

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY361931
Inspection date	24 June 2008
Inspector	Joan Isabel Madden
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 outstanding. 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 2007 and works with an assistant. The childminder lives with her husband and two children aged seven years and five years. The family have pet gerbils who are kept upstairs. They live in a house in Timperley, Altrincham, close to shops, parks, schools and pre-schools. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding; this includes a lounge/dining area, hall and kitchen. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The toilet and bathroom are on the first floor.

The childminder is registered to care for four children at any one time and this increases to six children when working with an assistant. There are currently six children on roll aged from one year to five years. They all attend on a part time basis. The childminder would support children with learning difficulties or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The childminder runs the local toddler group and pre-school group that all come under the umbrella of 'The Ark Childcare Service'. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and has a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3 in childcare, learning and development. She is working towards her NVQ level 4

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because the childminder follows highly effective procedures and practices which meet the children's nutritional, physical and health needs. The children benefit from a very clean and welcoming environment. As part of the operational plan the childminder has a hygiene routine that includes the cleaning of specific areas, such as door handles and banisters, to eliminate the cross contamination of germs. The exceptional adult support and guidance helps children gain an excellent understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care. All children receive a 'welcome pack' which is made up of a case containing their own flannel, hairbrush, toothbrush, high visibility jacket and water bottle. This encourages the children to use their own toiletries to develop sensible hygiene routines, such as washing hands before handling food, after taking part in messy activities and when toileting. Children sit at the table when eating to prevent cross contamination of germs. They have designed their own place mats around the wording 'Have I washed my hands?' Signs around the house remind the children to wash their hands at appropriate times. The childminder follows a clear sickness policy, in line with exclusion guidelines and has a detailed and effective administration of medication procedure. These are discussed with parents. She requests parents' consent for emergency medical treatment, has a fully stocked first aid box and current first aid certificate ensuring children are dealt with competently if injured. All accidents are recorded and acknowledged by parents.

Children's dietary requirements are successfully met by the childminder. Carefully planned menus show the childminder has an excellent understanding of how to provide and promote the children's understanding of nutritious food. Children's health and dietary needs are successfully met as the childminder records these and ensures the children eat accordingly. Children are able to help themselves to their own bottles of drinking water, encouraging them to appreciate the healthy way to remain hydrated. Children enjoy learning about healthy lifestyles through themes, such as 'Our bodies and exercise'. They take delight in planting and tending vegetables in the garden and baking from appropriate recipe books. This successfully heightens the children's awareness of nutritious food and promotes their self-help and independence skills.

Children explore, test and develop physical control in stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences. They benefit from being able to play outside whenever they wish, even in inclement weather, as they wear splash suits and Wellingtons. There are numerous wonderful opportunities to promote the children's large and small physical skills including becoming competent tool users. A challenging climbing frame enables the children to develop their climbing and balancing skills and they use bats and balls for hand and eye coordination skills. The children learn to use gardening tools as they tend the vegetables and construct using natural materials. High priority is put upon the children developing healthy routines as they walk to and from school as part of the 'walking bus' scheme. Children enjoy visiting local facilities, such as the park, library, woods and playing fields. They are able to rest and sleep according to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very safe and well protected in the care of the childminder. The premises are secure, highly stimulating and welcoming. Children and parents feel welcome as soon as they step into

the hall where there are named coat pegs, photographs of children, sample toys and an inviting role play area under the stairs. The display boards keep the parents extremely well informed of the childminder's qualifications, conditions of registration and curriculum frameworks. There are welcome and goodbye notices reflecting the wider world. Children are familiar with the environment and they move around with confidence. They show a high level of belonging in the child-focused, designated play areas. Space is clearly defined and used well to provide children with inspiring and challenging activities. Resources and toys are highly organised into learning areas that include a reading corner, role play area, mark making, creative materials and construction. Many are highly visible, labelled, easily accessible; they are attractively stored in natural wicker baskets. This helps the children to develop their independence, decision making skills and to sort the toys appropriately when they tidy up. Resources and equipment are extremely clean, safe and well maintained and many are made from natural materials.

