

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	314919
Inspection date	03 September 2007
Inspector	Sheila Iwaskow
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 was registered in 1989. She lives with her husband, adult daughter and son aged 14 years in the Grappenhall area of Warrington. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding; this comprises of the lounge, playroom, conservatory, kitchen and toilet. There is an area at the side of the property for outdoor play. The family have a dog

There are currently eight children on roll who attend on a variety of placements. The childminder offers care to older children before and after school and during school holidays.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well protected. The childminder maintains good standards of cleanliness across all areas of her home used for childminding purposes. She implements hygienic nappy changes routines and uses anti-bacterial spray on surfaces to minimise the risk of cross-infection. A clear sick child policy is in place and meets the needs of all the children who attend. Children clearly understand the importance of washing their hands and openly talk about germs making

them ill. A fully stocked first aid box is within easy reach to treat any minor accidents or injuries if required

Children's well-being is assured as they have time to rest as well as be active. Individual sleep patterns are respected, which provides an environment that is consistent with home. The childminder creates a relaxing atmosphere and organises her home well to enable young children to sleep peacefully and undisturbed in travel cots.

Children benefit from a good amount of fresh air, which contributes towards a healthy life style. On a daily basis they walk to and from school and to the park where they have the opportunity to play on the swings and slides. A range of play equipment is also available within the childminder's home to support children's physical development. Young children have a good amount of space to develop their physical skills and are well supported by the childminder as they practise balancing and walking.

Parents wishes with regard to food and drink are taken into account and respected. Meals provided by the childminder are healthy and help promote children's growth and development. Good emphasis is given to children having regular access to drinks to keep them well refreshed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a homely environment where they have ample space to move around freely and play in comfort. Examples of recent art work and photographs of the children at play are attractively displayed, giving them a sense of belonging within the setting. Space is made available for older children who want to do their homework or simply relax after a busy day at school. Toys are plentiful and meet the needs of all the children who currently attend. Resources are mainly stored in the garage and children make independent choices from the selection available at the beginning of the day. Play materials are clean and regularly checked for safety, minimising the risks to children.

Children are well supervised to keep them free from harm. The childminder maintains close physical proximity at all times to younger children. As a result, they feel reassured and secure. All reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that children are cared for in a safe environment. Entrances and exits to the premises are secure and safety features, such as smoke alarms and a fire blanket are in place. However, potential risks to children's safety have been identified; a drain in the back garden is not fully covered and a cupboard containing an electrical meter is not securely locked. Furthermore, although the childminder is aware of how to get out of the house in the event of a fire, these procedures are not practised with the children. This prevents them from being confident of what to do and where to go in the event of a fire.

Children's welfare is safeguarded. The childminder has a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and procedures to follow if she is concerned.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy the time that they spend in the childminder's home and care. The familiar routines and the relaxed supportive environment contribute strongly to them feeling at ease. Young children freely approach the childminder for hugs and the positive atmosphere encourages them to be good humoured. The childminder has a good understanding of what

the children like and can do. This allows her to plan activities which build on their natural curiosity as learners.

Children express themselves freely and play purposefully. They demonstrate good levels of concentration as they look at photographs and laugh with delight as they recognise pictures of themselves. Children develop their creativity as they make pigs from paper mache, paint their faces and make marks using felt tip pens. Reading is a popular activity and regular visits to the library contribute towards children's love of books. Children's tactile experiences are enhanced as they manipulate play dough and feel the differing textures of sand and water. Older children enjoy competing against each other as they play board games and engaging in role play using the wide range of dressing up clothes available.

Settling in procedures are implemented to ensure that new children are happy and secure in the childminder's care. Children enjoy visits local play groups and museums where they can experience alternative play environments, socialise with other children and acquire new knowledge.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children, parents and visitors are warmly welcomed into the childminder's home. She gathers relevant information from parents, ensuring that individual needs are well met. Children form good relationships with members of her family, enjoy their company and have fun together. Birthdays are celebrated which makes children feel special. A suitable range of resources are available which reflect equality of opportunity. However, activities which promote children's awareness of cultural diversity are limited. This prevents children gaining a full appreciation of the world in which they live. Through discussion the childminder demonstrates a positive attitude to inclusion.

Children play happily alongside one another and are very well behaved. They respond well to the positive strategies and gentle encouragement used to gain their cooperation. All children are treated with individual care and respect and the frequent use of praise fosters children's confidence.

Children benefit from the positive relationships that the childminder has established with their parents. Informal chats at the end of the day keep parents informed about how their children have spent their day. Clear and concise procedures are in place for recording complaints.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the childminder's good organisation. Effective use is made of space to provide children with a balanced range of activities. There is a clear time table in place, which facilitates taking and collecting children from a local primary school.

Over the years the childminder has accessed training courses to keep her child care practices up-to-date. She recognises her responsibility to ensure that all children living in the house are vetted when they turn 16 years-of-age. This helps to keep children safe.

The childminder cares for children within the required ratios and her certificate is displayed, keeping parents informed of her conditions of registration. All documentation required for childminding purposes is in place and organised to respect confidentiality.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection the childminder agreed to keep attendance records up-to-date and to ensure that the contact details for the Local Safeguarding Children's Board are accessible. Both of these issues have now been addressed. Times of arrival and departure are recorded on a daily basis in a diary and the relevant telephone numbers, in case of child protection concerns, are displayed. These improvements ensure that children's safety and welfare is further promoted.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required Ofsted or the provider to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they may 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):

- practise fire evacuations with the children; ensure the meter cupboard and drain do not pose a risk to children's safety
- increase activities that raise children's awareness of the world around them.

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