

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	130036
Inspection date	02 May 2007
Inspector	Karen Molloy

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 was registered in 1997. She lives with her husband and three children aged eight, ten and twelve years in Garston, Watford. 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 is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and she is currently minding three children under five, one full-time and two on a part-time basis. She also cares for one child over five, after school. The childminder is close to local facilities and walks to and from school each day to take or collect children. The childminder attends a local toddler group.

The childminder holds an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They wash their hands after using the toilet or playing in the garden and before eating. Young children are given the necessary support. Children are reminded to cover their mouth when they cough and their noses are wiped by the childminder. Children stay healthy as there are suitable procedures in place to protect them from infection, nappies are changed regularly and disposed of appropriately and children who are infectious do not attend the childminder's home. Children who are being toilet-trained are supported and a small toilet seat and step aids their independence. All the relevant medication and accident records are in place to ensure children's health is safeguarded. Children also benefit from the childminder's first aid knowledge.

Children benefit from regular physical activity, which contributes to their good health and helps develop their physical skills. They spend a lot of time in the garden with a good selection of play opportunities, such as the slide, climbing frame and role play area. Children receive fresh air and exercise as they are encouraged to walk to and from school each day. They attend a weekly session at a local leisure centre where they can be energetic on the bouncy castle and play with the large soft bricks. A regular toddler group also provides opportunities to use bikes and be active. Children rest and sleep when they need to. A travel cot is available whilst other children sleep in their buggy at the childminder's home or on the way to school.

Children are nourished. Parents provide their food which the childminder stores and prepares appropriately. Healthy choices are encouraged and children enjoy different fruits during the day. Snacks are not provided routinely unless children ask. Drinks are easily accessible and any specific dietary needs are discussed with parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in welcoming, safe and secure environment where risks are identified and minimised. This means they are able to move around safely, freely and with some independence. Appropriate safety measures are in place such as cupboard locks, stair gates and door 'bumpers'. Attention is paid to fire safety and precautions include a fire guard, smoke alarms, fire blanket and fire procedure, which all contribute to children's safety. The childminder has a good awareness of safety issues and takes appropriate action to minimise any potential hazards that arise. Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe as the childminder teaches them about closing doors carefully and safely.

Children are kept safe outdoors. The garden is all enclosed and gates and sheds are locked. Hedges are kept cut back and checked for falling berries. A low gazebo provides children with shade in the hot weather and enables them to play freely and safely. When out and about, children's safety is promoted. Children travel in the car using appropriate car seats and the necessary insurance is in place. Children's age and level of understanding is taken into consideration when walking. They may hold the buggy, hold hands or use the buggy board. Reins are used if necessary. Children learn about road safety. They watch the traffic and are shown when it is safe to cross. Children learn in a positive way about keeping safe. They are given more freedom in the park although the childminder continues to supervise them well;

she will call them back to ensure they know to return when they are called. All the relevant records are in place in relation to outings and records of attendance.

Children use a wide range of safe and suitable equipment. They have access to a varied selection that provides them with challenges and stimulates their interest. Many are easily accessible, stored in low level boxes with books on low shelves, which enables them to make independent choices. Toys are clean and well-maintained. Children are made welcome with toys laid out prior to children's arrival. They have low coat hooks to encourage their independence. Favourite resources are often chosen by the childminder and as a result, children are happy to become involved and settle well.

Children are cared for by a childminder who understands her role in child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. She has up-to-date literature and has previously attended child protection training. The childminder is familiar with who to contact regarding any concerns, consequently, children's welfare is protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children develop positive relationships with the childminder. They interact with each other in a comfortable and relaxed manner. The childminder is caring and listens well to children. Their needs are responded to promptly and children are confident to approach the childminder for support, for example, to take toys out that they cannot reach or to help them begin a train track. Children are very content and play well. The childminder shares the children's excitement as they stack beakers in the right order. Children receive comfort and cuddles when they are tired and they enjoy sitting with the childminder to look at books. Children have their individual needs met; the daily routine is led by the children and their routine, moods or the weather. The childminder likes to be spontaneous when possible. Children make requests, such as when they want to go indoors and complete a puzzle, which is responded to positively by the childminder who organises this.