There are excellent processes in place to keep children safe. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because the childminder is extremely vigilant in reducing potential hazards. No safety issues have been identified. There is a comprehensive risk assessment for indoors and outdoor play that is displayed and checked daily. Effective safety measures are in place to protect the children; the premises are secure both indoors and outdoors, electrical sockets are covered, water feature not operating, the shed is locked, the cooker is switched off, knives and cleaning materials are locked away, appliances are unplugged and there are protective corners on tables. The childminder has an emergency evacuation plan that she practises regularly with the children. There are fitted smoke alarms and a fire blanket mounted on kitchen wall. The childminder helps children to be aware of keeping safe as she introduces elements of safety during activities. A favourite resource are the 'safety puppets' that promote their awareness of danger through discussions and shows. The childminder is the leader of the 'walking bus' to school and all the children wear high visibility jackets on route.

The safe welfare of the children is paramount to the childminder. There is a written policy in place and procedures for reporting concerns about children's welfare are in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures. She is able to skilfully put procedures into practice and work effectively with other professionals to ensure priority is given to the children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of how children learn and acquire skills. This is reflected in her highly effective planning, assessments, identifying next steps in learning, and organisation of resources that successfully underpin the high quality of activities available to the children. With reference to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage, the childminder uses as her guide a flexible daily routine and a weekly play plan. In addition she has recently implemented a detailed system of assessing individual children through observations and recording their progress and achievements. She links these to the relevant framework and successfully identifies the next steps in the children's learning. Children benefit greatly from being able to choose from an inviting wide range of everyday resources that are highly organised and accessible to them. In addition to this the children follow a theme.

The childminder has assessed the children's needs accurately and correctly judges how to support the children appropriately. She has built up excellent relationships with them in a relatively short period of time. She skilfully helps younger children to learn and develop by giving them constant reassurance and providing them with activities that interest them. For

example, she effectively uses the children's interest in playing with cars to promote their knowledge of colours and counting skills. She extends this activity by introducing more unusual colours and the recognition of shapes. The older school children are able to exercise appropriate autonomy in deciding their routine and activities. On return from school they initiate sitting around the table for snack and one child chairing the daily discussion. They also decided to create a vegetable garden based on their initial wish to plant seeds.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are expertly cared for by the childminder who works exceptionally well with parents to meet children's individual needs and ensure they are included fully in the life of the setting. She demonstrates a very secure awareness of equal opportunities and particular needs, ensuring children's individual needs are met and they feel included. She recognises the uniqueness of each child. All children are sincerely and warmly welcomed into her home giving them a real sense of belonging. Children are learning to work harmoniously with others as the childminder effectively supports them in sharing and taking turns. Children are learning to make decisions as they choose from a wide, balanced range of resources. These resources reflect equal opportunities, successfully helping children to become aware of a wider society.

Children are extremely well-behaved and are learning to use 'please' and 'thank you'. They respond well to the positive behaviour management strategies employed by the childminder. She is an exemplary role model who remains calm and positive at all times and uses consistent strategies to create an enabling environment.

Childminder has built up exceptional relationships with parents. They are welcome into her home and actively help to settle their children. Parents comment very positively about the provision. There are highly effective procedures in place to keep them informed about the provision and their children. Details of themes, curriculum's and news are displayed in the hallway for parents. Parents complete a detailed form with relevant information about their child to ensure the childminder is aware of their individual needs.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by the exceptional quality of organisation. The childminder is extremely hardworking and diligent, displaying a high regard for the well-being of all children. She is highly skilled in meeting their individual needs. The childminder successfully implements the detailed operational plan to promote the children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Space and resources are organised to maximise play opportunities for children. The children are well protected and cared for by the childminder who has an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development and safeguarding children. Records are meticulously maintained, remain confidential and are easily accessible.

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 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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