

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** EY364062  
**Inspection date** 23 July 2008  
**Inspector** Wendy Brooks

**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](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 outstanding. 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 2007. She lives with her husband, one adult child, and two children aged 12 and six in Runcorn, Cheshire. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, and there is access to an enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. There are currently four children on roll. The childminder walks or drives to local pre-schools to take and collect children, and attends the local toddler group. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. The family have a pet rabbit and goldfish.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is given high priority by the childminder at all times. Whilst at the childminder's home, children take part in personal hygiene routines as part of their daily activities. For example, children of all ages wash their hands before eating and after messy play. After lunchtime children help to wipe their face with a face cloth and brush their teeth.

Children are cared for appropriately if they are ill because the childminder has an effective written policy in place which is shared with parents. The childminder holds a current certificate in paediatric first aid and shares information regarding contagious illnesses and recovery periods with parents. Accident and medication records are maintained accurately.

Children learn about protecting themselves in warmer weather as the childminder involves them in practices, such as putting on sun cream and wearing hats when playing in the garden. Babies and younger children are kept in the shade whenever possible and the childminder ensures that children have regular drinks from their beakers which are readily available.

The childminder provides quiet times for children to enable them to rest according to their needs. Individual children's routines are respected and the childminder is very aware of the needs of each child she cares for. The childminder ensures they are provided with appropriate equipment, space and quiet times to allow them to rest or sleep if they choose. Travel cots, floor cushions and a 'quiet space' in the children's play tent are available.

Children benefit from a healthy and nutritious diet. Snacks and meals are prepared in advance and take into account individual children's preferences and specific dietary needs. Children enjoy toasted fruit bread as a tasty mid-morning snack and later are offered breadsticks, pasta in sauce and banana for lunch. Parents of babies provide milk and pureed food which is stored appropriately at the childminder's home. Children are involved in buying and preparing the foods they eat. During visits to the farm, they help the childminder to buy grapes and blackberries which they can enjoy later.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety and well-being are effectively promoted at all times. The childminder ensures that children are supervised carefully whilst enabling younger children to develop independence within their safe and secure environment. Areas are set up to allow children to make free choices about their play. For example, toys and resources are stored in low level boxes and on low cupboards so that children can freely access what they wish to play with.

When playing outside children's safety is maintained because the childminder ensures that all areas accessed by children are suitable. Soft floor mats have been placed along the path to allow children who are developing their independent walking skills to do so with minimal harm. Young children are denied access to a small paved area in order to prevent them from tumbling and hurting themselves.

Appropriate steps have been taken to maintain children's safety in the home, such as the use of socket covers, cupboard locks and a safety gate to prevent children's free access to the kitchen area. The childminder carries out written risk assessments on a regular basis and always visits new places before taking children on outings. In addition, the childminder has carefully considered ways in which children's safety can be maintained whilst out on visits and day trips, such as wearing matching items and carrying individual key rings with vital contact information for the childminder.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe because the childminder talks to them about road safety and the importance of staying close to the childminder at all times. An emergency escape procedure is in place which is practised with the children, and they develop an

understanding of what to do when they hear the smoke alarm ringing. The childminder has arranged for local fire fighters to visit her home to talk to the children about fire safety.

Children are kept safe from harm through the childminder's clear understanding of child protection procedures in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy and very well settled in the childminder's home. They are relaxed in her care and confident to move around the home, selecting what toys they wish to play with. Babies are comfortable and settled with the childminder. They enjoy cuddles and affection whilst having their bottle of milk, and snuggle in to rest and fall asleep in the childminder's arms.

Children are provided with an extensive range of interesting and age appropriate activities. The childminder's home offers children a safe environment where they can explore their surroundings and happily play with the resources available. A designated playroom provides children with a bright and attractive area in which to play indoors. Activities are planned around the children's interests and level of development. For example, young children are learning about animal sounds and beginning to make appropriate noises for ducks, fish and other creatures. Therefore, the childminder has planned visits to the zoo, local farm and animal park in order to extend children's understanding and interest.

Daily activities include visits to the library, some playgroups and walks in the local area. A wide selection of child led and planned activities are also provided. For example, children enjoy painting, reading, sand and water play, baking and small world play on a regular basis. The childminder encourages children to develop their musical skills by listening to music, singing and exploring a selection of musical instruments.

The childminder shows a clear understanding of the needs and interests of the individual children in her care. Regular observations and assessments of children's progress are recorded and shared with parents. This helps the childminder to plan further activities to extend children's knowledge, skills and development. Appropriate equipment and resources are provided to enable children to take the next steps in their development. For example, babies are provided with soft floor mats outside while older children play in the garden. This enables them to observe the older children while practising their rolling and pushing up skills. Babies are engaged in exploring their environment and feeling the texture and smell of the grass underneath them. A small sensory area is being developed within the childminder's garden to provide further experiences for the children who attend.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and their needs are well met. The childminder talks to children about what they are doing and asks children questions, such as 'Can I put this sun cream on your leg?' before doing so, which shows respect for the children's feelings. The childminder does not currently care for children with learning difficulties or disabilities but is committed to further developing her knowledge and understanding of meeting individual children's needs.

Children learn about their local community through regular visits to the library, park, farm and other places of interest. The childminder enables children to learn about different cultural and religious festivals. For example, children celebrate Chinese New Year, St. Patrick's Day and Christmas. Resources, such as books, small world characters and dolls reflect positive images of diversity.

An effective behaviour management system using praise and encouragement ensures that children behave very well. Children are encouraged to take turns and share toys and resources during their play. Mealtimes are a social occasion for children, who sit alongside each other whilst eating.

Effective partnerships with parents enhance the care provided to children. Daily verbal exchanges keep parents informed of their child's day and every child has an individual journal which both the childminder and parents can add to. This ensures that all carers are up to date with the child's achievements and general well-being. Each parent is provided with a detailed information booklet before their child first attends, to ensure they are aware of the childminder's routines, policies and procedures. Parents and children are welcomed into the childminder's home for short introductory visits to ensure children are happy and settled.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are happy and at ease in the extremely well organised environment. This means that they are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. Children's welfare, care and learning are promoted through highly effective policies and procedures and by ensuring that adult - child ratios are always met.

The childminder carefully plans her time with the children to ensure that they receive a high quality of care at all times. All meals are prepared in advance and resources and toys are rotated on a weekly basis. This means that the childminder can devote as much time as possible interacting with the children.

The childminder regularly attends various training events to ensure that her knowledge and understanding of current childcare initiatives are up to date. She is committed to continuous improvement and has identified areas to develop in order to enhance further children's care, experiences and development.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration 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 outstanding. 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**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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