Children participate in a range of activities and experiences to support their all round development. They experience a balance of play opportunities both indoors and out of the home. They attend a weekly toddler group and leisure centre session which promotes their social skills and awareness of the community. Children's different stages of development are supported by the childminder who provides appropriate resources to challenge them and help them acquire new skills. Children's communication skills are fostered as the childminder repeats a sentence back to them correctly and they automatically repeat it correctly. The garden is well-organised and inviting as the childminder has brought the inside out and set up the outdoor space with a variety of play experiences. A low gazebo provides shade with a spacious role play area underneath and children take great delight in playing there and eating their fruit in the kitchen area. Children respond to challenge and whilst doing puzzles they discuss the colours and are encouraged to look at the shape of the pieces to see where they fit.

Children show interest in what they do and are completely absorbed and busy throughout the whole morning. They move from one activity to another playing well, concentrating and showing a real interest and enjoyment in their chosen area of play. They begin to ask questions and the childminder asks them questions to develop their thinking. As they run to the childminder telling them it is noisy, she asks if they know what the noise is and shows them the man next door using the lawn mower. The children are reassured and show interest in the whole event. Children develop confidence and self-esteem, they are praised and respond well to it, for

example, when they finish a puzzle. Children are confident in making independent choices, they move from the indoors to outdoors choosing new toys or activities.

The childminder has completed training in relation in the 'Birth to three matters' framework, but is not currently using this in her practice with children under three years.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a childminder who respects them and values their differences. Their individuality is acknowledged and they are cared for according to their differing cultures, personalities and stage of development. Children have access to resources that reflect diversity such as imaginative play people, dolls of different genders and nationalities. There are some books with dual text and others that explore various faiths, helping to promote children's understanding of others. Children benefit from the opportunity to learn about cultures and festivals as they take part in celebrations that the childminder organises. Children with additional needs are supported and fully integrated into the setting.

Children understand responsible behaviour and become aware of the boundaries as they become more familiar in the childminder's home. Sensible rules ensure the children's safety and they are not disruptive as they are kept busy and occupied during the day. The childminder recognises that children may behave in a particular way for a reason such as being tired. Children are told if they are unkind and if they persist in unacceptable behaviour they are asked to sit on a step. Any behaviour issues are discussed with parents. Good behaviour is reinforced through the positive use of praise.

The childminder works with parents to meet children's needs. Appropriate contracts and records are maintained to ensure children's needs and the business arrangements are agreed. Information about the children's day is shared informally between parents and the childminder and issues are readily discussed. A complaints record is in place to ensure any concerns are logged and the childminder is aware of the need to share this with parents. Parents are also kept informed of the childminder's service as they are given a copy of the policies. .

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a childminder who has a high regard for children. She has sufficient knowledge of the National Standards and regulations and is an experienced childminder who holds a recognised child care qualification from the Nursery Nursing Examination Board (NNEB). More recently, the childminder has completed training in child protection, food hygiene, and 'Birth to three matters'. She is aware of the need to maintain a current first aid certificate and ensures she keeps up-to-date with current practice.

Children receive appropriate support and attention from the childminder and they take part in a suitable range of activities to promote their overall development and enjoyment. She organises her time, space and resources effectively to meet children's needs. Children are settled and relaxed in their surroundings, moving freely from indoors to the outside. Toys are organised before the children arrive to ensure it is welcoming and they are confident in making further choices.

All of the required policies and procedures are in place to promote children's safety, welfare and enjoyment. They are sufficiently organised and maintained.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to maintain an accurate record of attendance. This is now in place and ensures children's welfare is safeguarded. In response to becoming familiar with current child protection guidance, the childminder has attended child protection training and takes regard of current literature. This knowledge ensures children's well-being is protected.

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

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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):

- access any relevant training to ensure good practice is maintained.

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