



Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** 306643  
**Inspection date** 06 January 2006  
**Inspector** Sarah Taylor

**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 has been registered since 1995. She lives in Stockport with her husband. The family live in a semi-detached house with their two pet cats.

Minded children have access to all rooms on the ground floor and the bathroom and bedroom on the first floor. The childminder is registered to care for six children and currently has six children on roll. Overnight care is included in this registration.

Children are taken to local carer and toddler groups, to the library and to the childminder drop-in sessions. Children are taken to and collected from the local

Primary School. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and the Borough of Stockport Childminder's Association. She has completed the National Childminding Association Quality First award.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Children clearly thrive because the childminder follows highly effective and robust procedures and practices. These meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. For example, children are consistently protected from cross-infection as they have individual towels provided on a daily basis. They independently and enthusiastically wash their hands at appropriate times with little adult intervention. The exceptional adult support and guidance, through daily practices and thematic planning, helps children gain an excellent understanding of hygiene, and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, children of all ages freely and eagerly help themselves to fresh water from the cooler, as they need it, and understand the need to remain hydrated.

Children enthusiastically explore, test and develop physical control in stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences, such as, playing on the wheeled toys, gardening with appropriate tools and enjoying dancing activities. The children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise as part of their daily routine. They take pleasure in a versatile range of activities, such as, outdoor games, which they tackle enthusiastically.

Children thoroughly enjoy fresh fruit at snack time. The menu clearly demonstrates that meals are well balanced and take account of the individual and cultural needs of all children. Children are more than able to talk independently about 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' foods with the childminder and this effectively reinforces their understanding of a healthy diet.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Safe and secure premises are provided that is extremely suitable for caring for children. They have more than adequate space to move freely, and great emphasis is given to making sure the environment is welcoming for children to aid their development. The rooms are expertly set out into defined spaces, such as, a reading area, a relaxing area and a play area. The children move from one area to another accessing equipment and activities independently. The childminder ensures children can easily access necessary items like their coats, which are on child height coat pegs. This significantly enhances the children's independence and development.

Risks of accidental injury to children is skilfully minimised, because the childminder is extremely vigilant and uses thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Children staying overnight are safe and secure as the childminder ensures that they

are very well protected from unvetted people. She makes certain that safety apparatus is in place, such as, monitors, emergency escape plan and appropriate sleeping equipment. She has an excellent understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits, for example, through the use of fluorescent safety bibs and hats bearing the childminders logo, which allows children freedom whilst on outings, but also keeping them safe. The childminder works exceptionally hard to introduce children to safety issues, such as, stranger danger and road safety. This allows children to learn some sense of danger and knowledge about how to protect them from harm.

Children use high quality equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development, such as, an excellent and well thought out range of robust and brightly coloured furniture that caters for children and babies. Children have a good range of safe toys to play with that is appropriate to their age and stage of development and that conforms to British standards. Children with special needs and those learning English as an additional language are safe and fully included because of the sensitive adult support, regular communication with parents and meticulously well-planned adaptations to resources and activities. For example, the childminder ensures that activities are accessible to all children and makes any necessary adaptations, such as, moving the activity to the floor so all children can join in.

Children are expertly protected by the childminder who has an in depth understanding of child protection policies and procedures, due to previous experiences and training. She gives top priority to children's welfare. Parents are fully informed of the action that would be taken in the event of a concern and are asked to sign to say that they have understood the policy.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the childminder's home. They achieve extremely well because the childminder is highly skilled and uses her exceptional understanding of early years guidance, such as, Birth to three matters and the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage, to provide high quality care and education to the children in her care. She provides a pack for parents, which includes a written statement clearly outlining how she intends supporting children in their progress.

The childminder has a keen knowledge of Birth to three matters and implements the framework with ease as part of her termly planning. This ensures that activities are planned to meet the individual needs of the children and to ensure that each child makes excellent progress. Children's achievements are celebrated and documented in each child's individual developmental progress file. For example, when a child receives a certificate at 'minimovers', a photograph is taken and the child's achievement celebrated within the group and with the parents. This achievement is documented and children and parents enjoy looking at the achievements and progress in the file. Children are very proud of their files and show enthusiasm for previous activities shown in the photographs, such as, making a knight's costume.

The childminder's understanding of each child's stage of development means the youngest children are confident enough to try out new skills, ask for help when needed and set their own limits within the safe environment. She ensures that children have an extensive range of experiences within the setting and she also takes the children to toddler groups and on trips to the seaside where children thoroughly enjoy exploring in the sea and the sand.

