

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	502043
Inspection date	29 February 2008
Inspector	Lesley Sharples
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 has been registered since 2001. She lives with her husband and their three sons age six, nine and 19 years in the Marton area of Blackpool. This is within walking distance of a primary school, Stanley Park and the local zoo.

The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. Children have access to the lounge and conservatory and bathroom facilities. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play and the family has a cat.

Registration is for a total of five children under eight years. There are currently six children on roll most of whom attend part time throughout the week. The childminder also looks after four children over eight years. The childminder supports children with learning disabilities and difficulties.

Membership of the National Childminding Association is retained and the National Vocational Qualification level 3 in Children's Care, Learning and Development has been gained in July 2006. The childminder is also member the Orchid and Teen Parents Networks. Advice, support and training is gained from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning about simple health and hygiene practices as part of their day's routine. For example, the childminder uses individual items such as wet wipes with younger children. Older children are encouraged in their independence in hand washing before eating and after using toilet. They use their own towels within the bathroom which helps prevent cross infection. Documents relating to the administration of medication and the recording and accidents fully supports children's health and safety. There are no entries for accidents or in medication records, as nothing has happened or medication requested to be given. All consents are in place and the childminder has a full understanding of requirements for record keeping. A sick children policy also includes informing Ofsted of any serious illnesses or accidents.

Children rest and sleep according to their needs in full consultation with parents. Naps are taken on the low bed in the conservatory and parents agree to this. Blinds can be closed to create a calm environment. Small children and infants have the travel cot or baby seats. Children enjoy physical activity and develop good sense of control and coordination over their bodies. They go to the park as often as possible, feeding the ducks and looking at squirrels and on outings to the beach. The childminder's garden offers a large trampoline, with parents permission gained, as well as swings, slide, wheeled toys and many balls. This ensures children benefit from plenty of fresh air and exercise to keep them healthy.

Children learn the importance of healthy eating since the childminder provides them with a range of nutritious foods. For example, home cooked meals are ready prepared, such as corn beef hash and pasta and sauces, with healthy desserts including milk puddings. Older children occasionally make their own pizzas. Fresh produce is provided in meals and snacks and they enjoy vegetable sticks and varied fruits for snacks, including melon. Children have their health and dietary needs met because the childminder uses information from parents about individual requirements, such as using soya milk and complying with foods that are eliminated from diets. Children easily access drinking water at all times. The sample menu shown to parents does not indicate the healthy amounts fresh foods provided and the childminder will be revising this.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment which provides two different rooms offering children various types of play. The conservatory is used for creative activities and leads into garden, and the lounge is used for quieter activities. Children use a good range of safe, good quality and developmentally appropriate resources. For example, creative materials, many books and many floor toys for younger children. These are well organised for easy access to promote children's growing independence and choice. The childminder gives parents a list of her equipment for both indoor and outside play, which meets their all round development needs.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised with the childminder taking the necessary precautions to keep children safe and secure on and off the premises. She uses equipment to contain children and gives good attention to detail, such as using corner protectors on the table. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised regularly alongside testing the smoke alarm. Records are held of these with the emergency evacuation procedures completed every

three months. Children have visited the local fire station as part of a childminder network outing. The rear garden is currently being worked on and the childminder compensates for this by taking the children out more, risk assessing venues first. She is conscientious about transporting children safely because she takes the time to carry out full risk assessments and comply with the requirements for appropriate seats and restraints. Older children learn about road safety when walking to and from school and reins are used, if required for younger children, to keep them safe.

Children are further protected because the childminder has knowledge and understanding of child protection and is clear about her role and responsibilities in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The childminder has all the required documentation in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. She has the government guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Summary', available for reference, and her written policy indicates the correct procedures and relevant telephone numbers.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled with the childminder providing individual children with good levels of care and attention to ensure their needs are met. For example, sitting on the floor with the children at their level, playing with a variety of toys that are tuneful, sparkly, reflective and which capture their interest. They play well with the childminder, rolling a ball to and from each other and interacting well. The childminder uses very good language and children respond, attempting noises and first words. Young children attempt mark making, using a pen on a board and showing delight. Another child likes to look in the mirror and then plays at hiding plastic balls underneath a tray. The childminder ensures encouragement and praise, help children to try a range of experiences to help them progress.

