



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 102019
Inspection date 03 May 2005
Inspector Catherine Greene

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 7th July 1995 . She is registered to care for a maximum of 4 children on her own , or 6 when working with her co-childminder.

She lives with her adult niece in a 2 bedroom flat on the first floor. There is a WC, bathroom, kitchen and living room all on one level. The living room is the main play space for children. There is a small outdoor area nearby. Various bus routes are close by and also Belsize Park and Chalk Farm Tube Stations.

There are no animals.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for in a clean hygienic environment where most of their basic health needs are being met through the prevention of the spread of infection and appropriate measures being taken when they are ill. They are involved in some routines that contribute to their good health such as washing hands. However, the poor mealtime provision significantly impacts on children's all-round well-being and their ability to enjoy a healthy lifestyle while in the childminder's care.

Children's dietary needs are not being met due to the childminder's failure to provide balanced meals and make appropriate arrangements with parent's regarding the provision of food to meet children's specific dietary requirements. Lunch on the day of inspection consisted of tinned spaghetti followed by plain boiled rice. This was both nutritionally inadequate and unsatisfying for the children. The childminder indicates that she gives children food provided and agreed by parents, although on the day of inspection she supplemented tinned spaghetti with her own plain boiled rice because the children were not satisfied. She indicates that she is aware of children's dietary needs but because she is directed by parents, children are sometimes given food products which do not always agree with them.

The children are making limited progress in becoming independent and being able to feed themselves or self select drinks, due to the childminder's low expectations and weak knowledge of the children's stages of development. Further contributory factors include the inappropriate seating arrangements, some of the feeding equipment, and the room layout. The children were seen to request juice and milk in bottles throughout the morning.

Children enjoy physical exercise through trips to the local park, however, this activity is limited and infrequent due to the numbers of children being cared for.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for in a clean home where most safety equipment is in place but the gate at the kitchen is not properly secured often trapping fingers and coming away from the wall as babies pull themselves up on to it.

Children's safety is compromised by the lack of appropriate facilities and play space in the room where they spend the greater part of their day. The loose matting and plastic sheeting that covers the fitted carpet poses a constant tripping hazard to children. Inappropriate use of car seats as feeding and sleeping chairs restricts children from developing independence skills or sleeping in a position appropriate to their size and age.

The childminder has a very basic understanding of Child Protection but gains support from a supported childminding officer.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

The childminder has a caring attitude towards the children but they are unsettled and unable to develop full potential due to her poor organisation of their care. She works with another childminder but they do not plan effectively for the children or agree consistent approaches to the children's needs.

Children are unable to independently select toys other than the toys on the floor that are badly organised and form little purposeful play. The space is limited and the resources stored in large closed containers that are stacked on top of each other, take away from the available play space and limit the opportunities to provide play for the children. The activities presented do not always provide sufficient challenges for the different age groups of children.

Children are confused when learning about right from wrong and the childminder fails to ensure that their behaviour is managed in a way which promotes their welfare and development. For instance, she has not agreed appropriate procedures with her colleague for giving children explanations for unacceptable behaviour and finding satisfactory solutions.

Children are not able to access sufficient play experiences and resources to develop their emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities. The childminder encourages children to take part in activities however, lack of space and organisation impacts on how the activities are presented and delivered and does not always encourage the children to use the activities to their full extent. Some children engage with the resources offered, however these are not always sufficient or appropriate for their level of understanding and they soon lose interest. Younger children are often left out of the activity; this leaves them wandering around aimlessly with no purpose. Children have access to Outdoor play and although the childminder indicates this is a regular part of the daily routine, only 3 children at a time go out.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

The childminder talks to children about other cultures and festivals to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase children's awareness of diversity. However children do not have the opportunity to experience many resources that reflect the diversity of the community and provide positive images.

Children's needs are known to the childminder, through discussion with parents and carer's this should help children feel secure and that their regular daily routine is continued. Communication with the local authority supported childminding service is not regular enough leaving the childminder unsure about specific aspects of

children's individual needs.

Children's behaviour is managed by a variety of strategies depending on the child's age and understanding. However there are significant weaknesses in the consistency of approaches with the co-childminder. This leads to children being confused and unsure of how to behave, leading to unnecessary conflict.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The childminder is poorly organised and has difficulty addressing the needs of the number of children for whom she is registered within the play space available. The main area used for childminding has limited open floor space due to an abundance of furniture and objects which restrict children's movements.

Children are often distressed and generally struggle to have their needs met as a result of the lack of planning and consistency in the daily arrangements for their care. The childminder demonstrates limited understanding

of how to meet the needs of a group of young children effectively. The children present were of varying ages under 5 years, including a very young baby; this became very challenging for her.

The partnership with her co-childminder has some significant weaknesses. The childminders do not have a consistent way of dealing with significant areas of children's care such as behaviour management and safety. This means that children are given mixed messages they are often confused and safety issues are not dealt with effectively. Poor systems are in place to evaluate co-childminding status and there is little or no monitoring of the provision or the children's progress.

The required record keeping that is needed to ensure the welfare of minded children is in place. There is a record of children's daily attendance, records of accidents and a system for recording the administration of medication. Ofsted has been kept informed of adults living on the premises but outstanding vetting procedures have yet to be completed for a close relative. Overall, children's needs are not being met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has implemented an attendance register since the last inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

04/06/2004 Complaint; concerns raised were:

That children had been left on their own whilst childminder went shopping. The childminder had told a Social Worker that Ofsted allowed her to do this.

The concerns related to National standards 1 & 2 and were investigated during an

unannounced visit to the childminder's home. The childminder stated that she had not left children on their own but in fact had left them in the care of the co-childminder. She had left for 10-15 minutes to go and check on her 82 year old mother who had not been answering the telephone. No evidence was found that National Standards were breached on this occasion. The provider remains qualified for registration.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- assess the risks to children in relation to floor coverings and take action to minimise these
- Ensure that children's individual needs and welfare are promoted through provision of activities and play opportunities that develop their emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities
- Ensure that children are provided with nutritious food in adequate quantities.
- develop awareness and understanding of effective and consistent ways to manage children's behaviour,
- Organise space and resources to meet children's needs effectively

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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