

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY340809
Inspection date	04 August 2008
Inspector	Sue Anslow
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 2006. She lives with her husband and three children aged seven, four and two years in Fazakerley, Liverpool. The childminder works alongside her husband who is also a registered childminder. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, plus the bathroom upstairs. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three children at any one time when minding on her own. When two childminders are present, a maximum of six children may be cared for at any one time. There are currently two children under two on roll. The childminder walks to a number of local play facilities during the week.

The childminder holds an appropriate early years qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy and learn about good hygiene practices through everyday routines and explanations from the childminder. They are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and nappies are changed regularly and hygienically. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and follows correct procedures should a child be unwell or injured. Parents are contacted if necessary and records are kept appropriately. Children enjoy a broad range of physical activities which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They walk to and from a number of local play facilities during the week and local parks and playgrounds are visited regularly. Children move freely around the house, climb up and down stairs to the bathroom and use the garden during fine weather. All these activities, particularly those at the local children's centre, promote a healthy lifestyle for the children and are lots of fun.

Children's individual health and dietary needs are met well because the childminder works closely with the parents, respecting their wishes and requirements. Meals and snacks are provided at regular intervals throughout the day and drinks of water or milk accompany every meal. Young children have their drinks available in the playroom so they can help themselves whenever they want, ensuring they never get thirsty. Fresh fruit and vegetables are included in the daily menu and babies practise feeding themselves with their own spoons.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy sufficient space to play in the through lounge and dining room, and conservatory. A small garden to the rear of the house is safe for outdoor play, although young children need help to climb down the two steep steps from the conservatory. A good selection of suitable and safe toys and play equipment is available for children to choose from. Boxes and baskets on the floor, as well as labelled drawer units allow children to see and choose what they want to play with. Colourful posters and family pictures around the walls give a feeling of warmth and welcome and notice boards for parents provides relevant information. All equipment is kept clean and checked regularly, thus enhancing the children's health and safety.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where the risk of accidental injury is low. However, a large amount of toys and play equipment out at the same time hinders children's freedom of safe movement around the house and garden. The childminder has a reasonable level of awareness of children's safety and teaches children to keep themselves safe through explanations and reminders. Two childminder's working together ensure children are supervised at all times, even if one childminder is upstairs or in the kitchen. Children practise road safety drills when out and about and are learning about evacuation procedures, in the event of an emergency. Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminder has sound knowledge of child protection procedures, should she have any significant concerns. She is clear about her role and responsibilities as a childcare provider and has attended relevant courses.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time spent with the childminder and benefit from the wide range of activities provided. They acquire new knowledge and skills and the childminder responds reasonably well

to each child's individual needs. For example, young children learn about washing their hands after using the bathroom or doing a painting activity. Each child receives individual attention during the day and lots of warm hugs and cuddles when required. Creative development is promoted well, as children experiment with paint, water and dough. They particularly enjoy blowing bubbles for the younger children to chase and catch. Children develop self-esteem and self-confidence because the childminder values what each child says and does. Kindness and helpfulness are praised and children are learning to share their toys and take turns.

Children enjoy a warm caring relationship with the childminder and social contact with other children and adults. They attend local groups regularly, walk to the library and learn to climb and balance on the playground equipment in nearby parks. These activities promote children's physical development and are lots of fun. Children make good progress in their learning and development because the childminder encourages learning in a fun way. They talk about the pictures on the number and letter posters on the wall, count the coloured beads on the frame and watch how paint changes colour when mixed together. A balance of quiet and active play is provided during each day according to the children's moods or requests. For example, quiet stories or television programmes are introduced at the end of the day when children are tired.

Children are encouraged to be independent from a young age as they wash their hands in the bathroom, climb up and down the steps into the garden and help themselves to the toys and equipment. However, having access to the full range of play materials every day, hinders children's ability to concentrate and persevere on one activity at a time. The full and rather cluttered environment is overwhelming for young children and leads to 'flitting around' from one thing to another, not stopping long enough to develop their interests or skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal concern and their individual needs are met well, which helps them feel a sense of belonging and develops a trusting relationship with the childminder. Children develop a positive attitude to others and gain an understanding of the world around them through different play experiences and the use of resources reflecting other cultures, genders and disabilities. For example, contact with other adults and children at the local children's centre, walks to the local park and stories about firemen and nurses help children learn about their local community. Children's welfare is promoted well because the childminder consults closely with parents and others on any particular requirements or issues of concern. The childminder responds to each child's character and preferences, and all children are encouraged and helped to participate in all games and activities.

Children behave quite well and the childminder promotes positive behaviour and self-esteem by praising achievements, helpfulness and kindness to others. Minor squabbles are soon sorted by either of the two childminder's working together and children can play together or separately according to their interests or moods. Close working relationships with parents results in a good understanding of children's needs. New families are invited to visit and meet the childminder's household. Files of photographs of children enjoying various activities plus written policies, reassure parents of the day to day childcare practice. Information is exchanged everyday, both verbally and in writing. Each young child has a home diary which contains information about their routine and any outings or particular activities they have enjoyed. The care of children is well supported by written contracts and consent forms. The childminder is happy to listen to any comments or suggestions from parents and asks them to complete a questionnaire, a few months after starting, to check they are happy with everything.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel welcomed and supported in this relaxed, friendly, learning environment. Ample play space and a range of suitable toys and materials provide for children's needs. The balance of indoor and outdoor activities together with visits to local play facilities ensure children are happy and active and have lots of opportunities for social contact with other children and adults.

The children's quality of care is enhanced by the childminder's commitment to keeping her knowledge and skills updated. She attends relevant courses and workshops and recently gained an appropriate childcare qualification. Continuity of care for each child is assured through regular information sharing with parents, both verbal and in writing. Children's health, safety and welfare is well protected and promoted through regular routines and keeping written records as required. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 complaint 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):

- organise appropriate activities to suit different age groups playing together.

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