



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY260573
Inspection date	19 October 2006
Inspector	Teresa Evelina Coleman
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.

At the time of the inspection there were no children on roll. Ofsted judges that the provider remains suitable to provide care.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2003. She lives with her three children aged two, three and five years. They live in a three bedroomed house in Woolwich in the London Borough of Greenwich. The premises are close to local shops, schools and parks. The living room is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden at the premises but it is currently not used for childminding. There are no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of two children under eight years at any one time, of whom one may be under five years. There are currently no children under eight on roll, although the childminder has cared for children within the last six months. The childminder currently provides after school care for a 12 year-old. The childminder is registered to provide overnight care for one child aged five to eight years.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is currently in the process of becoming part of the Greenwich childminding network.

The childminder has attended many training workshops to keep herself up to date on childcare matters and she is in the process of working towards an NVQ Level 3 qualification in childcare and education.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has procedures in place which enable her to protect children from the spread of infection and the risk of illness. These are supported by a clear written health and safety policy which is shared with parents. The childminder ensures that good hygiene procedures are in place in her home. Her written policy informs parents that she does not accept children who are unwell. The childminder said that she encourages children to learn about how to keep themselves healthy by encouraging them to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating.

All necessary documentation for the recording of accidents and medication is in place. The childminder is aware of safe medication procedures including the need to obtain prior written parental consent before giving any medication, including Calpol. Written records are kept of all medication administered and accidents are appropriately recorded. However, prior written parental consent for seeking emergency medical advice and treatment is currently not sought. In addition, the childminder's first aid qualification has recently expired.

Although there is a garden at the premises, it is currently not suitable for childminding. However, the childminder is able to describe a range of indoor and outdoor physical play activities that she provides. These include visiting nearby parks, playgrounds, toddler groups and the toy library. The childminder understands the importance of providing children with regular opportunities to take part in vigorous physical exercise. For example, running, jumping, climbing, balancing and sliding.

The childminder is able to demonstrate through discussion that she is aware of the importance of providing children with balanced nutritional meals. She provides sample menus for parents and said that she tries to ensure that five portions of fruit and vegetables are available daily. The childminder said that meals are usually home-made from fresh ingredients. Examples of meals to be provided include chicken casserole with mashed potatoes and green beans, tuna pasta bake with carrots and swede and fish fingers with peas and parsley potatoes. Menus also include vegetarian options, for example, cauliflower cheese, broccoli mornay, vegetable lasagne and vegetable chilli. The childminder said that she also tries to encourage children to choose healthy snack options, for example, fresh fruit and raw vegetables. The childminder understands the importance of providing children with regular drinks, including water and fruit juices.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides a safe, welcoming child-friendly environment where children can play, rest and eat comfortably. She said that she maintains safety in her home by carrying out regular risk assessments to ensure that any risks are identified and minimised and has attended a workshop to increase her knowledge of safety issues. Safety precautions include window locks, socket covers, safety locks on all kitchen cupboards containing dangerous items and the safe storage of all medication and first aid. She understands the importance of keeping children safe by ensuring that appropriate levels of supervision are in place at all times. Safety procedures are underpinned by a written health and safety policy.

Fire safety is well-promoted because there are smoke alarms on each floor and a fire blanket on the kitchen wall. The childminder has drawn up a written fire safety policy which includes a fire action and evacuation plan. The childminder said that she shares this information with older children and practices regular fire drills with them. The fire action plan tells children that if they see smoke or flames they must tell a grown up straightaway.

The organisation of resources is satisfactory and many resources are accessible. For example, toys and activities are stored in low level storage units and containers in the living room. Resources include an adequate range of provision across most areas of play, for example, creative play. The childminder said that she supplements her provision by making use of the local toy library. She understands her responsibility to carry out regular safety checks on all equipment and resources and said that she checks toys and equipment regularly and throws away any broken or damaged items.

The childminder demonstrates an understanding of her child protection responsibilities to the children in her care and of the action to take if she has any concerns. For example, she knows what the areas of abuse are and has a good knowledge of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. The childminder has a written child protection policy and has recently attended training to up-date her knowledge of child protection issues. The childminder is aware that she must keep confidential written records and inform Social Services if she is worried that a child in her care may be being abused. However, she was not fully aware of her responsibility to also inform Ofsted of any child protection concerns and/or referrals.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are provided with a satisfactory range of resources across all areas of play and development, including creative play. For example, the childminder has a selection of materials for arts and craft activities and for role play, including dressing up. Resources are stored accessibly in low level units and containers. This provides opportunities for making independent choices.

The childminder is able to describe a varied range of activities and demonstrates a sound understanding of the varying play needs of children of different ages. She understands the importance of talking and listening to children and asking questions to encourage their language

development. The childminder said that when she is childminding she plans the daily routine to make sure that it is well balanced and includes time for meals, play, outings and rest. She said that she draws up written plans that cover all areas of children's development and take account of children's individual needs and interests. Activities include sand, water and cooking activities as well as activities that encourage children to learn early maths and language skills. These activities are detailed in the childminder's written 'Play and learning' policy which she shares with parents. The childminder said that she provides individual contact books and uses these to keep parents informed about their children's progress. Regular outings are organised and include trips to local parks and playgrounds, toddler groups, visits to the library and toy library and walks in the local area.

