

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	503924
Inspection date	10 July 2008
Inspector	(Kate) Kathryn, Jane Ryder

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 and has a childcare qualification. She lives with her husband, who also occasionally works as her assistant and their two children, aged 13 and 15 years. They live in a house in the Moston area of Manchester.

The whole of the ground floor of the property including bathroom facilities is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have two pets, a dog and a cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and currently there are six children on roll, attending various days and hours.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where the childminder promotes good hygiene practices by having regular routines for cleaning the home, equipment and toys. For example,

she uses an antibacterial spray for washing work surfaces and tables. She follows good standards of hygiene during nappy changing, which protects very young children from the risk of infection. Children begin to develop good awareness about their personal care needs as they routinely wash their hands before and after certain activities, and they are encouraged to brush their teeth after lunch. Children are well protected in relation to pet hygiene, with good care being given to pet health and storage of feeding bowls. Children stay healthy because the childminder has a sick child policy and good procedures to minimise cross-infection, such as excluding children with infectious illnesses.

Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise which contributes to their good health and meets their developmental needs. Regular visits to the park and outdoor play in the enclosed garden help them to further develop their physical skills and enjoy healthy exercise. Children also enjoy frequent trips to soft play gyms.

Children's health and dietary needs are appropriately met through discussions with parents and the recording of allergies and intolerances. Sample menus demonstrate that children benefit from healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. Weekly menus take into account children's individual dietary requirements, ensuring that they stay healthy. The childminder prepares some home cooked food, such as jacket potatoes and pasta dishes, and she provides children with daily fresh fruit. Children are able to keep themselves independently refreshed as they can continually access their own cups. Children respond well to routine, such as sitting at the table and socialising at snack time improving their health and well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very warm and welcoming home. Space is very well organised to promote a child-friendly environment which has ample space to enable children to move safely and independently. Children are provided with good quality toys and equipment which meet their developmental needs and interests, and also address diversity. For example, there is a selection of books and dressing-up clothes from different cultures. Toys are organised at low-level to aid children's independent access, which means that even the youngest children can explore and investigate.

The childminder generally takes positive steps inside and outside the home to minimise risks and keep children safe. For example, safety gates are used at higher risk areas, gas appliances are regularly serviced and risk assessments for each area of the home are carried out. However, a telephone positioned on the kitchen floor with trailing cables impacts on children's safety. Relevant fire safety equipment is in place and children learn to keep themselves safe in the event of an emergency through the childminder's explanations about safe evacuation of the house.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect. The childminder has a good understanding of the procedure to follow with any concerns and she has attended training. She is aware of the types of abuse and the signs to look for and she has appropriate reference materials.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are extremely happy and well settled at the childminder's home. They enjoy the company of the childminder and her assistant, who build warm relationships with them, encouraging them to settle quickly. New children quickly gain confidence, learn where the different toys are stored and move through the home confidently. The childminder interacts enthusiastically, listening to and talking to the children. She plays with them at their level on the floor and frequently provides physical contact, such as hugs and kisses.

Children show interest in the range of toys and equipment which are suitable to their age and stage of development. They are confident in initiating their own play and enjoy playing with dressing up clothes, trains and track, jigsaws and coloured sand. The childminder supports children in setting up the train track and helps them understand that magnets pull the carriages along. She extends their interest by building a bridge and children enjoy pushing the train up and down the track. Children explore pattern and shape as they fit the pieces in an inset puzzle. Young children concentrate hard as the childminder suggests they turn the piece around to match the picture and shape. She rewards children's achievements with lots of praise which raises their self-esteem. The childminder makes children think as she asks questions, such as what colour are the frogs as they play with them in the sand.

Children have good opportunities to develop their senses as they explore natural materials and textures, such as sand, sponge, bubble wrap and wood. The childminder helps babies develop by holding their hands whilst they bear their own weight and encouraging them to walk towards her. She encourages early speech patterns by talking to them and providing free flow cups to develop their throat muscles. Children enjoy a broad range of planned activities, such as baking activities, weekly visits to toddler groups and childminder network groups, regular visits to the park and a nature reserve to feed the ducks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's needs are well met within the setting as arrangements for their care respect parental wishes and suit individual needs and stages of development. She has very good procedures for new children, who settle gradually into her care and make a smooth transition from home to the childminder's environment. She consults parents during this period, finding out about children's preferences and home routines. The childminder has a range of toy resources which reflect diversity and helps children to see positive images of other cultures, disability and gender issues. Children develop a good understanding about the local community through the many opportunities they have to visit places, such as adult and toddler groups, the park and soft play gyms.

The childminder manages children's behaviour by using appropriate strategies. She uses methods which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. For example, she distracts young children's attention when they take toys from others, she helps children to understand the consequences of throwing and helps new children learn about her simple house rules, such as not sitting on furniture. The childminder encourages children to be well mannered and polite, for example, she reminds them she is already speaking to someone else and when she has finished she will talk to them. The childminder is sensitive when managing children's behaviour, she uses the tone of her voice well and makes sure she has children's attention before explaining

issues to them. She encourages positive behaviour by praising children for their achievements and for good behaviour; as a result, children develop confidence and self-esteem.

The childminder establishes good relationships with parents, ensuring that children's needs are discussed and understood at the time of placement. Ongoing information is shared with parents through daily informal discussions, this ensures parents are kept informed about their children's activities and welfare. New parents are encouraged to read the childminder's comprehensive file containing setting information, policies and procedures, which demonstrate how she cares for children and the service she provides. The childminder has a written complaints procedure and has set up a written complaints record. On occasions, the childminder works with an assistant and parents are requested to provide a letter of consent regarding the arrangement. However, written consents do not always clearly reflect that the assistant may have sole charge of the children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a childcare qualification and continues to attend short training courses as a means to the ongoing development of her knowledge and skills. For example, she has updated her first aid certificate and attended a safeguarding workshop. She has attended a briefing session about the Early Years Foundation Stage and has secured a place on extended training. She is aware that anyone over the age of 16 years living in her household must undertake a vetting procedure and has taken advice on how to obtain the correct forms. She consistently interacts with children, providing effective support and encouragement, which helps them feel secure and confident.

The childminder plans her time and resources well to ensure children have access to a wide range of interesting and challenging activities both inside and outside the home. Space is well organised to provide an accessible environment for children, which helps them to develop their independence and enables them to make choices and develop their own ideas.

In the main, documentation meets the requirements of the National Standards and is shared with parents appropriately. The childminder has devised a comprehensive file of written policies and procedures, such as equal opportunities and managing behaviour. This keeps parents fully informed about all aspects of their children's care. The childminder's certificate of registration is openly displayed.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the childminder was asked to address two recommendations related to safeguarding and taking the 'Birth to three matters' framework into consideration when planning play activities for young children. She has attended safeguarding training and as a consequence has further developed her knowledge and understanding related to protecting children. She provides young children with extensive sensory play experiences, has attended a briefing session on the Early Years Foundation Stage and demonstrates commitment to further developing her knowledge by securing a place on extended training. These improvements further enhance the care, education and safety of children attending the setting.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint in relation to National Standard 1: Suitable Person. The concerns were originally shared with another agency. The registered provider submitted an investigation response regarding the concerns raised and 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

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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):

- take reasonable steps to ensure that the hazard of a trailing telephone cable in the kitchen is minimised
- improve partnership with parents by having a clear written agreement which sets out the expectations of working with an assistant.

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