

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313000
Inspection date	30 January 2008
Inspector	Chris Scully
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 registered in 1994. She lives with her husband and their three grown up children. They live in a three bedroom house on a private housing estate in the Huyton area of Knowsley, within walking distance of local amenities, such as schools and shops. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She is currently caring for three children under five at various times during the week. The childminder travels to local schools to take and collect children.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is an active member of her local childminder group. She receives support from Sure Start.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean environment. They are developing a sound understanding of the need for good hygiene practices. Children are aware that they must wash their hands before snack and eagerly rush upstairs with the childminder to do this. The childminder provides good support to children, as she reminds them to use soap and to run their hands together to remove any germs. The use of individual towels and paper towels effectively minimises the risk of cross infection. Children eagerly present their hands to the childminder to inform her that they are now clean. Children understand the need to cover their mouths when coughing and use tissues to wipe their noses. This is supported by the sick child policy, although this does not include information about parents collecting their child if they become unwell whilst in the childminder's care. However, this is discussed with parents. The childminder is trained in first aid, which means children accidents or incidents are handled well.

Children are able to sleep or rest according to their individual needs. Older children sleep on the settee in the lounge and are constantly supervised by the childminder to ensure their safety. Children are keen to explain about their trips to soft play centres and the park. They comment upon how they use the various swings and slides, especially the one that feeds into the ball pool. Children's small skills are developing well. They are confident to use a range of small resources, such as paint brushes and tools when playing with dough.

Children enjoy a generally healthy diet; although it does contain a number of processed foods, such as chicken nuggets and potatoes, with some vegetables provided. The childminder has begun to introduce more healthy options to the children which include chicken and fish. Children are offered fruit on a daily basis and eagerly devoured the melon, banana and oranges provided today. Children enjoy the opportunities to sit with their friends at snack time. A selection of drinks are offered to the children throughout the day in order to keep themselves refreshed. However, they are not always able to independently access them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming environment where they can play safely and in comfort. Children are confident to select their own resources from the low-level storage systems and to choose where to play. For example, they happily select a range of puzzles and play with these on the floor with their friends and the childminder. Children confidently assist in the tidying away of resources at various times of the day. There are some resources, which promote positive images of diversity. Toys and resources are safe and suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children.

The childminder conducts daily visual checks of the premises to ensure they remain safe and suitable for the children. This also includes outdoor areas used by children, such as local parks to ensure the equipment is safe before the children use it. This means any identified risk are quickly minimised. Clear procedures are in place for taking children on outings. Younger children are happy to use the pram and with older children encourage to hold on to the pram. The childminder discusses the importance of road safety with the children, which enables them to keep themselves safe. Good systems are in place for transporting children in the car. Thus, all children are suitably restrained in an appropriate car seat or booster seat. They have a sound

understanding of the house rules which enable them to keep themselves safe, for example, not running indoors. Appropriate fire detection systems are in place and are checked on a regular basis to ensure they remain in good working order.

The childminder has a sound understanding of child protection issues. She has attended a refresher course on safeguarding children and has used this information well to inform her practice. A child protection policy is in place, but does not give clear information to parents about the referral processes. However, the childminder is very aware of the action to take in order to protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the childminder's care. This is due to the warm, caring relationships the childminder builds with the children, which enables them to feel safe and secure in her care. Children are keen to include the childminder in their play, for example, completing the animal world puzzle and naming the various animals. The childminder is knowledgeable about the children in her care and knows their likes and preferences, such as dinosaurs. This enables the childminder to converse fluently with the children about their favourite topics. Children are confident speakers who enjoy talking with the childminder. They talk fondly about older siblings and the fun they have with them and their parents. Daily routines enable children to identify the flow of the day and provide opportunities for active and quiet times during the session. Activities are planned in consultation with the children, but are not formalised. There are no formal systems in place for charting children's progress.

The childminder spends considerable amounts of time talking and interacting with the children. She is adept at asking open-ended questions, which enable children to think, communicate and solve simple problems. Their counting skills are progressing well as they confidently count objects with the children and notice the similarities between them. Children state they enjoy making cakes with the childminder, especially fairy cakes. They enjoy the opportunities to paint with the childminder and happily help to set up the area for the activities. Children enjoy creating butterflies and talk eagerly about how they are to decorate them the following day. Weekly opportunities to visit the library enhance the children's enjoyment of books. Children are keen to look at books with the childminder and bring their favourites over to her to read. They are able to mark make and practise writing their names on magnetic boards and are beginning to identify the letters that begin their name.

Children are becoming interested learners who enjoy looking at new objects and ideas. For example, they rush to the window to watch the planes fly overhead and are thrilled to be able to examine the baby scan picture and identify which is the baby's body and head.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has a sound understanding of the children's individual needs and circumstances. This is supported by the written and verbal information sourced from parents. Children have some opportunities to explore the wider world through planned activities, such as the celebration of Chinese New Year at play group. Children learn about their own community, as they celebrate their birthdays with the childminder. This provides some opportunities for children to develop positive attitudes to others. Children feel valued as the childminder listens to and is interested in what they have to say.

Children are generally well behaved and respond well to the childminder's requests. Minor incidents are handled well by the childminder and enable children to quickly resolve any issues. The childminder is a positive role model who consistently applies the house rules. This successfully enables children to know what is expected of them. They are developing negotiation skills as they decide upon which activities they are to do next, for example, they will play with the dough once they have completed their butterflies. There currently are no children attending who have a disability or learning difficulty. However, suitable systems are in place for supporting children.

The childminder develops positive relationships with parents. Verbal information is provided on a daily basis about the activities the children have undertaken and their achievements. Policies and procedures are shared with the parents which means they are aware of the type of care and education their child can expect to receive. All consents are in place, which means children are cared for in accordance with their parent's wishes. Appropriate systems are in place for handling any concerns the parents may have. The childminder states that on some occasions children are reluctant to go home until they have finished watching a programme or completing their activities. This often results with parents waiting until they are ready to go.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has a sound understanding of the National Standards and implements these well in practice. She ensures all persons over 16 years living on the premises have undertaken appropriate checks with Ofsted, in order to maintain the children's safety, and systems are in place to provide care in an emergency. She has attended some training courses since the last inspection, which includes safeguarding children and the Early Years Foundation Stage, in order to keep abreast of current good practice and changes in legislation.

Procedures which contribute to the health, safety and well-being of the children are in place, although there are some omissions within the sick child policy and child protection policy. Policies are effectively shared with parents. Records and documentation are effectively maintained, although on some occasions confidentiality is not consistently maintained within the accident record. Children's attendance is accurately recorded.

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 four recommendations were raised in relation to: resources depicting diversity; the recording of medication; hand drying facilities; fire evacuation and the organisation of toys and resources. The childminder has purchased some resources which depict diversity, such as various small world figures and jigsaws. She has improved upon the systems for administering and recording medication by ensuring parents sign to give consent for the medication and sign the record book to acknowledge the entry. All children now have individual towels in order to minimise the spread of infection. The fire evacuation procedure is practised with the children, which means they develop an understanding of what to do in an emergency.

In addressing these issues the childminder has improved upon the children's health safety and well-being.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted 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 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):

- implement a system for recording children progress and formalise the plans of activities
- revise the child protection policy and sick child policy, and maintain confidentiality within the accident record
- further improve upon children's understanding of a healthy diet.

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