



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	202479
Inspection date	04 October 2006
Inspector	Ann Marie Cozzi
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 has been a registered since 1999. She lives with her three children aged 14 and 15 years, and her grown up son. They live in a house in Ingatestone, Essex

There are local shops and amenities all within walking distance and schools nearby.

The whole of the property is registered for childminding purposes. There is a garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. She is currently minding seven children under eight, some on a part-time basis.

The childminder attends local toddler groups with minded children on a regular basis.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, bright and well maintained environment. They learn about personal care, through daily routines for example, children are made aware that they need to wash their hands at relevant times, such as, after using the toilet and before meal times. The younger children have their own individual bed linen and cups. In addition their hands and faces are cleaned when appropriate by the childminder. As a result, the good health of children attending is considered and promoted well.

Effective procedures are in place in the event of a child being unwell while in the childminder's care, such as a written sickness policy and a contingency plan in the event of an emergency. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and there is a fully stocked first aid box. This assists in ensuring appropriate care when dealing with an injured child.

Children enjoy a good range of physical activities which help keep them healthy. All children have access to physical play through the range of resources the childminder provides including, balls, push along toys and a see-saw. They make regular trips out including, the park and local toddler groups. This assists in further promoting their physical well-being. Good regard is given to ensuring that children rest according to their needs. The childminder recognises the signs of tiredness in young children and plans appropriate periods of undisturbed rest.

Parents provide a packed lunch and drinks are made available throughout the day. Children are encouraged to help themselves from their own cups, increasing independence and developing an understanding of the importance of safeguarding their own health and well-being. The childminder ensures that she is aware of allergies and other special dietary requirements so that children's individual needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Safe practice is promoted with children. Children are well supervised and are always in sight and hearing of the childminder. Their safety is considered through ensuring they access toys and equipment that are safe and in good condition. However, the current organisation of toys does not allow them to move around from activity to activity, freely and safely. Children are becoming increasingly aware of their boundaries and are always offered explanations. This in turn helps them learn about what is or is not acceptable in order to keep them and others safe for example, explanations are given regarding the danger of climbing. However, there remains a weakness with regards to safety of children's unsupervised access to equipment and areas of the premises that are not safe. Although these have been risk assessed, the systems to ensure children's safety at all times are not yet robust.

Children are protected from direct sunlight as careful consideration is given to ensuring that they are not in the sun at mid-day and that they wear sun protection creams. As a result children are kept safe when playing outdoors during the summer months.

Children are well protected as the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and is fully aware of the necessary procedures to follow should she have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident, happy and well settled in a bright and welcoming environment. Children's development is enhanced by the good quality of interaction from childminder. She listens to them attentively and promotes their communication skills as she responds positively to their gestures, sounds and questions. They are encouraged to become independent as they make choices about their play and self select resources. This promotes development of confidence and self-esteem. The childminder has recently undertaken training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework, this assists her in planning activities that are suitably challenging for young children.

The childminder has a good understanding of the way in which children learn, this is evident in the activities and learning opportunities provided for children which challenge and extend their learning. Children are absorbed and interested in everything they do and are confident to try new experiences, for example, when attempting to manipulate and position a train onto a track. Children are inquisitive and eager to learn. They listen intently as the childminder talks to them about what they are doing. Children learn effectively through their play as the childminder reinforces their knowledge and understanding of colours, numbers and concepts such as size.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing an awareness of the wider community through the provision of good resources which reflect positive images of gender, race, culture and varying needs. The quality of resources available to children are enhanced by the good use made of trips out and local toddler groups.

Children are happy and co-operative in the care of the childminder as they learn to share and take turns with toys and resources. They are confident to approach her for support and are able to express their needs or concerns without any hesitation. Children receive lots of positive recognition for their achievements and are rewarded for their good behaviour by regular praise and encouragement and occasionally getting a treat such as, a magazine or for the younger children a special trip out. This in turn, reinforces the good behaviour and promotes their self-esteem.

Children benefit from the secure working relationships that the childminder has with their parents. There is sound verbal communication in place which promotes continuity of care. Parents have access to the comprehensive information about her practice, policies and procedures. This ensures that the childminder has a good understanding of the children's needs and parents gain a clear understanding of her role.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The space is organised to meet the needs of children and the environment is bright and welcoming. Although there are a wide age range of children attending, the management of care is on the whole promoting an awareness of how to keep each of them safe, healthy and be able to make choices.

The childminder is pro-active and has a commitment to ongoing training which she attends on a regular basis, for example, food and hygiene and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This enables her to keep up to date with current childcare practice.

The good range of documentation in place effectively supports children's care, welfare and learning. Procedures are in place for the safe collection of children and the childminder ensures that all persons with access to children are suitably vetted. Good emergency procedures enhance children's safety and well-being.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder agreed at the last inspection to ensure the register is completed at times of arrival and departure of minded children daily. This promotes the safe management of the provision.

She also agreed to obtain written parental consent for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment if required. This assists in promoting the well being of children

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1st April 2004.

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):

- continue to assess risks and hazards in the home in order to prevent children's access to equipment and areas of the premises that are not safe.
- develop further the organisation of toys in order to promote children's safety.

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