

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	202526
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 June 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Sarah Johnson
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 1992. She lives with her husband and adult child in the New Town area of Colchester. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder does not have any pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding six children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends local toddler groups with the minded children.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good health and hygiene practices through the daily routine. They are prompted to wash their hands before eating, after playing outside, using the toilet and having their nappy changed. Children are provided with liquid soap and individual towels,

which are washed regularly to prevent the spread of infection. They confidently take responsibility for caring for their bodies as they help themselves to their own lip balm when their lips feel dry and decide whether they need to wear a coat before playing outside. Children's rest and sleep patterns are accommodated well, as children can choose to sleep in their pushchairs or on the sofa.

Children are well cared for if they are ill or have an accident because all the required documentation and consents with regard to sickness, medication and accidents are in place to support this. A fully stocked first aid box is easily accessible and the childminder has completed training in first aid for infants and young children.

Children enjoy food that is balanced and nutritious, which contributes to a healthy lifestyle. They are encouraged to choose what to have for lunch as the childminder gives them a range of options, including lasagne, chicken casserole, roast beef and a daily selection of vegetables. The children demonstrate a very positive attitude towards healthy eating. For example, they request sweetcorn instead of peas for lunch. Children's dietary needs are fully met as the childminder gives regard to the information provided by parents in relation to their children's allergies, cultural and religious requirements, likes and dislikes.

Children have daily access to the garden where they enjoy a broad range of activities in the fresh air. They develop their coordination, movement and balance skills, as they crawl through tunnels, play in tents, play with water and use ride-on toys. Children are encouraged to exercise through regular walks in the woods to see squirrels and when using large climbing apparatus, slides and swings at the local park.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and welcoming environment where they can move around freely. Toilet facilities are provided on the ground floor, with a low level sink, enabling older children to access the facilities independently. The childminder is vigilant in ensuring that children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen, as they pass through the kitchen en-route to the garden and toilet. Children enjoy a balanced range of safe and stimulating toys and resources, which are stored in ground level plastic boxes to allow them to self-select. The childminder and children make good use of the local toy library, ensuring that children can choose new resources and remain engaged and interested in their play.

Children are cared for in a safe environment as the childminder takes positive steps to minimise risks during daily visual risk assessments. For example, the childminder has effectively minimised the risk associated with a high step leading to the garden by ensuring that children are fully supervised. Children show awareness of safety when bringing the childminder's attention to a small piece of blunt glass they have found in the soil. Children take part in safe outings as risk assessments are conducted in advance and the childminder is mindful to plan outings with appropriate numbers and ages of children. All the required precautions are in place to ensure children are protected in the event of a fire, including a fire blanket and a clear evacuation plan.

Children are protected from harm because the childminder has completed relevant training in child protection and she has good understanding of child protection issues. A clearly written statement on child protection shows that the childminder is aware of her role and responsibilities in safeguarding children and understands what to do if a concern arises.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children relish their time at the setting. They settle immediately as they are familiar with the routine and have very secure and trusting relationships with the childminder. The children and childminder genuinely enjoy the time they spend together; spontaneously laughing and sharing cuddles. The childminder is motivated by what children say and do and spends most of her time down at the children's level. Children clearly feel highly valued as they share photos of activities with the childminder and reflect positively on their experiences.

The childminder offers a flexible routine which is lead almost completely by the children's interests. They confidently self select from a wide range of suitable resources and feel comfortable when requesting alternative activities, which the childminder happily provides. For example, when the children ask to dress up as police officers, the childminder provides an excellent set of dressing up clothes and joins in with their play by dressing up herself. The childminder is skilful in making the most of incidental opportunities that arise, providing children with a wide range of meaningful experiences. For example, watching the truck collecting the rubbish and talking about a magpie that flies over the garden. Children delight in sharing stories with the childminder. They independently access their favourite books and sit comfortably on bean bags as the childminder brings the book to life with varying tones, actions and questions.

Children's independence is highly supported as the childminder encourages them to take responsibility for simple tasks, such as collecting the post and sweeping the floor with a dustpan and brush. They experience ample opportunities to develop their social skills as the childminder plans regular activities for children to socialise with adults and children in their local community. For example, attending toddler groups and childminder drop-in groups, visiting the zoo and train trips to the seaside.

Younger children receive excellent care as the childminder draws on her vast experience of caring for babies and young children and effectively reflects the 'Birth to three matters' framework in her practice. The childminder encourages their communication skills by patiently listening and responding with enthusiasm to questions. Younger children feel settled as the childminder respects how comforters and individual routines help children to feel secure.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The childminder clearly knows the children and their families very well, which enables her to meet their individual needs and ensure all children are fully included and treated with equal concern. Children make choices and decisions as they select their own activities and are supported if they decide to do something other than what has been planned. Children use a small selection of books which help them to learn about different religious and cultural celebrations. However, there are insufficient activities offered to help children to develop an understanding of diversity through their play and a lack of resources that reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. The childminder has a positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and ensures that her setting is inclusive by adapting activities to enable all children to participate.

Children's behaviour is good. Children benefit from the childminder's calm and supportive approach and learn right from wrong through careful explanation and consistency. Children respect others as they consistently say 'please', 'thank you', 'pardon' and 'excuse me'. Children's

behaviour is well supported as the childminder discusses concerns with parents to enable them to determine any possible causes and decide on the best way to support the children together.

Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to creating a welcoming and friendly environment where parents feel reassured and comfortable to discuss their needs and concerns. Children's care needs are well met as the childminder and parents share information on a daily basis about eating, sleeping and nappy routines. Parents are kept informed further through a folder containing policies and other relevant information, including a clear procedure for handling and recording complaints.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for as the childminder approaches childminding with a professional but friendly manner and demonstrates clear commitment to providing good care for the children. Children are safeguarded as the childminder ensures that they are never left alone with adults who are not suitably vetted. Children experience good levels of supervision and individual attention as the childminder complies with the ratios defined in her conditions of registration. The childminder is proactive in updating her skills and knowledge as she reads literature and guidance relating to current good practice in childcare and attends meetings organised by the National Childminding Association and local authority. As a result, the children benefit from the childminder's clear sense of purpose and ongoing improvement.

Children's well-being is promoted by well organised documentation. Personal records relating to individual children are consistent with requirements and are stored securely in dedicated cupboard. Children are cared for in line with their parents wishes as all the required written consents are in place, including permission to transport children in a vehicle, administer medication and seek emergency medical advice and treatment.

Overall, children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to update an appropriate first aid certificate that includes training in first aid for infants and young children. The childminder has since completed a relevant first aid course, which ensures that children receive appropriate care in the event of an accident.

## **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 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):

- increase the range of activities and resources, which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability and help children learn about diversity.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)