All children arrive happy and eager to participate. The children make excellent progress because the childminder recognises the uniqueness of each child. Close and caring relationships with the childminder increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. They develop a sense of belonging through the childminder's use of each child's development folder to celebrate their achievements. Also, through the use of hats bearing the childminder's logo, which matches the logo on her shirt. High quality adult-child interactions are extremely supportive of early communication skills and the childminder echoes children's speech and supplements early speech with the highly innovative use of sign language, which the children demonstrate with ease. This ensures that children know that their communication is valued and very effectively increases their self esteem. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in a diverse range of exploratory and sensory experiences. For example, preparing their garden plot where they grow banana trees and shopping for the ingredients needed for the baking activity.

Right from the start, the childminder finds out about children's skills, interests and needs and builds on this information effectively to help children achieve as much as they can. She is very sensitive to the needs of the children from a range of home circumstances. A flexible approach to planning and an excellent balance between adult-led and child-led activities allows children to learn at their own pace. The childminder is perceptive to children's interests during self-initiated play and uses questions very successfully to challenge children's thinking and language skills. For example, during a dressing the dolls activity, the childminder asks the youngest child what colours are used, what the baby wears for bed and encourages a choice of pattern. She uses highly effective systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements in their development files, and to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning.

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

The provision is outstanding.

All children are warmly welcomed and play a full part in the setting, because the childminder values and respects their individuality and the family context for each child. The children have extensive opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned themes, such as, people and homes and outings to local places of interest. They regularly visit the park, library and the seaside. Children are exposed to different cultures through planned activities and they are learning to speak Spanish with the childminder therefore increasing their knowledge and understanding of the wider world. Children are learning about making a difference in people's lives through their participation in charitable events. For

example, in the toddler for Barnardo's, where the children raised money for children in need and received a certificate for their efforts.

Children with additional needs are superbly supported through the practice of the childminder and her commitment to the development of each child. She works closely with parents and with external agencies to ensure that the care offered is more than adequate and this ensures that children make excellent progress.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. The childminder supports younger children in sharing and turn-taking. She has high expectations and sets consistent boundaries for the children. This helps them to learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. For example, the children know why they are not allowed upstairs and follow the rule with confidence. She increases children's understanding of right and wrong as the children respond to gentle reminders to care for their environment, the resources and each other. She encourages them to tidy up the play areas, help to sweep and through good discussion during gardening activities.

An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being in the setting. Parents are fully informed of the planning for each term as well as their own child's progress. The childminder actively seeks parents' views about their children's needs and interests before their child starts at the setting, and on a regular basis throughout their time in her care. Parental feedback shows that parents greatly value the care offered by the childminder. She ensures that all parents know how their children are progressing and developing through verbal exchanges and through the use of the development file. These steps ensure extremely effective continuity of care for the children.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder greatly enhances children's care by the exceptional quality of organisation. The premises are exceptionally well organised. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximise play opportunities for children. Indoors, the dedicated play area is set out in areas for play and rest and the equipment is accessible to all the children. A wealth of detailed documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place. All documentation is regularly reviewed, such as, the parent's pack, which has been re-written so that it is in line with Every Child Matters, Birth to three matters, the Foundation Stage and the National Standards.

Children benefit from a highly qualified and skilled childminder who strives to improve her current excellent practice through attendance on courses, such as, the Birth to three matters framework, play work courses, child safety and protection courses and ongoing childcare practitioner qualifications. She uses ideas from courses and from the childminder support sessions to develop her practice and enhance the enjoyment of the children. For example, the children enjoy a trip to the seaside with other childminders and complete planned activities whilst there. These visits are recorded in the child's development folder. Through offering support to other childminders as a

'support childminder' for Sure Start, she also has the opportunity to assess her own practice and make changes. She regularly reflects on, monitors and improves the quality of the care that she offers as part of the National Childminding Association accredited quality assurance scheme.

The high quality of the provision means that the childminder meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

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

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to ensure that babies were provided with sensory experiences and that cleaning fluids were made inaccessible to children.

The childminder has attended training on the Birth to three matters framework and has implemented a series of sensory activities for all of the children. The children explore a sensory basket containing a wealth of materials to stimulate their senses. She has ensured that cleaning fluid is inaccessible to the children.

These steps ensure the effective development and continuing safety of the children.

### **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**

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 *Building better childcare: Compliments and*

*concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website:  
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