

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 314897
Inspection date 18 January 2008
Inspector Jane Shaw

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 in Penketh, Warrington, Cheshire.

The whole of the ground floor and the bathroom on the first floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is access to an enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five on a full and part-time basis and one child over five after school on a part-time basis. The childminder attends the local toddler group and other child centred groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted as a result of effective procedures and practices employed by the childminder. The provision of a clean and hygienic environment ensures children's good

health is maintained at all times during the day. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and certain activities and also before meals. Younger children are supported in this task. Appropriate routines are in place for the changing of nappies ensuring children's good health, for example, the use of disposable gloves. A written sick child procedure, which is shared with parents and carers, ensures that they are aware of the childminder's responsibility to their children. This ensures that their children are cared for within an environment which is as free from infection as possible. Appropriate recording systems are in place to record accidents and the administration of medication, ensuring parents and carers are kept up to date with their child's care and well-being.

Children enjoy a very healthy diet. They are provided with a wide variety of healthy options throughout the day, for example, children enjoy a light lunch of cheese sandwiches with brown bread, salad, bananas and custard and a drink. Menus are balanced and varied and contain plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, for example, butternut squash and sweet potato, ensuring children eat healthily. The childminder discusses food and meal arrangements with parents and carers and gathers information regarding children's likes, dislikes and allergies. Menus are available for parents and carers ensuring they are aware of how the childminder plans to promote their child's healthy eating. Children have access to drinks throughout the day.

Children's physical health is well promoted through regular opportunities to be outdoors either within the childminder's garden, or as they enjoy local walks and trips to the park. The children have a variety of opportunities to develop physical skills. They participate in large physical play activities within the outdoor play space, and develop small manipulative skills and hand eye coordination during craft activities as they play board games and build with construction resources.

The childminder has an understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, having access to an information pack.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder makes good use of space to provide the children with access to a range of activities to support their enjoyment and development, for example, there is a designated playroom where children participate in a range of activities, such as imaginary play and construction. The dining room and lounge are used for additional activities, such as craft. Areas and activities are generally planned prior to children's arrival. All areas are clean and well maintained ensuring children's health and safety is well promoted. Play areas are bright with displays of children's work, posters, sensory lighting, making the environment welcoming and inviting for children, their parents and carers.

Children have access to a good range of toys and resources to support their care and play. Some resources are made ready for children's arrival, others are visible for children to make choices about their play upon arrival enabling them to settle quickly. Toys and resources are rotated regularly to sustain children's interest and to support a range of activities and experiences.

Children are cared for in an environment where their safety is well promoted. The childminder is clear about her responsibility in keeping children safe from harm. She has appropriate safety precautions in place, for example, socket covers and fireguards, however the presence of ivy in the garden poses hazards to children when using this space. The monthly practising of fire drills with children ensures that children's responses are appropriate in the event of this

occurring. Missing and uncollected child procedures and an emergency plan, which are shared with parents and carers, ensures they are aware of the childminder's responsibility to protect their children and to ultimately keep children safe.

Children are well protected because the childminder fully understands her role in safeguarding their welfare. The childminder has attended a basic awareness child protection training course in the past, and has access to written information on recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to refer any concerns. The childminder is clear about her responsibility in protecting children's welfare and would deal with any issues or concerns in an efficient and prompt manner. A written child protection policy which parents and carers read and sign to say they have done so, ensures that they are clear and fully aware of the childminder's responsibility to protect their children and refer any concerns to the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's enjoyment, achievement and care is well promoted. Children engage in an interesting range of activities and experiences both within and away from the childminding setting.

Activities are varied and include craft activities, experimental play, imaginary play, music and outdoor activities. Some activities are planned prior to children's arrival, with children being able to make additional choices once settled. Some toys and resources are accessible to children, enabling them to make independent choices about their play. The childminder plans activities, but plans are flexible allowing for children's particular interests or other events.

Photographs show children enjoying activities and outings, for example, making a large gingerbread house and visiting a local theme park. Children attend a toddler group where they enjoy the variety of activities offered, such as a music and rhythm sessions. Children go for autumn walks collecting leaves, they then return and create their own individual pictures using the different leaves, for example, one child created a giraffe picture using leaves and twigs. Children present thoroughly enjoyed looking at the photographs and other items kept within each child's personal scrapbook becoming very excited and animated.

Children enjoy imaginary play using a variety of small world resources, for example, changing and feeding their imaginary baby. They enjoy favourite board games which involve them in practising their counting, matching numbers and shapes.

Walls are decorated with examples of the children's artwork, such as an animal frieze and other educational posters and information.

Parents and carers receive information about outings, outdoor activities, learning and play, prior to their child's placement. This informs them how the childminder intends to promote their child's learning and development through the various activities she offers. They are kept up to date with what their children have been involved in during the day through verbal feedback upon collection.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have equal access to the activities and experiences offered. Activities are appropriate to their age and level of development, and are adapted to meet particular needs. Children

access a range of resources that reflect diversity, for example, books, jigsaws and play figures. Photographs show children taking part in tasting foods from around the world whilst attending the toddler group. This helps children to understand the culture of different countries. The childminder has a written equal opportunities policy, which is viewed by parents and carers.

Children's needs and specific care requirements are discussed with parents and carers in detail prior to their child starting, enabling the childminder to plan each individual child's care. The childminder liaises closely with parents and carers and other professionals and services to ensure consistency of approach in caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. The childminder has undertaken several courses looking at inclusion and working with children with learning difficulties or disabilities and has a written policy which shows how she will care for individual children and respect their needs.

Children's good behaviour is encouraged by the childminder through the use of positive praise and encouragement. The childminder joins with them in their activities promoting and supporting their learning and enjoyment. A positive behaviour management policy describes the use of appropriate strategies to promote children's good behaviour. Issues are discussed with parents and carers, but there is no incident record at present.

Good quality partnerships with parents and carers support children's placements well. Children's individual needs and requirements are discussed carefully and in detail with parents and carers prior to placement. They have access to an information booklet which looks at specific aspects of the childminder's services, for example, activities, toilet training and behaviour. They also have access to additional policies and procedures, such as admissions and collections, health and safety and medical emergencies. The childminder also asks them to read certain policies and sign to say they have done so and that they are therefore aware of the childminder's responsibilities. The childminder also has a written statement of commitment which she shares with parents and carers. Letters from parents and carers were available at the time of the inspection and those parents spoken to were very complimentary about the care and support their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All checks have been successfully completed on the childminder and household members by the local authority, ensuring children's safety at all times.

Children's days are well organised in terms of their meals, activities and opportunities, ensuring children enjoy their day and engage in varied activities and experiences both within and away from the setting. A current paediatric first aid qualification ensures the childminder is able to respond to any accidents or incidents in a confident and prompt manner ensuring children's safety and well-being at all times. The childminder is committed to enhancing her provision through attending training and keeping up to date with childcare initiatives and developments.

All legally required documentation and records are in place ensuring children are cared for safely. Children's individual needs and requirements are discussed with parents and carers prior to their child starting and appropriate information is gathered and recorded. Children's safety and enjoyment is given priority as the childminder obtains parental consent for aspects of children's enjoyment and care.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, two recommendations were raised, which related to, obtaining parental consent for transporting children by car and reviewing storage arrangements in the playroom.

Both issues have been appropriately addressed. Parents and carers now give written consent for the transporting of children by car. The childminder has reviewed her arrangements for the storage of resources within the playroom. The actions taken ensure the safety of minded children at all times.

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 complaint 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):

- ensure ivy in the garden is made safe
- devise an incident record.

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