



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	138080
Inspection date	09 January 2007
Inspector	Sandra Patricia Jeffrey
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 has been registered since 1999. She is registered to provide care for six children under eight years; of these no more than three can be under five years at any one time. At the time of the inspection the childminder was caring for two children under eight years of age.

She lives with her husband and two children, a son aged seven years and a daughter aged nine years. Their house is in a quiet road in the Mitcham area of Merton. There are shops, playing fields and the Tramway all within walking distance. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and also the bathroom facilities on the first floor. There is also a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play.

The family have no pets.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children are cared for in a warm and caring environment where they learn the importance of personal hygiene. From an early age, young children receive appropriate support to develop their personal care, such as by having their hands wiped before and after meals. The procedures in place for nappy changing however are not fully effective and place the children at risk of cross infection.

Children are actively encouraged to enjoy a range of daily physical activities, including visiting local toddler groups, local parks and playing in the garden. Regular physical exercise contributes to keeping children healthy.

The procedures in place for administering medication to children are effective and this safeguards children's health and welfare. The childminder holds a valid first aid certificate which also promotes children's wellbeing.

Children receive a range of healthy snacks including lots of fresh fruit. Drinks of water are also available throughout the day. By following parental wishes and the children's choice, the childminder ensures that food meets all of the children's dietary needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from playing in a spacious environment. This allows them to move around and play freely. Children choose from a satisfactory range of toys and activities, which the childminder ensures are suitable for their age and stage of development. Children can independently select from this range of toys, which gives them freedom of choice. Close supervision, enables young children to play safely.

Children benefit from a range of safety measures, for example socket covers and a fitted safety gate at the foot of the stairs. However, there is no safety gate fitted at the top of the stairs and the open 'ranch' style balustrades on the first floor pose a hazard when taking children to the bathroom on this floor. Emergency evacuation procedures are not in place and children do not have opportunities to practise emergency evacuations. This means children will not be aware of the routine to be followed in the event of an emergency and does not safeguard their wellbeing.

In the main, the childminder describes a sound understanding of child protection procedures. However she is unclear if these are in line with the latest guidance. The childminder was also unclear if she held the relevant contact details to be used in the event of any concerns about the children in her care. This does not fully safeguard or promote children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children are made to feel at home and have a warm and secure relationship with the childminder. Children receive lots of affection from the childminder and they respond well to the attention given to them. Consequently children are happy and confident in the childminder's care.

The childminder ensures she has up to date knowledge of the children she cares for and has a routine, which enables children to feel secure and comfortable.

Young children enjoy a varied range of activities, mainly outside of the home as they visit various play groups on a daily basis. This extends their environmental experiences and learning as they take part in stimulating and well balanced activities appropriate for their age and stage of development. A balance of adult and child initiated activities and opportunities helps children to make progress in all areas of learning.

Young children's creative and imaginative development is encouraged through activities such as art and craft, painting, singing and music making.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder treats young children with respect and uses praise and encouragement to promote their self-esteem, which contributes to the children's sense of well-being. From an early age children learn important social skills, such as, why it is kind to share and to have good manners. Appropriate strategies, according to the age and stage of development, help children understand right from wrong.

The childminder has a positive attitude towards diversity. Children have some opportunities to become aware of their own and other cultures through a range of resources including books, puzzles and play people.

The childminder does not have experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but demonstrated a positive attitude to caring for such children.

Relationships with parents are friendly and flexible. Young children are cared for according to the needs of the parents and their work patterns. The childminder demonstrated a clear understanding of the benefits of working in partnership with parents. Parents are asked to provide relevant information about their children to help ensure continuity of care for the children.

The childminder is aware of recent changes in legal requirements in relation to complaints and investigations. She is aware that she is to make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to follow if they have any cause for concern about the service or the care of their children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has a sound understanding of her role in supporting the children in their play and learning. The children benefit from a generally well-organised environment where the childminder uses her time well and her flexible approach allows children the opportunity to pursue their own games. A daily two-way flow of information between the parents and the childminder ensures continuity of care for the children.

Mandatory records are in place and confidential and records are generally well maintained. This ensures the effective organisation of the setting in order to promote children's welfare. The Certificate of Registration is not displayed as is required. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

During the previous inspection several recommendations were raised. Two were in relation to improving fire safety precautions in the premises by ensuring that smoke alarms were in place on all floors and the fire blanket was wall mounted in the kitchen. These issues have now been rectified and therefore have improved fire safety arrangements. The garden gate was to be made safe and this has also been addressed. Three recommendations were raised in relation to documentation. Daily attendance records, written contracts and written parental permission to take children out of the premises were required. The childminder has also taken steps to have these documents in place which ensures clearer communication links with the parents of the children and therefore improves continuity of care for the children.

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 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):

- improve hygiene practices when changing nappies to reduce the risk of cross infection
- assess the risks to children in relation to access to the stairs when using bathroom facilities on the first floor and take appropriate action to minimise these risks
- develop an emergency evacuation procedure to be practised with the minded children
- refresh knowledge of Safe-guarding children procedures (child protection)
- ensure the Certificate of Registration is displayed at all times when minding

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