Tameside. Minded children have access to the whole ground floor of the childminder's house. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have a dog and some tropical fish.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of three children at any one time and is currently caring for a total of two children on a variety of placements. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local adult and toddler group.

The childminder has a relevant level qualification in childcare. She is a member of the Tameside 3 Childminding Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder gives a high priority to helping children to maintain a healthy lifestyle. She understands the importance of actively contributing to good hygiene practices. Children learn about good hygiene through effective every day routines, such as hand washing before baking. They understand why they need to follow good hygiene routines and use fresh towels to prevent the spread of germs. Parents are fully informed about required exclusions if children are ill and there are clear written procedures for recording accidents and medication or seeking emergency medical advice or treatment in an emergency. This helps children to stay healthy.

Children enjoy a variety of activities in the fresh air which contribute to their good health. They have regular exercise as they walk to and from school, to the park or canal basin. The children love regular football club activities, playing in the garden, going on nature walks or trips to the park for swings and the see-saw. This encourages development of coordination and balance.

Arrangements for snacks, meals and drinks are agreed carefully with parents so that children's individual dietary needs are met. The childminder provides a selection of homemade healthy and nutritious meals and snacks using home grown organic produce where possible. The childminder for example, prepares in advance a variety of toppings in separate containers and encourages the children to make their own pizzas. The children have their own beakers and can help themselves to drinks whenever they are thirsty. Mealtimes are relaxed, sociable occasions when children sit around the family dining table, sharing news and conversation. The childminder talks with the children about which foods are healthy and why it is important to eat a healthy diet and have lots of exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The children are cared for in a very well maintained home where the childminder gives the utmost priority to safety. They are able to enjoy playing with a wealth of age appropriate, good quality, well kept resources, which meet safety standards. Resources are organised to enable children to make their own choices and thus develop their independence. The childminder monitors the safety of children in her care by giving excellent, consistent supervision.

The childminder has taken meticulous steps to ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment, such as practising the emergency evacuation procedure on a regular basis, implementing written risk assessments, using locks on cupboards and safety gates. As a result children are able to move around freely and confidently. Children are beginning to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe, as the childminder explains boundaries, for example, they are familiar with the 'Kerbcraft' road safety system. They are reminded to pick up toys so they do not trip.

The childminder has the required documentation in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted, for example, she has a valid first aid certificate. She has an excellent understanding of child protection issues and procedures. This helps to ensure children are well protected from harm and abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder actively contributes to children's development by using her wealth of knowledge to plan a rich and imaginative range of age-appropriate activities, which enable them to learn new skills. Resources are arranged at child height, which enables the children to make their own choices and develop independence. The childminder utilises local amenities, such as the park, garden centre, museum and library, to provide the children with a wealth of experiences, for example, they visit the museum to look at the exhibits of motors and wheels which are of particular interest to a child. They visited the garden centre to buy bulbs which they can plant in the garden. This increases their awareness of the world around them and provides opportunities to develop early mathematical concepts as they discuss small and big and count the number of bulbs. Children are able to socialise with other children when they visit the local toddler group. This helps them to become confident and independent.

The childminder dedicates all her time playing and talking to the children. She shares superb, caring relationships with the children and offers lots of positive physical contact by means of hugs and cuddles. As a result, children are happy, content and relaxed in her home and care. The children benefit from routines which are consistent with their experiences at home.

The childminder gives priority to encouraging children's early communication skills. She introduces new words and sounds and sings rhyming songs to reinforce early speech patterns. Children have opportunities to learn new skills, for example, they take magnifying glasses out on their nature walks to identify berries, nuts and leaves. Each child has an autumn watch book which they excitedly complete as they identify different birds and trees and count the number of magpies they see. The children gain an appreciation of the environment as they make bird feeders from pine cones, lard and seeds to ensure the birds do not go hungry in the winter months.

Children are extremely confident as they proudly share their photograph albums and recall particularly enjoyable activities. These include trips out to Blackpool and Southport and planting sunflowers and hyacinths in the garden. They clearly enjoy the play opportunities as they discuss the fun they have and the friends who were present.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop confidence as they play happily alongside one another. The childminder helps children to begin to consider the needs and feelings of others. They learn to take turns and help one another as they play with the cars, for example. Children make their own decisions as they decide what they will play with. They confidently choose activities and get out resources to support their play. They have easy access to a variety of resources which raise their awareness of the wider world. Resources, such as dolls, jigsaws, play figures and books provide the children with an understanding of different races, cultures, gender and abilities. The childminder demonstrates a positive approach towards the inclusion of all children and works closely with the school to ensure continuity of learning experiences.

Children receive support and encouragement as they play. Boundaries are very simple but clear and the childminder explains the reasons for them so that they understand. Children develop a growing awareness of themselves and others. They begin to take responsibility for their own

behaviour and show that they understand why certain rules are in place. They know that toys with small pieces must be kept out of reach of young children, for example.

The childminder works closely with parents to understand children's needs. This helps the children to feel secure and included. She shares verbal and written information on a daily basis, to ensure children's needs are met, for example, a daily diary is maintained which details their activities, snacks and outings. This allows for a three-way sharing of information between childminder, parents and school, also keeps parents up to date with the service provided. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns and are made aware how to make a complaint should the need arise. Detailed paperwork is in place and shared with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are protected and cared for because the childminder is suitably vetted, qualified, skilled and well experienced. In addition to completing all mandatory training, she attends ongoing training, such as safeguarding, health and safety and winter festivals. This ongoing training allows her to improve her knowledge and understanding of childcare practices. The relevant certificate of registration is displayed prominently.

The adult to child ratio positively supports outcomes for children. Records of attendance demonstrate the childminder works within her registered numbers at all times. This limits the number of children minded, so that all children are able to receive excellent levels of care. The childminder organises her time in an expert manner so that she can give children her full attention and meet their individual needs.

All the required documentation is in place and for the most part well-organised. However, although parents give their written consent for medication to be administered they do not countersign the record to acknowledge the entry. As a result, the records are incomplete. Documentation is stored securely to ensure confidentiality of information is maintained. This contributes to keeping children safe.

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 further develop children's interest in nature by involving them in planned container planting in the garden. The childminder, together with the children grows organic fruit and vegetables in containers in the garden. This encourages the children to appreciate living things and understand the importance of eating healthily.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 parents sign the medication record to acknowledge the entry.

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