



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY298117
Inspection date	17 October 2005
Inspector	Sharon Verma

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 satisfactory. 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 2005. She lives with her six children aged between 8 and 22 years in the Hough Green area of Widnes. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time, and is currently minding three children after school. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children. She attends local parks, the library and other local places of interest.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning about good health and hygiene practices through their daily routine. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children are protected from the risk of cross infection by the strict hygiene practices implemented by the childminder.

Children's health is protected well by the exchange of information between the parents and childminder about allergies and dietary requirements. The children are protected from illness and infection through the childminder's effective policy on sick children.

The childminder provides the children with a healthy diet which promotes their growth and development. They have access to fresh fruit each day and meals are cooked using fresh vegetables. Their good health is fostered as they help themselves to easily accessible drinks which keep them hydrated and refreshed.

Children benefit from the fresh air and physical exercise on visits to the local park. They also enjoy playing in the garden after school where they have opportunities to practice their physical skills each day using equipment such as balls and hoola hoops.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's independence skills are fostered as they are able to move freely between the play areas on the ground floor and the garden. A selection of suitably maintained toys is available which helps to create a welcoming and stimulating environment for children. They develop confidence as they make choices about equipment and activities which are easily accessible.

Children are protected from some hazards in the home, for example, the childminder has fitted a safety chain on the front door and a safety gate on the stairs. Children gain an understanding about keeping themselves safe when walking near roads, through the regular discussions they have with the childminder on the daily walk home from school. They are familiar with the fire evacuation procedure through the regular practices organised by the childminder. Children are however, exposed to risks, through the inadequate storage of cleaning products and sharp knives and a lack of security in the garden.

The childminder has sufficient knowledge and understanding of the local child protection procedures to ensure that children are protected and their welfare safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed and they develop independence as they make choices about how they wish to spend their time. Children feel secure and reassured by the childminder who is friendly, caring and interested in what they are doing.

There is a wide range of activities and equipment which promote the children's development. They benefit from the good selection of arts and crafts materials and baking activities to practise their creative skills. There is a computer with a selection of age appropriate software and a PlayStation with a wide selection of games. They enjoy making up their own games in the garden using space hoppers and hoola hoops. They also visit the library each week during term time on their way home from school. During the school holidays children enjoy a variety of interesting and fun trips out. They go to the swimming baths each week, take the ferry to New Brighton beach and go crabbing and visit local places of interest, such as the Catalyst Museum and Sherdley Park.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the friendly relationships the childminder develops with the parents. Their needs are catered for by the sharing of information. This helps to promote continuity of care and ensures that any issues can be resolved quickly. The childminder also shares information through scrap books she keeps for each child, which include information about activities and trips, photographs and examples of their work.

Children behave well. They learn about the boundaries and expectations through discussions with the childminder who displays house rules on the wall, to ensure children are clear about what is expected of them. The childminder gives regular praise for good behaviour, effort and achievement which enhances their self esteem and self confidence.

Children become familiar with the local community through visits to the local library, park and other places of local interest. They have a limited understanding of the wider world, as there are few activities that encourage children to develop positive attitudes to others and their differences.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children develop independence and choice as they are given space to play, move around the home and access equipment, which is organised so that they can reach it easily. Furniture is not organised however to enable children to sit and eat together at meals times.

The childminder ensures that children are well supervised and are not left with people who are not vetted.

All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and up-to-date.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. 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 satisfactory. 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):

- make cleaning products and sharp knives inaccessible to children
- ensure that the premises are secure
- provide activities which help children to appreciate and value each others' similarities and differences
- organise furniture to ensure children can sit and eat together at meal times.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk