



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260121
Inspection date	10 July 2006
Inspector	Georgina Walker
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 2001. She lives with her husband and family including three children aged 13, nine and seven. The whole of the ground floor in the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The family has a dog and fish in a garden pond.

The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children. She takes children to the library and local park.

The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time and is currently minding seven children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis, two under five during the day, two over five and three over eight before and after school.

The childminder holds an early years childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's well-being is inconsistently promoted as the childminder promotes hygiene practices which contribute to the minimal risk of the spread of infection for under fives, but over fives all share the same towel. They do however, use antibacterial soap. Independence regarding toileting is successfully promoted as the children develop the skills necessary to take themselves to the cloakroom, situated off the front hall. They are aware they must wash their hands after toileting and before snack and after handling the new pet dog. A first aid certificate is held to ensure children's needs are met in a minor emergency. Few accidents have been recorded since registration. However, documents to record accidents, incidents and significant injuries a child may arrive with are available for completion. A first aid box contains all relevant equipment. Written permission for seeking any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment has been obtained. Permission for giving medication is available and appropriate records are maintained to ensure the children have their medication at the correct time.

Children benefit from a very healthy diet. They are offered drinks regularly and can help themselves from the jug and beakers set out on the dining room table. Snacks and meals are well presented and enjoyed by the children, who are developing an understanding of the need for a healthy and nutritious menu. Pitta bread and strawberries are particularly enjoyed and the snack time is used as a maths activity as the strawberries are counted by children. Their individual likes and dislikes are accommodated and they enjoy a wide selection of bread, protein and fruit for puddings. Parental wishes regarding meals are met and the childminder does not cook main meals. She sits with the children to eat, encouraging good manners. Parents are informed of the exact menu each day as it is displayed in the front hall and the childminder discusses the quantities the children have eaten. The childminder has an understanding of special dietary needs and allergies to foods and ensures all children have their dietary needs met.

Babies and young children are able to rest and be active according to their needs. They benefit from the childminder holding a childcare qualification and her experience and knowledge of child development. They enjoy an extensive range of toys which are presented to promote development. Resources such as small world figures and building bricks are shared with the adults present. The childminder has not attended training to develop an awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework but she provides activities which develop children's movement skills and places resources just out of reach to encourage crawling and walking. Notes regarding children's progress are not yet recorded.

Children enjoy a good range of physical play experiences to grow and develop new skills. They have access to an extensive range of play equipment in the home. Access to a range of stimulating resources and activities indoors develops their small movement and coordination skills and successfully contributes to their development. Mobility is developed and is also extended during visits to the local park where climbing equipment and swings are enjoyed. Children's learning experiences about nature are extended as they learn about the seasons and new growth as they walk to school. They particularly enjoy outings such as visiting Victoria

Park and 'Crazy Crocs' soft play centre. They regularly visit the local park where they have more space to run and develop ball skills, as the garden has been under redevelopment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in secure and suitable premises which are warm and welcoming and create a stimulating environment in which they play and learn. Craft work is displayed as part of ongoing topics and photographs of the children at play all contribute to a very child centred environment. Their individual skills develop competently with the age-appropriate resources. Children can independently select activities from the range of good quality toys and equipment. Resources are stored in boxes for access by older children. They can request activities or choose from those presented depending on the ages and stages of those present. Children are encouraged to pack away before getting something else out. This teaches them respect of property and ensures the toys remain in good condition for use. They have access to drawing equipment and enjoy painting and gluing activities. Sleep facilities are discussed with parents and provided accordingly, currently in a pushchair or on the settee, with children bringing their own blanket to snuggle in. As children grow older and do not specifically require a sleep, quiet times and story reading take place. Access to the outdoor play area is via the conservatory to ensure the dog does not have free access to the house.

The children's safety is promoted throughout the premises. Relevant cupboard locks are used in the kitchen and a safety gate is used to keep the dog out of the kitchen for safety and hygiene reasons. Children do not have access to potentially hazardous small toys as the childminder carefully monitors the use of resources. Under three's develop an awareness of safety as they play, become more mobile, and learn about boundaries and what is off limits. Older children are aware of potential hazards of their toys if younger children are playing. The ongoing development of the garden is carefully monitored by the childminder to ensure individual children are safe and have age-appropriate access. Children's access to the new fish pond is suitably restricted.

An awareness of safety during a fire is promoted to a very high standard as the written procedures, shared with parents and children, have been practised effectively. Children are also developing an awareness for personal safety as they respond to the childminder's expectations when they are on school journeys and outings. They understand the good strategies of being strapped appropriately in pushchairs, holding the pushchair or hands when crossing the road, or only running in safe areas. Documentation from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment is available on outings and children's medical needs are likely to be met.

The children's well-being is further extended as the childminder has an understanding of child protection procedures and how to put these into practice. A policy informs parents of her duty to protect children. Written documentation regarding procedures is retained for reference to ensure the children are well protected. However, the new local procedures for safeguarding children have not been received. This does not have an impact on the welfare of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly at the childminder's home, eager to access the wide range of age-appropriate resources. Their development is supported as the childminder uses her childcare qualification and knowledge of child development. She puts this into practise by following her common sense in relation to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. The childminder has an extensive range of resources to stimulate the children who are motivated to access the varied activities. Whilst the childminder states she does not have specific play plans, activities provided introduce children to a wide range of educational activities. A file of previous work and ideas contains information of what children have been engaged in. An understanding of nature and the world around them is promoted successfully, as well as their physical development, during daily periods outdoors.

Language development is ensured as the childminder constantly talks to the children and encourages them to repeat words linked to the activities or resources. They respond to instructions and smile broadly or laugh out loud as the childminder communicates and extends their learning opportunities. Children enjoy painting, crayoning and messy play as they learn about textures and being creative. Activities are often linked to those on the curriculum at school or science and photographs of children enjoying experiments to make volcanoes are shared with parents. Information regarding children's activities and any significant developmental progress is shared verbally with parents and is to be recorded to ensure development is promoted effectively.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have a good understanding of how everyone positively contributes in society. Resources which promote and represent the wider community are freely available in a range of books and on puzzles, and in a variety of small world figures. Equality of opportunity is promoted effectively through the activities which are adapted age appropriately and children's specific needs are very well considered. Older children demonstrate care and understanding of other children's stages of development.

Children are welcomed and valued as the childminder uses discussion with parents, but inconsistent written details on information sheets to ensure individual requirements are met. The childminder has an awareness of a range of potential learning difficulties and disabilities of children. The very good levels of support ensure that all children are included and receive a great deal of individual attention so that their needs are effectively met. Documents requesting supplementary permission from parents are completed for seeking treatment in an emergency, using transport, going on outings and the taking of photographs.

Children develop a strong sense of independence and self-worth as they are encouraged to follow rules as they progress through the developmental stages. They settle very well after attending for visits with their parents and children's personal needs are met effectively. Children are beginning to understand the reasons for the rules about tidying up before getting out more toys and safety of themselves in the garden and on outings. They are purposefully occupied

and reminders regarding the expectations of the childminder are generally responded to as she distracts the children with different and interesting activities. The use of praise, encouragement and good manners contributes effectively to the children being confident in the setting and the development of a sense of belonging to a wider family group.

Parents attend for a visit to discuss information about the services provided and how their child will be cared for. A portfolio of documents, including certificates of attendance at training is presented during the initial visit. Written policies and procedures are discussed. These include the complaints procedures which contains information of where to contact the regulator. Information regarding activities the children have been engaged in, their meals, toileting and any sleep or rest periods is discussed in detail each day. The ongoing sharing of information ensures any changes to children's circumstances can be addressed immediately. The certificate of registration, Ofsted contact poster and the menu are displayed for parents to assure them their child is being cared for in registered premises and are fed healthy food.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the childminder holding an early years qualification and experience of caring for and educating children. They are under her direct supervision as they access the wide range of resources in the house. She effectively maintains their records. However, the children's record sheets do not contain detail of their ethnic origin, languages spoken and any religion followed. This information is discussed with parents to meet children's needs. Her comprehensive written policies successfully promote the welfare, care and learning of the children.

The childminder continues to read documentation sent to her to ensure she is aware of current childcare practice and regulation requirements. However, she has not received the documents relating to changes to the national standards in 2005. She is also to obtain the local 'Safeguarding Children Board' procedures to confirm she has current details to ensure children's safety and well-being. Her understanding of the content of the 'Birth to three matters' framework is being developed through practise. She is to record the progress of the children, to further assist in promoting their development and the partnership with parents.

Children are supported by the childminder's good organisational skills which ensure their time with her is worthwhile. Overall children's needs are met. The childminder ensures ratios are maintained at all times to meet the needs of the children in flexible childminding arrangements. Her routine includes regular journeys to school and the park which she uses as 'talking time' and for educational opportunities. She prepares well for each session with relevant age-appropriate resources and takes the children on outings. The way that the childminder organises space and resources means that children take decisions and develop increasing independence. They are happy and confident in the setting.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the childminder agreed to devise a number of policies and complete documents as necessary. An exclusion policy to prevent the risk of cross infection if children are ill is now implemented successfully. Accident records now include the child's full name,

where the accident happened and action taken to meet a child's needs should a further accident occur. Medication consents and medication records are now more detailed to include the child's full name, name of medication, dosage, when medication was administered and the written entries are countersigned by parents. This ensures children are not overdosed at any time.

The childminder was to maintain written records regarding fire safety and emergency evacuation. She has produced a very comprehensive document with space for extensive detail to be recorded. Evacuations are prompted by the childminder's husband or friend phoning to say there is a fire and where it is. She then puts the plan into operation and evacuates to one of three neighbours homes. The documents are completed later with the detail and evaluation. All contributes to children's safety and well-being and reassurance for parents that children are cared for appropriately and their needs would be met in an emergency.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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):

- obtain documents regarding current legislation, standards and guidance and update policies and children's records accordingly
- record any incidents and injuries to children however minor and ensure the risk of cross infection is consistently promoted
- further ensure children's development is promoted by recording their progress
- develop awareness of local safeguarding children board procedures.

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