



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	114575
Inspection date	24 October 2006
Inspector	Susan McCourt

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 1997. She lives with her husband and three children aged seven nine and eleven in a residential area of Crawley. The whole of the ground floor is available to minded children and there is a garden for outdoor play. The childminder is registered to care for four children and currently has four children for whom she cares on a part-time basis. The childminder has a level three qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association. The family has some small pets.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment and learn good personal hygiene habits. The childminder provides liquid soap and children can access separate towels to minimise any risk of

cross-infection. Pet care is organised to ensure that they present no hazard to minded children. The childminder maintains her accident and medication records according to the regulations which safeguards children's health.

Children eat a healthy diet while with the childminder. Food is freshly cooked and each meal provides a balance of nutrients. Drinks of water or juice are always available, and children are offered more substantial meals on days where they are very active. The childminder is able to cater for special diets and is skilled at handling any idiosyncratic eating habits that small children may have.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in a very child-focussed home, which is comfortable and provides ample space to play. The open-plan arrangement gives children maximum opportunity to choose what to play and to move freely about between areas. Play equipment is stored in easily accessible boxes and trays, and there is so much to choose from that children can experience a wide variety of play opportunities throughout the day. Each activity is well-resourced, so that groups of children can play together for extended periods. The childminder has a good standard of safety throughout her home and garden, although one glass door cannot be verified as safety glass. Children can play safely and are given simple reminders about how to use scissors for example, so that they can learn how to keep safe themselves.

The childminder has a good awareness of safeguarding children and understands that their welfare is paramount. She has information at hand to guide her if she had any concerns about a child who may be being abused.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are well-settled and confident in the childminder's care. She gets to know each child and is skilled at balancing their individual needs so that they can all play happily together. Children can be very independent in their play because they can choose freely from the toys and play equipment, and there are sufficient resources for them to be able to pursue their ideas. For example, children playing with dough can make a variety of realistic foods and then move on to role playing at cafes. The childminder is always alongside children to extend their ideas or help them to solve problems such as joining a train track together to provide a good circuit.

The routine is based around the children's needs and easily accommodates meal times, times for active or quiet play, games and outings. Children enjoy being able to take part in various creative activities such as pottery-painting and gardening as well as more conventional painting and modelling. The childminder encourages children to help with the routines: tidying up, laying the table and making decisions about what to do next. This fosters an appropriate sense of responsibility and helps children to feel a part of what is happening.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has an anti-discriminatory attitude and her play equipment reflects a diverse world. She has good experience of caring for children with special needs and works with the parents to ensure that she can meet their needs. Children are all included and the childminder is skilled at helping each child to participate at their own level and play successfully alongside each other.

Children know what the boundaries are because the childminder gives clear and simple guidance about how she expects them to behave. Any challenges are met with a firm and calm manner, which helps the children to settle. The childminder gives praise and encouragement frequently to help build children's self-esteem and children behave well as a result.

Parents receive good quality information about how the childminder works before the children start. Children are given time to settle in and the childminder ensures that parents feel welcome by having time to talk about how the day has gone. Parents value the fact that the childminder offers a home from home, giving children consistent care. The childminder keeps any emergency contact details at close hand and ensures that she knows who is authorised to collect children from her care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. The childminder has a very professional attitude, is qualified to level three, and plans to continue her professional development by becoming an accredited childminder. She maintains her skills with short courses and succeeds in her aim to provide children with a home from home, where they can relax, play and learn. The childminder has organised her home to ensure that she can give good quality supervision at all times to all the children in her care.

The childminder maintains her records in a very professional manner. The register is an accurate reflection of the times of children's arrival and departure, and children's records are kept secure and confidential.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one recommendation was made about children being able to access toys independently. The childminder now has lots of low storage boxes, trays and cupboards that enable children to reach a wide variety of toys and play materials. This helps children to be independent in their play and offers them choice.

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 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 glass panels in the back door are safe.

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