



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118947
Inspection date	09 November 2006
Inspector	Toni Hanson
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 1988. She lives with her husband, her adult daughter and her daughter's partner, her adult son and two children aged 17 and 13 years. The family live in a house in a residential area of Upminster, Essex. Their home is within walking distance of local schools, shops, parks, bus routes and a main line train station. Apart from the front room, the whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. Children also have access to the first floor back bedroom and the bathroom upstairs. A fully enclosed garden is available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children aged under eight years at any one time. She currently has 13 children aged between 11 months and 11 years on roll, all attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to a local school to take and collect children. 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, welcoming childminding home. Their good health is promoted effectively. The childminder has attended relevant first aid training to ensure her knowledge of first aid procedures is up-to-date and she can deal with accidents appropriately. Areas where children play, sleep and eat are cleansed regularly. Medication is stored safely out of children's reach. The childminder's daily routines help children understand the need for good personal hygiene.

Children's dietary needs are met well. Foods provided by parents are stored and prepared appropriately. The childminder has a secure understanding of the nutritional needs of children and provides healthy, balanced meals for children. School children are able to choose from a variety of snacks when they return from school including fruit, grated cheese, yoghurts and crisps. The childminder uses discussion to encourage them to make healthy choices and learn to eat a balanced diet. Drinks are easily accessible to children. Even the youngest children confidently ask for 'more' when they finish their beakers of juice and learn to meet their own needs.

Children enjoy a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities each day, these allow them to be active and further develop their physical skills. They walk to and from school, visit the local park regularly and use the outdoor play equipment provided in the garden. Children enjoy dancing to music and playing with foam balls indoors. Suitable arrangements are in place to allow children to sleep or rest comfortably when they are tired.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder is clear about her responsibility to ensure all adults living in her home are vetted appropriately. However, she has not notified Ofsted about a family member's recent, temporary move home. This is a breach of regulations. However, the childminder has taken appropriate action to deal with this, supervises children well and ensures they are not left alone with visitors or other unvetted people. Consequently, children are protected from harm. The childminder has sound knowledge of child protection issues, including the signs and symptoms of abuse. Although she knows what action she must take if she has concerns about a child's welfare, she is unable to locate her local procedures and contact numbers. As a result, there is a risk of children and families not receiving swift and necessary support.

The childminder's daily safety checks of her house and garden enable children to move confidently and safely around her home. The indoor space is well-organised. Children have ample room to play, a quiet area to rest and a comfortable place to enjoy meals. Appropriate safety measures are in place to protect children; these include cupboard locks, stair gates and socket covers. Suitable fire safety arrangements are in place. These include smoke alarms at each level of the house and a fire blanket in the kitchen.

Children have easy access to a wide range of age appropriate, safe and suitable play equipment. The childminder checks these regularly to make sure that they remain safe and in good condition. Young children learn how to keep themselves safe as they are gently reminded to sit on chairs carefully. Children are kept safe when they are on trips and outings. Younger children are secured appropriately in a buggy. Older children learn about road safety through discussion as they walk to and from school.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children's day is planned well and they benefit from having a balanced range of activities, which include lots of physical play and quiet relaxing play opportunities too. Young children busily rush around 'cleaning' the floor with a toy vacuum cleaner. They also enjoy snuggling up to the childminder, looking at books and learning new words as they point and name items on each page. Children explore how things work as they excitedly push buttons to make activity toys light up and play music. There is lots of laughter as they build towers with plastic bricks and watch it topple over, yet again. The childminder encourages young children's speech development well. She listens carefully to what they say, gives them time to form their words and uses praise to reward their efforts.

Children are able to express themselves creatively as they draw and paint. Older children create new 'hairstyles' for each other, enjoy board games and playing in the garden. The childminder ensures they receive any help they need to complete homework. Children confidently help themselves to play resources, are secure and comfortable in the childminder's care and benefit from the fun play opportunities she plans and provides.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals, are secure in the childminder's care and have appropriate opportunities to learn about the wider world. They have access to an adequate range of play resources designed to develop their understanding of diversity, such as books, dolls and a puzzle. Children explore their community as they attend story sessions at the library, visit the local park and toddler/carer groups.

Children's behaviour is managed positively. The childminder is a good role model and treats children with care and respect. She is patient and calm and uses appropriate techniques such as distraction successfully, for example when she needs to stop young children climbing onto furniture. The childminder has clear, appropriate house rules to ensure older children know what is expected of them. An effective partnership between the childminder and parents ensures children's care is consistent and their individual needs are planned for and met. She gathers relevant information regarding children's health and dietary needs. The childminder knows children well and shares information and discusses their progress with parents each day. Although financial arrangements are agreed verbally, these are not confirmed through the use of written contracts.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children confidently make themselves at home in the welcoming childminding environment. They have warm, secure relationships with the childminder and enjoy the good, overall range of play opportunities she provides. Although, too few activities help children explore the wider world. Children's behaviour is managed positively, which supports their emotional well-being. The childminder knows children well as individuals and works closely with parents to ensure they receive the care they need. Consequently, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

The childminder has a clear understanding of the vetting procedures in place to safeguard children. However, due to recent family circumstances she has failed to fully implement the process of notifying Ofsted of changes to the adults living in her home. She has taken immediate, appropriate action to resolve this and ensures her vigilant supervision of children protects their welfare. All the required children's records are up-to-date and stored with an awareness of confidentiality. Most of the other relevant childminding documentation necessary for the safe management of the childminding service is in place, but is not organised efficiently to ensure it can be located quickly and easily.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder agreed to complete an appropriate first aid course, and improve her knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations, including vetting procedures.

Arrangements to promote children's health have improved. The childminder has completed a first aid course, to ensure she can give children appropriate treatment in the event of an accident or injury. The childminder has improved her knowledge of regulations relating to her childminding service and apart from a recent incident, works hard to ensure these are met and safeguard the children in her care.

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 the parents, which they must 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 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):

- provide more opportunities for children to explore the wider world through play
- further improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and procedures to notify Ofsted of relevant matters. In this instance, notifying Ofsted of any changes to persons living on the premises
- improve the organisation of documentation, to ensure all records relating to childminding activities are readily accessible on the premises and available for inspection at all times.

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