

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 310614
Inspection date 15 January 2008
Inspector Ann Lee

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 is registered to care for six children at any one time, and is currently minding seven children on a full and part time basis.

She lives with her husband and two children aged 11 and nine years in the Bootle area of Liverpool. The whole of the ground floor and the bathroom and two bedrooms on the upper floor are used by minded children. There is an enclosed garden for outside play. The family have two small pet dogs

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She takes children out to toddler groups, parks and other local places of interest on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very warm, clean and well maintained environment where the childminder takes good steps to keep them free from infection. She cleans all work surfaces,

tables and changing mats with anti-bacterial spray and uses disposable gloves and nappy sacks when changing nappies. The childminder has completed a basic food hygiene course and understands how to prepare and store foods hygienically in order to prevent cross contamination. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene because the childminder encourages them to wash their hands appropriately and she talks to them about germs causing illness and about dental hygiene. Children have their own towels and they can independently use the toilet since the childminder provides a child sized toilet seat and step up facility.

The childminder has an up to date first aid certificate and a fully stocked first aid box which helps her to safeguard children in the event of accidental injury or sickness. Children are further protected because all the necessary documentation, such as accident and medication records, sickness policy and parental permissions are in place. Children are provided with a varied, nutritional diet which includes plenty of fruit and vegetables and home cooked meals. They are also offered regular drinks of water throughout the day. Children learn the importance of healthy eating through discussion and when they take part in cooking activities.

There are daily opportunities for children to develop their physical skills in the large, well equipped garden. They enjoy ball games, ride wheeled toys, dig in the sand and climb and balance on the see-saw, slide and swing. Indoors children dance to music and practise their small motor skills when painting, drawing and when manipulating dough, small world toys, puzzles and construction. There are also regular walks to the local parks and toddler group and outings to the beach, woods and farms.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are made welcome in the warm, comfortable and child friendly house. The childminder displays colourful posters, photographs of the children and examples of their art work which helps them to feel that they belong in the setting and builds their self esteem. The front door is locked when children are present and the childminder follows her policies and procedures to ensure that they are safe and well supervised both indoors and on outings.

Most of the necessary safety equipment is in place to minimise the risk of accidental injury to children. For example, there is a fire blanket, smoke alarms, carbon monoxide monitor, safety gate, fire guard and socket covers. Until recently the kitchen was not used for childminding but the childminder now wishes to use the kitchen occasionally. Not all of the dangerous chemicals and sharp objects are inaccessible to children and this may be hazardous to them. The childminder discusses safety issues, such as road safety, emergency evacuation and 'stranger danger' with the children and they practise the fire drill and learn how to cross the road safely.

There is a wide variety of toys and equipment, such as role play toys, books, puzzles, construction, arts and craft materials, board games and treasure baskets which are suitable for all ages of children. The resources are stored on a large open shelving system and most of the items are within reach of children to enable them to make choices about what they do in the setting and become more independent.

The childminder has attended training in child protection and all of the necessary information and emergency telephone numbers are available, so that she can seek help and advice if an issue arises.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder is a friendly, approachable person who has a good understanding of how children learn and develop gained from her training and experience. She develops close affectionate relationships with children which helps them to feel safe and secure in the setting. The childminder observes children closely, meets their individual needs and provides a range of stimulating and interesting activities which enable them to make good progress. For example, children enjoy digging and growing things in the garden and they look for snails and slugs to examine through a magnifying glass.

Children are confident and they become more independent as they go to the toilet by themselves, help tidy away the toys and learn to dress themselves. The childminder talks to the children, asks questions, listens carefully to their answers, reads stories and sings songs. This helps children to develop good language and communication skills. There are many opportunities for children to explore different materials, such as sand, water, play dough and paint and the childminder also has several 'treasure baskets' containing natural materials for babies to explore. Children are very well behaved. They play cooperatively together, enjoy one another's company and show excellent concentration skills when making pretend food with the dough.

There are regular opportunities for children to learn about the wider world on outings to local shops, parks, toddler group, library, beach and farms where they meet other children and adults, observe their environment and play with different equipment. They also gather leaves, stones, and other objects to use in their art work.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are made welcome and the childminder follows her equal opportunities policy to ensure that children are treated with the same care and concern. She provides a range of resources which help children to understand and appreciate different cultures, religions and disabilities. There are books, dolls and puzzles and the childminder also borrows other resources from the library and toy library. The childminder introduces the children to different festivals from around the world. For example, they dress up, make dragons and lanterns and eat Chinese food with chopsticks at the time of Chinese New Year. The childminder works with other professionals and parents when necessary to meet the needs of children with additional needs.

The childminder is a good role model for children and uses praise and encouragement to reward good behaviour and achievement. This helps children to feel valued and promotes good self esteem. Children learn right from wrong because the childminder is kind and fair and there are clear boundaries for behaviour. The behaviour management policy is shared with parents and they work together with the childminder to deal with any issues.

Parents are invited for introductory visits with their children when they meet the childminder, complete any necessary documentation and provide information about their children. This is reassuring for parents and helps children to settle in quickly. The daily menu, registration certificate and other useful information is displayed on a notice board to keep parents informed about the service. Parents are informed about their children's progress during regular conversations and with the use of a daily diary. The childminder also compiles a portfolio for parents which includes photographs, examples of the children's art work and the childminder's observations.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are protected in the setting because the childminder ensures that they never come into unsupervised contact with people who have not been vetted. She is experienced and well trained in childcare and children make good progress in all areas of development. The childminder has completed a National Vocation Qualification (NVQ) level 3 in childcare and she is committed to ongoing training to improve her knowledge and understanding of child care, so that she can further improve the outcomes for children.

The correct child to adult ratios are maintained at all times to ensure that children are fully supported and supervised. The childminder is a member of the local childminding network and she regularly meets with other childminders and their children for support and social events. The childminder organises the space well to provide space for children to move around freely and explore. The resource are stored within reach of the children to allow them to make choices about what they do in the setting and become more independent.

All of the necessary documentation, policies and procedures are in place for the efficient management of the setting and to promote the welfare and care of children. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are in line with current regulations. Ofsted are kept informed of any significant changes to the service. The childminder works closely with parents to meet the children's needs and they share information on a daily basis. This promotes continuity of care for children. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has improved the safety of children in the garden because she has replaced broken fence panels. She has also improved the partnership with parents by devising a complaints policy, so that they know how to make a complaint to Ofsted.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted have received one complaint relating to National Standard 6: Safety. This involved an allegation made about the childminder leaving a child unattended in a parked car. Ofsted investigated and two actions were raised. The actions were met and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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 that all dangerous chemicals and sharp objects are inaccessible to children.

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