



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	322797
Inspection date	09 March 2006
Inspector	Kay Margaret Armstrong

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 has been registered since 1991. She lives with her husband and 1 child aged 15 years, her young adult daughter and her fiancé. The family have a cat and a dog. They live in the Atherton area of Wigan, close to parks and shops. The children have access to the play room, a through sitting room, dining room and conservatory. Toilet and hand washing facilities are available on the ground floor. The rear garden, which is enclosed is available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to provide care for 6 children and is currently caring for 12 children, 1 of whom attends on a fulltime basis.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and she gains support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Hygiene procedures are implemented to ensure that children are cared for in a warm, clean, home. Daily routines promote children's understanding of good hygiene practices, fosters their independence and self-help skills. Older children are able take themselves to the bathroom and are reminded to wash their hands by a bright poster on the door. Appropriate nappy changing routines are in place, minimising the risk of cross infection.

Children benefit from a range of activities that contribute to their physical growth and development. Daily outings ensure children have plenty of fresh air. Regular visits to the park provide the opportunity for them to run around, swing, climb, slide and play football. Indoors, babies are able to crawl around freely, pull themselves into a standing position and practise the skill of walking whilst holding on to furniture or push a long. All these experiences help children to develop physically and gain control of their bodies.

The childminder discusses and agrees children's dietary requirements with parents. She considers children's likes and dislikes when providing food and drink. The childminder provides children with a range of snacks and meals, some of which are homemade. These contribute to their well-being and physical development. Children remain hydrated as they are able to access drinks at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The children benefit from a well maintained, homely environment where the childminder prioritises safety. Potential hazards are recognised and minimised, as a result children are able to play freely and safely. The childminder is vigilant and has a good recognition of the need for a balance between safe limits and freedom. She makes sure safety measures are in place, such as safety gates on the kitchen door way. Exit doors are locked with the keys easily accessible, but out of the reach of children, therefore allowing an easy evacuation of the home in the event of an emergency.

There is a sufficient range resources available, which are suitable to the children's ages. Toys and equipment are maintained to a good standard and comply to safety regulations, minimising risks to children. Children are sufficiently protected because the childminder has the required knowledge and documentation in place to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded. She has an understanding of her role in protecting children in line with the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children's welfare is promoted and their individual needs are met through activities that include opportunities for social, emotional, physical and intellectual development. The relaxed atmosphere enables children to settle quickly. The children are happy and have a positive relationship with the childminder. The childminder offers comfort and reassurance through appropriate cuddles and hugs. Children have good support and attention from the childminder which increases their sense of security.

Although the childminder has a sufficient range of resources to meet children's individual needs, their choice is limited as they have restricted access to a variety of toys and books. The resources available are all manufactured which impacts on children's sensory development. However, the childminder does provide a range of activities to promote children's learning. They regularly attend toddler groups, where they are able to access different play environments, equipment and are able to socialise with other children. The childminder spends time playing and interacting with the children who are engaged, interested and occupied. They enjoy investigating activity centres, spend time posting different shapes into posting boxes and putting together puzzles. Their understanding, language and vocabulary are extended as the childminder talks about what they are doing. She introduces colour and shape into the conversation as she plays with them. Children are beginning to learn they are independent people, as they start to point to their eyes, nose and ears.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has an adequate understanding of equal-opportunities and anti-discriminatory play. However, there are insufficient resources available, which reflect our diverse society, to promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

The childminder speaks positively to children, using encouragement effectively to support their efforts and foster their independence. Good behaviour is acknowledged, celebrated and praised appropriately. As a result the children are becoming confident and developing a positive self-esteem. The childminder supports children to understand and maintain simple house rules. Consequently children behave well and are beginning to learn right from wrong.

Children benefit from the positive relationships that the childminder has established with their parents, as their individual needs are recognised and met. Information is shared verbally on a daily basis. This ensures that children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is enhanced by the childminder's organisation. This means they are welcomed into her home, which is clean, well maintained, safe and warm. All records and documentation required by the regulator are in place and information is shared regularly with parents, which contributes to the continuity of care for the children.

The childminder ensures children have sufficient space in order to play in comfort. Some resources are organised to promote children's independence, encouraging them to make choices about their play and learning. The children enjoy a range of different play opportunities away from the home, such as visits to a nearby farm, alphabet zoo, toddler groups, other childminder's homes and the park, which provide opportunities for social interactions with their peers.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure children have a wide range of activities set out for them to play with on a daily basis, develop knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and develop knowledge and understanding of equal opportunity issues.

The childminder has addressed these recommendations. Through discussion she demonstrates a sound understanding and knowledge of the issues surrounding both child protection and equal opportunities. Her knowledge and understanding ensures children are adequately protected and they have some opportunities to learn about difference and the world around them. Children have access to resources, which are suitable to their ages and stages of development. However, these are not varied offer limited choice therefore a further recommendation has been raised.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted have received two concerns since April 2004. The first concern regarding National Standards 6, 8, and 11 was investigated on 26 November 2004 and as a result actions were raised. The provider response to these actions was satisfactory. A further concern relating to national Standard 6 has been raised. A childcare inspector conducted a visit on 2 February 2006. Ofsted are satisfied that the provider 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

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):

- provide children with the opportunity to explore a range of natural materials and improve access to a variety of resources
- develop the range of resources available to the children which reflect positive images of our diverse society.

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