The childminder has attended training in the Birth to Three Matters framework and said that she intends to incorporate this into her planning if she is asked to look after a baby or toddler.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has suitable arrangements and recording systems for finding out about children's individual needs. For example, she said that she discusses all aspects of children's needs at the start of all minding arrangements and records these appropriately. The childminder said that she also promotes effective partnerships with parents through regular discussions and sharing her policies and procedures with them. Policies are clear and give good information about the setting and services provided. Individual contact books are also used to share information about the child's day and their progress.

Feedback from parents through written references is positive. Records are shared with parents. For example, the childminder draws up written contracts and ensures that she obtains prior written permission for the administration of medication and taking children on outings. However, there is currently no system to obtain prior written parental permission for seeking emergency medical advice/treatment or to record significant incidents relating to behaviour and the use of physical intervention. The childminder provides parents with up-to-date information if they wish to make a complaint and keeps a complaints log.

The childminder has an understanding of equal opportunities issues and said that she aims to ensure that all children are treated with respect and with equal concern. The childminder acknowledges the importance of identifying children's individual needs in terms of their language, religion and culture and this approach is reflected in her written policy. A few multi-cultural resources are available, for example, some books. The childminder also aims to provide activities that help children to find out about festivals and celebrations from a range of cultures. This helps children to learn to value and respect others. The childminder said that all children are provided with equal access to all resources and this contributes to a non-sexist approach.

The childminder has some experience of caring for a child with developmental delay and learning difficulties who is now over eight years old. She has a positive proactive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and demonstrates this by attending relevant training. For example, she has attended an eczema, asthma and epilepsy workshop and recent

training about sickle cell anaemia and HIV. She said that she is committed to providing all-inclusive service.

The childminder demonstrates a sound knowledge of behaviour management, giving good examples of strategies she uses with children, depending on their age, stage of development and level of understanding. These include distraction, redirection, reasoning and explanation and time out. She said that she always discusses behaviour management with parents in order to try and establish a consistent approach. The childminder acknowledges the benefits of positive behaviour management and said that she does this through giving children frequent praise and attention and by encouraging them to try and understand how they have made others feel through their behaviour. The childminder said that she sets some ground rules for children which include no swearing and no name-calling. These are reinforced regularly so that children can begin to learn right from wrong. However, there is no system in place to record any significant incidents relating to behaviour and the use of physical intervention.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall, evidence suggests that the childminder would meet the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

The setting is warm, welcoming and child-friendly. Resources are accessibly stored and provide opportunities for taking part in a varied range of activities and making independent choices. The childminder is able to demonstrate a professional and positive approach to her work. For example, she demonstrates a commitment to up-dating her knowledge by attending regular training courses. The childminder is currently working towards becoming part of the Greenwich Childminding Network. However, the childminder's paediatric first aid qualification has expired and she is waiting for a place on the next available course.

Documentation is well maintained and stored safely, accessibly and confidentially. The childminder has effective systems in place to record accidents and medication. Attendance is accurately recorded and the attendance record includes children's hours of attendance. Records are shared with parents and the childminder ensures that she has systems in place to obtain most necessary parental consents. For example prior written permission for giving medication and taking children on outings. However, there are currently no systems in place for obtaining prior written parental permission for seeking emergency medical advice or to record any significant incidents relating to behaviour and the use of physical intervention. Good information is available for parents in the form of clear policies and procedures that cover all aspects of the setting and service provided.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection five recommendations were made:

Two recommendations related to the provision of resources to meet the all round developmental needs of children and review the activities provided for older children. The childminder acknowledges that her provision at the time of her last inspection was limited. However, her

understanding of differing play needs has now increased and she has added to her provision since this time. For example, she has obtained some outdoor play equipment, increased provision for creative play and added to books and board games for older children.

A recommendation was made to develop the childminder's awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. The childminder has addressed this by attending a child protection awareness course through the NSPCC and was able to answer all questions relating to child protection issues during this inspection. This means that she is now better prepared to protect children from the risk of abuse.

A recommendation was made to review garden safety to ensure that potential hazards are minimised. The childminder states that she made the necessary improvements in this area following the previous inspection. However, due to recent renovation work to her home, the garden is again unsuitable for childminding. A further recommendation has been made that the garden is not used until the building materials and other unsuitable items have been removed.

A recommendation was made that the childminder should seek prior written parental consent for seeking emergency medical advice and/or treatment. There has been a misunderstanding over this recommendation. The childminder showed the inspector her procedures to be followed in the event of an accident. However, these did not include the necessary parental consent. A further recommendation has been made following this inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection one complaint has been made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to the following National Standards: National Standard 2 - Organisation; National Standard 6 - Safety; National Standard 7 - Health; National Standard 12 - Working in partnership with parents and carers; National Standard 14 - Documentation. Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit to investigate the concerns raised. The inspector found that the childminder had not ensured that accident records were signed by parents and an action was set. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigations were closed.

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

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The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

At the time of the inspection there were no children on roll. Ofsted judges that the provider remains suitable to provide care.

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):

- obtain prior written parental consent for seeking emergency medical treatment
- ensure that the garden is safe and suitable before it is used for childminding
- ensure that there is a system in place to record any significant events relating to behaviour and the use of physical intervention
- obtain an up-to-date qualification in first aid that includes training in first aid for babies and young children

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