



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	322168
<b>Inspection date</b>	09 February 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Barbara Redmond
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1986. She lives in the Mossley Hill district of south Liverpool. She lives with her husband, two adult children and grandson who is 16-months-old. Children have access to a playroom, the conservatory, an upstairs bathroom and a rear garden for outdoor play. The minded children are taken out on most days, to places such as the local playgroup, swimming, library story times, park or gym tots.

The childminder currently minds 13 children who attend for a variety of sessions. Of these, two children are funded for nursery education.

The childminder is National Nursery Examinations Board qualified and also a member of the accredited Calder Childminding Network.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder carries out effective routines to ensure all areas are suitably clean, to keep children safe. The nappy changing routine is appropriate, minimising risk of cross-infection for children. Hygiene routines for older children are less effective. Older children access the toilet independently but are not reminded to wash their hands. They also use a communal towel, posing a risk of cross-infection.

Children on medication are safeguarded because the childminder consistently completes appropriate documentation, which includes times and dosage of medication confirmed by parental signatures. Children who have accidents are protected because an accident book is completed with appropriate detail and consistently signed by parents. The childminder has a current first aid qualification and a first aid kit, so she can provide appropriate care for children who have minor accidents. Permission is also in place for children to receive emergency treatment.

Children have access to a satisfactory range of foods including processed foods and some fresh ingredients, providing a suitable diet to meet their nutritional needs. Children make their own pizza, but no discussion takes place about why foods such as vegetables might be healthy to increase children's awareness of health issues. Drinks are provided regularly to prevent children becoming dehydrated, but children cannot freely access fresh water all day.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

A good space is available to children, which meets their care and play requirements. They have a designated play room which is very much their own space, fostering a good sense of belonging. Their artwork and photographs are on the walls and their toys are readily available at all times. The outdoor play space has a grassed area and a hard surface area facilitating a range of play experiences.

Children have access to a good range of resources that promote their development in all areas. They use a good range of creative materials and have extensive small world play resources including cars and a road map, small world figures and a play house. They also use natural materials such as sand and water and a wide range of role-play items. Appropriate child sized furniture provides comfort for children engaged in table top activities. The childminder checks toys every time they are used to ensure they remain safe for children.

The childminder demonstrates a good awareness of safety. She has produced a health and safety policy and introduced precautions such as a safety gate on the stairs, a fire guard and several items in the garden. However, children access the upstairs toilet on their own but locks fitted on the bedroom doors are not used consistently posing a risk for children as electrical appliances and materials which may be unsuitable for them can be accessed.

Children are encouraged to develop a sense of their own safety. The childminder explains that someone could trip over a pair of trousers discarded during a dressing up activity and they should be put somewhere safe.

Children are protected in case of fire because there is a written fire evacuation procedure, smoke alarms and a fire blanket in the kitchen. Fire drills are carried out regularly to ensure children know what to do in an emergency.

Children are protected because the childminder has had training in recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse. She has an information booklet and contact numbers so she knows what to do if she is worried about a child.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The childminder provides resources and activities that help children make progress in all areas of their development. The childminder has a good awareness of the Birth to three matters framework and is using trackers to record children's progress so she can plan for the next stage in their development. Children have free access to the toys, which fosters their independence skills. Children are able to develop a sense of identity and good self-esteem. They enjoy finding their photographs on the wall and discussing their experiences and achievements with the childminder. Activities planned by the childminder are linked to development stages within the Birth to three matters framework. For example, when making houses children's learning focuses on colour recognition and shapes, increasing their sense of the world through describing and labelling. Children have a good range of sensory experiences including water play, sand and gloop. They enjoy friendly and affectionate relationships with the childminder, which helps them to feel confident and able to express their wishes and preferences.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Planning is in place, including long-term and short-term plans, to ensure that children have access to a balanced and stimulating range of activities to help children progress in all six areas of learning. The plans are topic based and cover subjects such as shapes, patterns and mini-beasts which are interesting for the children. Learning intentions are identified so the focus of activities can be targeted to areas of development appropriate for the children who attend. Assessment files are kept on each child which include a good range of evidence such as observations, drawings and photographs to enable the childminder to plan for the next stage of learning for individual children.

Children access the toilet independently and also help with tidying up, encouraging self-help skills and independence. They are able to make choices. For example, the childminder has cards showing photographs of activities that are available and the children select their particular preference. They enjoy seeing themselves on the photographs giving them a good feeling of self-worth. Independence is further fostered as the children are encouraged to dress themselves and put on their own shoes during a dressing up activity. Children are encouraged to think about the needs of others. For example, they complete a sponsored walk for charity to help other children.

Children are encouraged to develop mathematical knowledge and skills during care and play situations. The childminder encourages counting at snack time and children are able to count beyond ten with confidence. They develop an understanding of pattern as they search for animals with stripes and spots and bring them to the table for a discussion. An understanding of shape is encouraged when children look at a story book and then select shape stickers to put in the right place. Children play with solid shapes on the floor, which reinforces their learning.

Story time is cosy and relaxed and the children are attentive and interested, providing a positive learning experience for them. The childminder extends children's thinking and language skills as she asks open questions and encourages discussions about what the snake might eat. They are able to move about imitating the animals adding to the enjoyment of the experience. Children have opportunities to link letters to sounds. They identify letters in the story and play a game of sounds. Good concentration is shown and the children's ability to focus on a task has a positive effect on their learning. Opportunities are made to develop early literacy skills. Displays include letters of the alphabet and children draw letters in the sand. However, examples of written words in the environment are limited. In addition, although a range of mark making materials are brought out for children to use, they are not made available in play situations to give children a sense of writing for a purpose.

Children are able to develop a sense of time as they discuss today, yesterday and tomorrow when discussing the weather. Children learn about the world about them through activities such as dressing up and discussions about other places. However, when making pizza learning opportunities are missed as no discussion takes place on shapes to link with the topic. Children go on lots of visits to enhance their experiences including the park, the farm, the museum and the wild flower centre. Children do not have access to a computer to increase their awareness of technology but they do use a cassette recorder, a camera and toys that require using buttons to operate them. They are encouraged to operate lifts and pedestrian crossings when out and about. Some scientific concepts are developed through play. Children cover topics such as senses and mini-beasts when they use magnifying glasses. However, opportunities are missed to help children increase their knowledge and understanding of science. For example, when making pizza no mention is made of hot and cold nor the changes in the ingredients as they are heated.

Children are given good opportunities to express themselves creatively. They sing, use musical instruments and a range of creative resources including paint, printing items and collage materials. They also make papier-mâché bowls and decorate them. The provision for children to develop physical skills is excellent. They do indoor activities such as impersonating the movements of animals. The physical wellbeing of the children is further enhanced by regular outdoor play. They enjoy using a good range of wheeled toys, a play house, a tent, ball games and climbing equipment encouraging the development of a full range of physical skills. Children are also taken to the swimming baths most weeks as the childminder has instructor qualifications, providing excellent physical benefits for children.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children can receive appropriate care according to their needs because the childminder completes admission forms containing the necessary information to meet individual requirements. This includes information such as medical details and dietary requirements but also likes and dislikes so children can feel secure and have their individual needs met. Children have access to resources and activities which encourage positive attitudes to the wider society. Gender stereotyping is avoided as children have a free choice when dressing up and the childminder uses appropriate language such as police officer, pointing out that females also become police officers. The childminder values children's opinions and shows understanding for their concerns. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with additional needs are provided for because the childminder has the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver inclusive care. She has attended training and conferences and liaises with the area Special Educational Needs Coordinator and other agencies to ensure care is appropriate for all children. A good understanding is shown of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2001).

Children behave well and they are encouraged to consider each others feelings. They are praised for their achievements and the childminder takes time to calmly explain why a behaviour is unacceptable. There is a behaviour management policy in place which is used consistently. The childminder skilfully uses distraction to resolve a dispute between two young children, appropriate to their age and stage of development.

The quality of partnership with parents is good and the childminder has had training on developing good relationships with parents. The childminder has many letters of commendation from parents who emphasise the wide range of activities available. Good systems are in place for the exchange of information. Detailed admission forms are completed to ensure care is appropriate for individual children in accordance with their parents' wishes. Parents are provided with detailed information about their child including progress, food eaten and sleep patterns. The childminder also takes time to provide verbal information as the child is collected. The childminder is aware of the new requirements for a detailed complaints log, but this has not yet been put into place.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder is well organised, providing a safe and efficient service for children, with all the required documentation in place. She has a file organised under the standards providing a detailed account of the provision so that parents can ensure that the setting is appropriate for their child. She has included a set of policies, which are available to interested parties. She ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on adults living at the premises to make sure children only have contact with suitable persons.

The childminder is pro-active in accessing training to ensure the provision continues to be of a high quality. She has recently attended training on nutrition, health and safety and the Birth to three matters framework to improve the service for children.

Children's interests continue to be protected after they have left the setting because the childminder keeps the records for the required time. Records are stored securely to maintain confidentiality for children and their families. The childminder notifies Ofsted of any changes at the premises to ensure the provision remains appropriate for children.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to include the regulator's address and telephone number in the complaints procedure. This is now in place, providing a more effective service for parents.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

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. There are no complaints to report.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

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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):

- provide children with individual towels for drying their hands and make fresh water freely available throughout the day
- ensure that locks on the bedroom doors are used consistently to prevent children accessing unsuitable or dangerous areas.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- take opportunities to extend children's learning by introducing new vocabulary ideas and concepts
- develop children's literacy skills by including more examples of writing in the environment and frequent access to mark making materials in play situations.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)