

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	322576
Inspection date	04 March 2008
Inspector	Shirley Maynard

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 a registered childminder since 1996. She lives with her partner in a semi-detached dormer bungalow on the outskirts of Standish village centre, near Wigan. The local park and shops are a short distance away. Minded children have use of the family's lounge, kitchen/dining area and downstairs bathroom. A secure rear garden is available for outdoor play and is accessed from the kitchen.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. There are currently five children on roll, two of whom attend on a full time basis. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder makes sure children play in an organised and clean environment and they learn from an early age the importance of suitable hygiene practices. For example, they learn to wash their hands when finished in the bathroom and before eating. This is enhanced by the

childminder providing liquid anti-bacterial soap and talking to the children about being clean. However, the children use a communal towel and, as a result, the risk of cross-contamination is not minimised.

The childminder holds an up to date first aid certificate, enabling her to deal effectively with minor accidents. This, together with prior consent to take children to hospital in the event of an emergency, means she will act in the best interest of the child if there is an accident. Children are also protected from infection due to the clear sick child policy, which is shared with parents. Furthermore, suitable systems for maintaining records relating to accidents are implemented. However, the current format of the medication permission slips does not ensure children's confidentiality is maintained.

The childminder works with parents to ensure children enjoy healthy meals and snacks. Parents choose between providing packed lunches for their children or the snack lunches prepared by the childminder, for example, beans on toast or sandwiches served with fresh fruit and yoghurt. Children monitor their own needs for a drink as they are provided with regular drinks of water, juice and milk in their own cups, which helps develop their sense of belonging.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming house that gives them a home from home environment. The childminder ensures they play in a warm and well maintained environment. The children can move freely and select from the good quality resources which are easily accessible and stored in child height storage boxes, to encourage the children to make choices in their play. Their artwork and displays are attractively displayed on the dining room wall, creating an interesting and stimulating environment.

Children's safety is a priority for the childminder, who is very vigilant in her supervision of those in her care. She has taken positive steps to reduce the risks both in the home and on outings. For example, safety gates prevent children from accessing areas not suitable for them such as the stairs, a fireguard is in place to protect children from the gas fire, and the emergency evacuation plan is well established. The childminder records when smoke alarms are checked and the batteries changed, therefore, children's safety is significantly enhanced as a result. Furthermore, the childminder ensures the laws relating to car seat safety restraints are fully implemented and all children are securely fastened in age appropriate car seats.

Children are well protected and cared for by a childminder who has recently attended child protection training. As a result, she has a good knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms of possible child abuse and has a range of appropriate documentation. Furthermore, the childminder knows the procedures to follow if she has concerns about a child in her care based on local and national guidance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very content and secure because the childminder encourages them to enjoy, socialise and learn through their play and experiences. She interacts with children at their own level, for example, entering into role play activities to help develop imagination with age appropriate questions. As a result, children are animated and talk freely and confidently about their play. Children are able to mark make in a variety of ways and are proud of the pieces of

craft work that they have produced and excitedly point to their work which is displayed on the wall. The children also enjoy a wide variety of exciting role play props, dressing up clothes and construction equipment, to stimulate and develop their imaginations.

The childminder uses her secure knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide children with a stimulating range of activities which meet their needs. She has an informal and flexible plan of topics which follow their lead and interests. Recently, the children enjoyed the theme of the 'weather' and have made a bright and interesting display. The children enthusiastically tell the inspector that a rainbow occurs when it is raining and sunny. The childminder observes children and uses the information in their individual development files, enabling her to monitor their individual progress.

Children enjoy sharing books with the childminder and looking at pictures of animals, enthusiastically making the sounds of the animals. The childminder also regularly takes children out into the community, for example, trips to the library, local park and the local schools. This is organised around the individual routines of the children, which the childminder knows well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a very good understanding of equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and has a written policy in place. She ensures all children have equal opportunities to play with the interesting resources that she provides, including children with learning difficulties or disabilities. The childminder would be very proactive if she noticed a delay in a child's development and would liaise closely with parents and other agencies in order to promote the child's welfare and development. The children learn about diversity and the wider world from a variety of resources and activities which include books, dolls, dressing up and games.

The children are well behaved because they learn through play about what is right and wrong. The childminder acts as a positive role model by always saying 'please' and 'thank you' to them and uses age appropriate praise and encouragement to reinforce positive behaviour. As a result, children work and play harmoniously together and their self esteem is promoted.

There is a strong emphasis on partnership with parents. They are valued and their wishes sought to enable the childminder to adapt her service to meet individual needs. This is further enhanced by daily verbal feedback as well as a written diary of events. This keeps them well informed on their child's progress and the day's activities. Furthermore, the childminder has recently undertaken parental questionnaires which were very positive and included many comments on the 'wonderful progress' children make in her care. The childminder has a secure understanding of the complaints procedure and the poster is on display with all the information should parents need to make a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are well settled in this family environment. The childminder organises her day to ensure they have the opportunity to learn through play and relax when necessary. She has established routines which ensure children feel secure, valued and confident, and the positive attention she gives them ensures they learn and make progress.

The childminder is very keen to attend training courses to develop her practice further to develop her knowledge and so improve the outcomes for children in her care, for example, child protection and 'Birth to three matters ' framework. The childminder displays her registration certificate so that parents are able to see her conditions of registration. Furthermore, children are safeguarded because she ensures they are fully supervised at all times and never left with an unvetted adult.

Most of the required documentation is in place, securely stored and promotes the welfare, care and learning of the children, for example, records of accidents, contracts and children's details forms. These are all well organised, shared with parents and stored in a mainly confidential manner. However, the attendance register does not clearly show all children's actual arrival and departure times. This potentially compromises children's safety. 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 agreed to a number of recommendations. She agreed to devise a system in the event of any incidents, including the use of restraint, occurring in the future. The childminder has made good progress and has an incident book in place. This, together with a positive behaviour policy, means the children are well behaved. Furthermore, she has updated her knowledge on the procedure to follow in the unlikely event of having to restrain a child in her care. As a result, children are safeguarded.

The childminder also agreed to obtain and make reference to the government publication 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' as a means of widening knowledge and understanding of the procedures to follow. The childminder has recently attended child protection training and is fully aware of the procedures to follow if she was concerned about a child in her care, based on national and local guidance. She also has an appropriate child protection policy which is shared with parents. As a result, the children's welfare is protected.

Finally, the childminder agreed to widen the range of resources that reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability and make these accessible to children. This is ongoing and children freely access a range of resources which include books, dolls, dressing up and games. Consequently, the children have the opportunity to value differences in society.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been a complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards. Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 6: Safety. A childcare inspector visited the provision on 19 December 2007. An action was raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. 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):

- review the arrangements for children's hand washing to minimise the risk of cross-contamination
- ensure children's confidentiality is maintained, with particular reference to the medication permissions book
- develop a system of registration to include all children's actual arrival and departure times.

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