

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 203169
Inspection date 12 June 2007
Inspector Anita Bartram

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 adult daughter in Ingatestone, Essex. The ground floor and master bedroom are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five, and three children over five before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends local toddler groups. The family has no pets.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to understand simple health and hygiene practices through the satisfactory routines the childminder encourages them to follow. As a result, children are suitably

protected from cross-infection. Children enjoy physical activity. They are keen to play outside in the garden and have ample opportunities for exercise as they walk to and from local schools and amenities. Consequently, children's health is benefited as they exercise in fresh air helping to build positive habits for their future.

Children are appropriately nourished according to their parents' wishes. The childminder encourages children to try new tastes as they see and comment on different foods in each other's packed lunches. Children are suitably hydrated although squash is offered in preference to fresh water.

Children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs and preferences. For example, the childminder is aware of the benefits to babies and children to sleep peacefully in a cot away from the distractions of other children. However, she works alongside parents to follow routines with children that they follow at home. The childminder encourages children to use comforters appropriately. The childminder is warm and responsive in her care of the children. For example, she listens to what they say and has little chats with them appropriate to their age and stage of understanding. As a result, children have their emotional well-being fully promoted.

All medication records are in place. She has some consent forms in place from parents although has not yet fully requested written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice. This restricts the action the childminder is able to take if she is concerned about a child's health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to learn about keeping themselves safe through the simple explanations the childminder uses when caring for the children. For example, when she asks them to sit down in their chair at lunch time, she reminds them that they might tip up and hurt themselves.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment. For example, toys are in good condition and appropriate in their variation to suit the ages of the children being minded. They are stored at low level so children can access them safely. All hazards around the house have been minimised and the garden is safe and secure.

The childminder has attended recent training in child protection and has written procedures to hand to follow should she be concerned about a child. As a result, children are suitably safeguarded from non-accidental harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are able to develop their independence well and have a valuable amount of choice in their play. For example, all children can help themselves to toys and books and older toddlers are given a choice in activities they can do whilst younger ones sleep. As a result, children are able to begin to form their individual likes and dislikes in which toys they enjoy playing with.

The childminder interacts purposefully whilst children play. She asks children open ended questions as she sits on the floor to play alongside them and listens purposefully to what they have to say. As a result, children's self esteem is sensitively fostered as children feel listened to and have their comments valued. The childminder has familiarised herself with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and plans some activities to cover children's areas of development.

For example, children are able to develop their social skills through visits to toddler groups and enjoy craft activities or puzzles geared to their age. As a result, children are able to experience activities which are appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are able to begin to learn right from wrong through the calm and consistent approach the childminder uses. Overall, the childminder uses positive methods such as distraction and re-direction to manage children's unwanted behaviour. For example, as two year olds struggle with sharing toys she intervenes to ensure toys are shared fairly and children understand why. The childminder occasionally uses a 'naughty corner' as a strategy to manage children's more persistent negative behaviour. However, this method can have a profound effect on children's self-esteem and self-confidence.

The childminder works effectively with parents and aims to support them in the care of their children. She exchanges important routine information with parents through discussion at the end of the day. The childminder aims to meet children's individual needs by, for example, following sleep routines and practices. The childminder has limited experience of caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities, although is aware of working in partnership with parents to meet children's more specific needs. There is an adequate range of resources reflecting diversity, enabling children to build a balanced view of their wider world around them.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has a sound appreciation of her responsibilities as a registered childminder. She has completed all required training and has continued to update her awareness of how to protect children and how to help them enjoy and achieve. For example, through recent training in child protection and the 'Birth to three matters' framework she now has more awareness of issues to be mindful of in her care of the children. This commitment to ongoing training has a positive effect on the quality of care children receive.

The childminder is aware of protecting children from non-vetted persons and all required checks have been completed on persons over the age of 16 years living in the household. The childminder has developed some written policies to underpin her provision and these are accessible to parents upon request. These are generally carried out well in practice. All required documentation is in place and the register is maintained accurately. As a result, children's safety and well-being is appropriately safeguarded.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder agreed to ensure all persons aged over 16 years living on the premises are suitably vetted. All the required checks have now been undertaken. The childminder agreed to ensure all records are stored confidentially. All documentation is now organised and stored confidentially although is easily accessible in an emergency.

She agreed to ensure that the register accurately reflects children's actual attendance on the premises; to obtain contact details of who she would refer concerns to about a child's welfare; and to request written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. The childminder keeps her register very accurately to enable her to identify when children are actually in her care. Following recent child protection training the childminder now has written contact details of who to contact if she suspects children are being abused. She has made some improvement in obtaining written consent from parents to seek emergency medical treatment although has not yet obtained permission for her to seek emergency medical advice. This limits the action the childminder is able to take should she have concerns about a child's health.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the childminder or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The childminder 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):

- ensure specific written consent from parents is requested to seek emergency medical advice or treatment
- develop the methods of communication with parents to increase opportunities to exchange information
- revise the use of how 'time-out' is used to ensure children's behaviour is managed positively.

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