Children undertake a wide variety of activities throughout the week. Photographs held in a scrap book evidence outings to the park and enjoying the swings, tactile experiences with cooked noodles and role play, such as being a chef and wearing a turtle outfit. Children are able to express themselves through a variety of media, hence they develop their creative and imaginative skills. These include fun days doing Easter crafts, making paper snakes and free drawing and painting. The childminder values children's achievements and compiles a book of work, relating to the Birth to three matters framework. Self discovery with natural materials is being developed by the childminder, who provides a range of textures and weights for children to explore. The childminder has written a policy which demonstrates how each area of development can be enhanced by the provision of different activities and uses observations, consequently children are progressing well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children treated with equal concern and their individual needs met well since childminder obtains all relevant information and understands the importance of working closely with parents. She has good understanding of equal opportunities issues and how this affects practice. For example, her written policy fully evidences a clear understanding of this area of practice and how she implements this for children with regard to resources and activities to learn about their own and other cultures. Activities include celebrations, such as the Chinese New Year, role play costumes from around the world and offering different skin tone colours for art work. This

contributes to raising children's awareness and understanding of the wider world. The childminder is able to discuss sensitively, with older children, about other children needing more help in learning to talk and expressing themselves. This significantly helps children learn about differences and issues of diversity.

The childminder is aware that some children may have learning disabilities and difficulties and knows to be proactive in ensuring these needs are met. She actively works with and supports children who require this, as part of being in a childminder network. She ably demonstrates an awareness of working in partnership with parents and other professionals to promote the welfare and development of all children. Training and development includes workshops on the 'Early Support Key Person' and she has had an accessibility audit carried out in her home. She ensures parents are kept informed about their child's day and when any visiting professionals come to see their child, relaying information verbally as well in daily accounts, when transporting children to and from home.

Children behave extremely well because they are interested in the activities provided and are happy in their play. The childminder's written policy includes plenty of appropriate strategies for managing unwanted behaviour and reference to the use of physical restraint. However, the important issue of recording and informing the parent on the day is not clearly understood. Children respond to praise and understand to be kind and share because the childminder encourages them with abundant positive comments, which helps them to behave appropriately and harmoniously.

The childminder works very closely with parents sharing information within written records on a daily basis to ensure children's individual needs are recognised and their welfare promoted. The routines and developmental progress of young children and infants is discussed and reviewed frequently with parents to ensure consistency of care. Written policies and procedures have been developed that are shared with parents in a handbook and significantly contribute effective partnerships. These include information about complaints, retaining on file as required. The childminder also informs parents of courses she is attending, and parents in turn show their appreciation through numerous cards and letters and complimentary references.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children fully benefit from the childminder's enthusiasm for continuous improvement of her service. Many workshops are attended which shows the commitment she gives to her job. These include, Developing thinking and problem solving; Risk assessment; Understanding and responding to behaviour; Listening to children; Food can be fun; Top Tots training and Intervention in relation to children with additional needs. Importantly the childminder ensures her first aid training is current.

The childminder is aware of her responsibilities for ensuring all adult members of the household have clearances. Resources are well organised and children have sufficient space in which to play. She meets the ratios in line with her conditions of registration, records attendances as required and displays her certificate. Well organised documents contribute to the safe and efficient management of the provision. Exceptionally, extensive risk assessments and a thorough policy relating to confidentiality shows how the childminder acknowledges these aspects of practice as essentially important. Therefore, the welfare needs and safety of children are met.

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, it was agreed to further knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues; ensure children are provided with a selection of healthy and nutritious snacks and meals; to obtain written permission from parents for transporting children in a vehicle and request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

The childminder has implemented all recommendations. She has undertaken equal opportunities training in March 2007 and provides children with resources and activities to broaden their knowledge of the wider world and their own and other cultures. Meals and snacks include fresh produce, resulting in a more balanced diet. Written permissions are in place as required, which means that children's welfare and safety is assured.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

An action was raised in relation to National Standard 6. This was to ensure children are under the direct supervision of the childminder at all times. A satisfactory response to the action has been received which demonstrates that this standard continues to be met. 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.

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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):

- ensure full understanding of the requirements for recording any incident relating to physical restraint and informing parents.

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