



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	304335
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 April 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Rachel Ruth Britten

<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<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

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 July 1994. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children under 8 years old. She lives with her husband and adult daughter in a house in the Willaston area of Nantwich. The ground floor and upstairs bathroom are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

There are six children currently on roll, of whom two were present during the inspection. Children are taken to local toddler groups and parks on a regular basis. There is a pet cat and chickens are kept in the chicken run which children may come into contact with.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children stay very healthy because the childminder consistently meets high standards of hygiene, diligently following health and hygiene guidelines and procedures. She keeps up to date by attending relevant courses on food hygiene, allergy management, childhood illnesses, health and safety awareness, and manual handling. She applies these to her practice. She talks to parents about allergies before their child starts and tells them that she can manage these. For example, she knows to change her apron after preparing food which may have traces of nuts in it. She also knows how to use an EpiPen. She makes sure cleaning routines for dummies and blankets are well maintained and always has clean spares so that parents do not have to remember everything.

Children learn about healthy living because the childminder enthusiastically teaches children about hygiene from the outset. They watch her clean the nappy change station with Detox spray and then help her to place bagged nappies in the bin outside. Then they all wash their hands at the kitchen sink. As they get older, children learn to keep their bodies and their possessions healthy and clean. For example the childminder educates children about the benefits of using sun cream, teeth cleaning, carrying water bottles and cleaning shoes before going home. She helps them to learn about recycling too, especially as they help with preparing and cooking meals or snacks. As a result, children are confident and respond well to hygiene routines.

Children enjoy physical activity, for example, by attending different toddler groups a few days a week and by going out regularly for walks and visits to places of interest, such as Wheelock farm. They make very good use of the garden for play too. Children have the opportunity to rest according to their needs because the childminder is aware of these and adapts the daily routine accordingly. For example, the toddlers are not equally tired so she tries putting them both down in separate rooms, but quickly brings one back to play when it is clear that he is not going to settle. Likewise, school age children might come into the playroom for a rest and watch television for a short time before going outside to play with the others.

The childminder is contributing superbly to children's emotional well-being. This is because she provides a clean, calm, welcoming play environment and is giving her utmost priority to each child's stability and happiness. She is dynamic, warm and consistent with each child, so that each one feels at home from the outset and loves to spend time with her, even on an informal basis outside childminding hours.

Children are very well nourished because the childminder supplies a full range of main meals, cold lunches and snacks. These include fruit, vegetables and little fat, sugar or salt. For example, children have pasta or rice meals, salads or jacket potatoes. Snacks might be fruit and bread sticks. Children drink water, milk or juice, according to their preferences and have constant access to these. Biscuits are

sometimes given to older children if they choose, especially since some of the teenagers seem rather preoccupied with body weight resulting from peer pressures.

Children respond well to meal and snack routines because the childminder usually eats with children and regularly involves them in helping to prepare and serve food and drinks. She also ensures that she consistently follows parents' wishes and records baby and toddler intakes so that parents know exactly what they have eaten and drunk.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a spacious, welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment. It is well set out with a designated play room and use made of the kitchen and conservatory for meals, quiet and messy play. The play room is light, bright, and provides table and floor play space and comfortable seating. In addition, the childminder uses posters, open shelving and fabric coverings to good effect. They help children to learn about number, letter and animals as well as making the environment look bright and cheerful.

The resources are excellent. The childminder supplies all her own buggies and high chairs which are safe, clean and in excellent condition. She obtains at least two of all resources to save disputes, especially now that she has twins on roll. This strategy is highly effective and has significantly enhanced the quality of the play that under fives are enjoying. For example, they can all play with a shape sorter, build with bricks or look at a book. Storage boxes are placed accessibly around the play room on open shelf units so that the environment is stimulating and additional resources can be quickly accessed to support role play, for example, tea parties. Resources for pre-school children are also educational. For example, floor puzzles help children to learn their numbers and colours. Even the material covering the chairs has animals on it which the childminder points out to toddlers learning animal names.

The childminder keeps children exceptionally safe. She makes use of her training from a 'risk and play' workshop and shows a good level of insight into her tendency to be 'risk averse'. She knows that she is reluctant to expose children to any dangers and that, as a consequence, they could be under-stimulated. She therefore devises ways to balance safety and adventure so that children still have fun and can play innovatively. For example, when toddlers want to play in the shopping baskets, she makes sufficient floor space and supervises them closely so that if they tip over, they do not hurt themselves. When she has to leave the room to fetch drinks, she puts the baskets out of reach despite the children's protestations, because it is too risky for the children to play in the baskets unsupervised, even for a minute.

Meticulous care is given to maintaining the safety of the environment for the children attending. For example, a door stop is put on the playroom door when toddlers are there because one of them tends to play with the door and may trap his fingers. In addition, the childminder puts out of reach all the small things in the toy room when toddlers are here so that they cannot put any small objects in their mouths that could choke them. In addition, emergency back-up arrangements are in place, regular

evacuations are practised, and children aged two and over understand what this is for.

Children are kept safe on outings because the childminder always uses reins, buggies and car seats appropriately. Walking children know not to walk on the outside of the pavement. Pre-school children know that they cannot let go of the childminder in case they fall into the road. Older children are taught how to use the crossings and where to cross safely.

Children are protected from abuse because the childminder understands her role in child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. She shows parents information about child protection in her portfolio and knows what to do if an allegation is made against her.

