



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123294
Inspection date	26 July 2005
Inspector	Gail Groves

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 adult daughter who both act as her childminding assistants. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house and one bedroom upstairs is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have a pet cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children all of whom attend on a part-time basis. She walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children and takes children to the local park. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder maintains some appropriate environmental health and hygiene policies and procedures which protect children from infection. Children begin to learn some simple hygiene practices such as washing their hands after using the toilet and before and after cooking activities. However, they do not consistently wash them before eating, which means that they are at some risk of cross infection. Children rest and sleep according to their needs as part of their daily routine. For example, after lunch young children spend time quietly watching a video. Older children have the choice of playing quiet games, watching television or playing in the garden when they return from school. This prevents them from becoming over tired and fractious.

Children have regular opportunities to enjoy physical activity and fresh air. They play enthusiastically on a swing and a climbing frame in the garden and access larger scale equipment during trips to the park. This encourages them to develop a healthy lifestyle. They are appropriately nourished which promotes their physical development and growth and have access to drinks throughout the day. They occasionally learn about healthy eating through discussions with the childminder during their daily routine but opportunities to develop these ideas further, such as during cooking activities, are sometimes missed. Children's health and dietary needs are met because the childminder works with parents to ensure that she is aware of any allergies and medical conditions. Children's well-being is therefore protected.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment where risks are minimised. This means that they are able to be independent and to move round freely and safely. The childminder helps children to learn how to keep themselves safe through discussion, practical experiences and planned art activities. For example, children learn about road safety through colouring pictures of children holding hands to cross the road, they discuss being able to go to a policeman if they become lost and they learn not to stand in front of a child using the swing. The childminder also has procedures in place which generally help to keep children safe on outings.

Children have access to a range of toys and equipment which are of good quality, age appropriate and safe. They can therefore play and take part in activities safely. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and the appropriate documentation in place to ensure that children's well-being is safeguarded. However, the first aid box is inappropriately stocked with some items, which if used, could put children at risk of an allergic reaction. Also, children are not fully protected because the childminder has a limited understanding of her role in child protection and is therefore not able to put appropriate procedures into practice without support.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident and show self-esteem. They make positive relationships with each other and with familiar and unfamiliar adults. This enhances and extends their social skills. They ask questions to seek information, to ask for support and to acquire new knowledge to extend their learning and thinking. For example, the childminder asks them to talk about the texture of the biscuit dough they are kneading and to look at the way the colour of the dough changes as they add water. Children respond well to challenge. For example, copying and writing simple words to accompany their drawings. However, sometimes the challenge is inappropriate for the child's developmental level. This could result in failure and lead to the child developing a negative attitude to learning.

The childminder provides children with easily accessible toys and activities which capture their interests. They quickly become involved in their play and this helps to develop their concentration and attention skills. Children are beginning to use initiative and to develop independence when organising their play. For example, children decide to record some music so that they can take it outside and use it for a game in the garden. This means that they can become increasingly independent. They are also beginning, with the support of the childminder, to distinguish between right and wrong. She uses a variety of age appropriate methods to help them develop increasing control of their emotions and sometimes discusses moral issues brought up by older children. She is aware of and meets children's individual needs so that their development is supported and encouraged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are comfortable and relaxed in the provision, which enables them to confidently take part and enjoy the learning experiences provided by the childminder. They work harmoniously with each other and are learning to make positive relationships and develop respect for others through turn taking and sharing during their play. For example, the childminder encourages and supports children to become aware of and respect the needs of others during activities such as cooking. Children take turns to add ingredients to the bowl. They try to ensure that they do not add too much at a time so that there is enough left for everyone to have a turn.

The childminder's house rules and safety procedures help children to begin to understand responsible behaviour both inside and when on outings. They can make choices and take decisions, such as what they wish to eat for lunch or whether they wish to play inside or outside. This encourages their confidence and self-esteem. Children receive some appropriate support to meet their developmental needs and to extend their abilities because the childminder works in partnership with parents. She asks for detailed information about children before they attend so that she is aware of their individual needs and can provide suitable care. Children have limited opportunities to become aware of a wider society and develop positive images of diversity. For example, resources such as dressing up do not reflect cultural

differences or give children the chance to experiment with different gender roles.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder's husband and daughter act as her two assistants on a part-time basis. This means that she can use them to organise her routines to more easily meet the needs of the children. Also, the adult to child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play during some parts of the day. Both assistants are vetted and this ensures that children are protected. The childminder cares for a maximum of four children at a time at the present moment which enables her to give a lot of individual attention to them. This means that their developmental needs can be more fully supported.

The childminder has made recent efforts to ensure that most of her policies & procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement & ability to make a positive contribution. The provision therefore meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection it was recommended that the childminder should improve her range of toys and play resources for children under 2 years and develop and review the documentation she required for the efficient organisation of care.

Since then she has purchased a variety of age appropriate toys. For example, inset puzzles, shape sorters, books and construction toys. This has greatly improved the opportunities available to young children to acquire new knowledge and skills.

She now reviews her documentation every six months and has obtained written permission from parents to seek emergency treatment. This ensures that children's details are maintained accurately and that they are cared for safely and in accordance with their parents' wishes.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 Ofsted have received three complaints relating to Standard 6: Safety. One of these complaints also related to Standard 1: Suitable Person and Standard 12: Partnership with Parents. On the first occasion in October 2004, Ofsted investigated the concern by telephoning the provider to discuss the issues raised by the complaint. One action was raised in regard to Standard 6. This was to ensure that children are under the direct supervision of the childminder at all times. The childminder remained qualified for registration.

On the second occasion in November 2004, Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the childminder. At this visit she agreed to carry out a number of actions to ensure that she met the National Standards. These actions were to ensure that she stay

within her registration numbers, to demonstrate how she will work effectively in partnership with parents, to demonstrate her understanding of the role and responsibilities of a childminding assistant and to ensure that children are under her direct supervision at all times. The childminder remained qualified for registration.

On the third occasion in May 2005, Ofsted made another unannounced visit to the provider and as a result issued a compliance notice requiring her to ensure that children are under her direct supervision at all times. The childminder also agreed to carry out further actions to ensure she met the National Standards. This was to ensure that all relevant records relating to childminding activities are kept up to date, are regularly reviewed, are accessible and are available for inspection at all times. A further unannounced visit was made to the childminder in June 2005 to check that she was meeting the compliance and actions which had been set. At this visit the childminder agreed to carry out another action which was to ensure that her daily record of attendance was maintained accurately and kept up to date. The childminder has now carried out all of the actions and remains qualified for registration.

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):

- increase the knowledge and understanding of child protection issues including the procedures for recording and reporting concerns regarding child protection
- ensure hygiene procedures with regard to hand washing are consistently carried out
- ensure the First Aid box contains only items which have been determined in the first aid training course and which are checked frequently and replaced as necessary.

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: www.ofsted.gov.uk