



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	304401
Inspection date	21 March 2006
Inspector	Jeanne Lesley Walsh

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 good. 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 1994 and is registered to provide care for up to six children aged under 8 years. She lives with her husband and two grown up children,

in Disley near Stockport and the family have a pet dog. There are currently six children on roll.

Childminding takes place in the lounge, dining room, kitchen, upstairs toilet, bathroom and one bedroom. There is access to a rear garden for outdoor play.

Children may be taken and collected to and from local schools for out of school care. Younger children can be taken to local carer and toddler groups to extend their play opportunities and social skills within a group setting.

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 enjoy a wide range of activities in the home and outdoors, which positively contribute to their physical development and general good health. Walking and playing in the garden and dancing provides opportunity for fresh air and exercise. Children are able to move around freely in the home and the childminder takes highly effective steps to ensure that the premises are clean to prevent the spread of infection. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before handling food and after visiting the toilet and they are provided with their own towels, marked with their own individual picture, which they all recognise. The childminder works with parents to make sure children's individual needs are met, for example, when children are toilet training she provides equipment, such as trainer seats to support and encourage the child and give it confidence.

The children's health is important to the childminder and she obtains appropriate signed consent forms from parents regarding health, outings and emergencies and these are kept confidentially. She provides a clear policy about children who are sick or who have an infectious disease to ensure their best care and this is shared with parents. As the provider has family pets she has taken the trouble to discuss safety and hygiene issues with the Environmental Health in order to ensure that she is taking appropriate precautions when young children are around.

The parents currently provide their own child's food for lunch and the childminder provides their snacks. Children are encouraged to eat a healthy diet and they enjoy helping to prepare an assortment of fresh fruits that they choose for themselves at snack time. The childminder has discussion with parents regarding children's individual likes and dislikes and any particular allergies and is willing to provide food in conjunction with their wishes to ensure that children's diet is appropriate.

Children are learning about healthy eating and they are developing good habits as meal time is well organised as a social occasion. The children are relaxed and able to enjoy their food. They wash their hands first, choose which seat they want at the table and they enjoy their meals and snacks without disruption or fuss. Children also independently enjoy fresh drinks throughout the day. They are starting to learn about growing food, during an activity, as they prepare to grow some cress and they know that once it has grown they can cut it and eat it on sandwiches.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained environment, where the childminder has made every effort to minimise the risk of accident and injury, both in the home and on outings. Children are able to participate freely and independently in a wide range of play activities that provide challenge and stimulation. The equipment is of good quality, clean, safe and appropriate for their stage of development and conforms with safety standards. Children are becoming aware of the simple rules that ensure that they have a balance between having the freedom to play and still maintaining safe limits.

Good procedures and the required documentation are used to actively safeguard and promote the children's welfare. Their safety and protection is a priority to the childminder and she reviews all accidents and incidents that happen to children, to identify if changes in practice or additional precautions are needed. She holds a current first aid certificate, is fully aware of local Area Child Protection Committee procedures and her responsibility to implement them and she makes sure that parents are also aware of her responsibility in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are content and settled in the childminder's home. The childminder confidently provides well for their individual care needs and their different stages of development. Children participate in a wide variety of well planned, age-appropriate play opportunities and activities, both inside and outside of the home. This actively promotes their development in all areas and meets their individual needs. Children choose what to play with from the wide variety of resources which are accessible to them and they are supported by the childminder as they often lead their own play. Activities are prepared and well set out prior to their arrival so that children can safely enjoy and achieve. This boosts their confidence and their independence. The children are developing imaginative skills as they play house with the play kitchen, go shopping and make shopping lists and they are enjoying being creative as they enjoy making puppets and growing cress seeds. However, although the children have plenty of stimulation, the activities are decided with the children at the beginning of each week and the provision could be further enhanced if the children had a little more freedom to choose spontaneously on a daily basis.

Children are becoming increasingly aware of their surroundings as they enjoy regular trips out, giving them the opportunity to enjoy physical activity, fresh air and to learn about their local environment. They are learning good communication skills as they listen intently to the childminder who talks constantly to them. She explains things, asks questions and answers questions and offers praise consistently. They know that she always listens to them and they also know that sometimes they have to be patient if the childminder is talking to somebody else. They are learning good social skills and they are beginning to understand their environment and respond to what is said to them.

The childminder is starting to keep daily planning records of activities. The children

will benefit further from these if they are developed so that they relate to their individual needs and skills and demonstrate their progression. The childminder prepares well and she has the skills and the tools to help children to achieve and to progress. Children are happy and learning and they are developing socially, physically and intellectually. Their individual needs are being met.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are provided with a wide range of activities and resources both inside and outside the home which are appropriate to their age and are designed to begin increasing their awareness of diversity and understanding of others. Good use is made of local amenities, such as visits to the park, the library, the farm and the shops. This is helping children to develop a sense of belonging and start to be aware of their local community. Children have access to a good range of toys and books and they enjoy a variety of activities and resources that help to enhance their understanding of the wider society we live in. These reflect positive images of culture, religion, gender and disability. Different festivals are celebrated and include creative activities, food, dance, music and costume.

Children behave well and are starting to learn about right and wrong as the childminder demonstrates a positive approach to behaviour management. She is clearly aware of different ages and stages of development and she tailors her approach appropriately. Older children are encouraged to participate in setting simple boundaries and house rules so that they take ownership and act accordingly. The childminder gently reminds the children that we all have a responsibility to each other to keep safe and to keep happy.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their individual needs are met well as the childminder discusses and agrees the children's care with their parents to ensure continuity. She has a welcome pack which she gives to parents containing information about routines, what their children need, what they will do and information about policies and procedures. She encourages daily discussion to keep them informed of their child's progress and she keeps daily written record sheets of the child's day if parents request it. This ensures that there is regular information sharing with parents and that children's progress and achievements are monitored and valued.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and settled in the friendly well organised home. They confidently and freely explore their surroundings and initiate their own play and learning. Children of all ages benefit from a well planned day and they receive lots of encouragement, time and attention from the childminder which promotes their independence and helps to develop their self-esteem. Effective procedures keep children safe from persons who are not vetted and the childminder never leaves the

children in the care or supervision of any other person other than herself.

The childminder is committed to further developing her own knowledge and skills and the service she provides by attending additional training and this is helping with her planning for children. She is using her knowledge and skills to benefit children by ensuring their continued development and her records are starting to confirm this.

Children's welfare is well supported through good practice, policies and procedures. They are cared for in a secure environment where they can develop and achieve at their own pace. The continuity of their care is enhanced through the good use of written records.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder had several areas of the home excluded from use due to extensive building work. This included the rear garden for outdoor play.

The building work has now been completed and the improvements provide good, safe areas both in the home and in the garden for children to move around freely and safely during their play.

The restrictions have since been removed from her registration.

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

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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):

- further enhance the provision by giving the children more freedom to choose toys and equipment spontaneously rather than always in advance and

continue to further develop planning and link it to the individual needs of the children.

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