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

The provision is good.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem because the childminder relishes the time she spends with each child and listens and talks to them constantly. They are able to select their own toys to play with and she will join in and extend this to help them learn and develop as they play. For example, toddlers play with the shape sorters and with her help are beginning to name shapes and identify which hole they go into.

Although there are no written activity plans, the childminder has numerous ideas and utilises the many training courses she has been on, to suggest ideas and capture children's interest. For example, she went on a "Music to your ears" course and uses the CDs in the car and at home to do singing and dancing with children. Stories are also being brought to life so that children can participate, sing and act out stories, such as 'Incy Wincey Spider'. This is because the childminder is utilising the 'story sack' method to extend stories into themed activities where children can play an active part. The childminder also uses the Birth to three matters framework to check that children are making progress and having opportunities such as chances to be together, to find a voice and to make meaning.

Toddlers show some interest in what they do and can sustain this for quite long periods when they continue to receive input from the childminder. For example, they play in the shopping baskets for about 20 minutes, but require constant input to make sure that they do not annoy one another. However, the childminder has not laid on any messy, creative or physical play opportunities for them and does not seem to be as successful at meaningfully occupying them as she is with pre-school and older children. As a result, they are noisy and irritable at times.

School age children are confident to ask questions of the childminder if they want to play with something particular or if they need help to learn a new skill. They do their school work in the kitchen or conservatory and then they usually go out in the garden with a ball. Younger ones sit to the table and do some colouring at the same time. Indoor activities after school include many traditional games, such as hang man, battleships, snap, picture dominoes, boules, jigsaws, craft and junk modelling. Very

little television is watched except when children are tired because they are involved and interested in other activities.

Children are becoming skilful communicators because the childminder talks to them about everything that they are doing and is responsive to them, so that they are confident in seeking adult interaction. She names objects and models clear speech for toddlers to help promote language development. For example, she explains that she is putting the baskets out of reach while she fetches drinks from the kitchen. The toddlers cry when she does this, but she immediately puts the baskets back when she comes back into the room, explaining again what she is doing. This helps to encourage the beginnings of speech.

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

The provision is good.

Children develop self-esteem and respect for others as they play in groups of varying sizes and ages. The childminder is skilled in helping each child to feel wanted and loved and makes sure that she has individual time with each one, either when others are asleep or busy playing. She helps them to understand one another's needs by arranging quiet table top activities for younger ones when their older siblings are completing homework. She also explains why some activities are not suitable for the toddlers and helps the older ones to include and tolerate the younger ones' games.

The childminder understands each child's individual needs and celebrates their individuality. Children also become aware of wider society because they have access to a range of multicultural images through books, dolls and play figures. For example, the childminder has a box of play figures with disabilities and a toy ambulance with multicultural play figures.

Children make positive and cooperative relationships, sharing play equipment happily and going confidently to the childminder for resolution whenever things don't feel right for them. They are beginning to distinguish between right and wrong because the childminder explains that they must take turns or be kind to each other at all times and is positive in her discipline. She has undertaken behaviour training and uses distraction, vigilance and clear boundaries so that children behave well. Her policy is "include everyone and safety first." Time out on the sofa and discussion about the problem is used for all children aged over two and quick resolution of issues supports parents' wishes too. Children are able to say sorry when they have been unkind or wrong and some have written cards to say this. However, toddlers are not yet able to work very harmoniously with others and the childminder has to work hard to ensure that they have access to the same things to play with so that they do not fight over toys.

Children's needs are met through very good relationships with parents. An excellent welcome file explains all aspects of the family and the childminding service to new parents. References and cards demonstrate that other parents are satisfied with the service and tell that their children have been attending for many years. The childminder asks parents regularly about children's routines, about what they think of the service and if there is anything they want her do differently. She communicates

openly and parents find her reliable, flexible and easy to deal with.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are well protected and cared for because the childminder has an excellent knowledge of child development which she continues to build upon by attending relevant training and workshops. Her comprehensive portfolio includes recent update training in safety, health, play, documentation and equal opportunities issues. Outcomes for children are therefore good in all these areas.

The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of all children and organises her service accordingly. For example, she ensures that the play environment is tidy, accessible, safe and stimulating each day. She also promotes good outcomes for children's health because she is thorough in obtaining and storing children's information, consents and agreements from parents. These are used to ensure that good care is given, that parents' wishes are adhered to, and for essential information in case of emergency.

Policies and procedures work extremely well in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. There are clear policies relating to all aspects of the National Standards for childminding, accompanied by useful information for parents and childminder to refer to. For example, children's health and wellbeing is secured by excellent paperwork in relation to incident, accident and medication records. Sheets are all signed and parent consents are kept with the medication record. This means that parents are fully informed and continuity of care is given priority. Likewise, children's safety is prioritised through safe working practices detailed in safety policies for indoor and outdoor activities. Included in this are current documents relating to the maintenance of the vehicle used to transport children, so that parents can be sure that appropriate insurance is in place and the vehicle is roadworthy. The daily register book shows accurate times of arrival and departure for children and is completed as they actually come and go. This means that it can be relied upon to show when children are present in case of an emergency or dispute.

The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

There was one recommendation made at the last inspection in November 2004. It was a reminder to retain parent consents for medication for at least two years, in case of complaint or dispute. Consents for medication are now all retained by the childminder so that there is a clear paper trail of evidence that medication has been given following parents' written instructions. This safeguards children and protects the childminder from possible complaint.

## **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 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):

- consider ways in which you can extend the development of children under two through planning a variety of play media.

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