

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY233059
Inspection date	16 May 2007
Inspector	Jenny Howell
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2002. She lives with her husband and two daughters aged eight and ten in Rayleigh, Essex. The whole 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 six children when working alone and eight children when working with an assistant. She is currently minding a total of 29 children on a part time basis. Five of these children are over eight, the majority of whom are cared for after school. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools.

The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network and is currently in receipt of funding for early education for three and four-year-olds. Currently eight children are in receipt of funding. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities

and children who speak English as a second language. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely well cared for in a home which is cleaned and checked daily and maintained to a high level of hygiene. Food is prepared in a clean area and there is provision for the sterilisation of babies' feeding equipment. Children develop an excellent understanding of simple health practices as, for example, they learn about washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They talk about the reasons for doing this which helps to reinforce their understanding. Children are extremely well cared for if they become ill. The childminder has all necessary information to hand so that she can contact parents or medical professionals quickly to discuss the action to take. Unwell children are made comfortable and are closely monitored. The childminder and one of her assistants have current training in first aid and this allows them to act appropriately in the event of illness or accident. The childminder carries a small first aid kit with her when out and about alongside emergency contact numbers so that she can seek help and advice wherever she may be.

Children learn about healthy living as they enjoy the very nutritious snacks and meals provided by the childminder. They talk about what they are eating and are learning to recognise healthy and unhealthy foods. Children have frequent opportunities to exercise, as they play in the garden, explore the park and visit local woods and a soft play centre. Babies and children under three have extensive opportunities to develop physical skills as they shake rattles, grab and feel soft toys and reach up to the toys on activity arches and play centres. They are able to pull themselves up on low level furniture and baby-walkers and have ample space to practice rolling over and crawling. Children are able to rest according to their own needs and routines and are provided with a quiet and safe environment in which to sleep.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely safe and secure environment where the childminder is proactive in promoting safety. Children are unable to leave unsupervised and the childminder can monitor visitors to the premises at all times. The childminder takes great care to ensure that effective procedures are in place to protect children's safety. For example, children learn how to evacuate the house and this routine is regularly practised with them. A fire blanket is in place in the kitchen and smoke alarms are appropriately placed throughout the house. Children play in an extremely safe area which is free from hazards and play with toys and equipment which are regularly checked for safety and are appropriate to their ages and stages of development. The childminder is meticulous in ensuring that babies do not have access to toys with small parts.

Children successfully learn about road safety as they walk around the local area and follow simple safety procedures such as walking in pairs and looking for safe places to cross. When

travelling by car they are correctly restrained in seats and straps which are appropriate to their age. They also learn about safety in the home as they contribute towards devising the simple house rules which are in place. Comprehensive and clear written policies effectively support children's safety. The childminder carefully ensures that all assistants working with children have undergone thorough vetting and safety checks before they are able to have any unsupervised contact with children. The childminder has a very clear understanding of her responsibility to protect children and explains this openly to parents. She has attended training in child protection and has accurate written guidance and support to close to hand should she need it.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy with the childminder and enthusiastically settle to play as they and their parents are warmly welcomed into the home. They quickly become involved in a wide range of stimulating activities which are carefully tailored to their interests, needs and stages of development. Children develop highly positive relationships with each other, enjoying playing, learning and eating together. This, combined with effective interaction with the childminder and her assistants, helps children to build confidence and self-esteem. Children initiate their own play, accessing toys independently and allowing their imagination to take the lead. They suggest games and play these with the childminder, providing opportunities for them to learn about sharing and taking turns. Children are actively involved in contributing to the setting as they help to develop house rules and produce pictures and craft for display from walls and ceilings.

Children under three are well cared for as the childminder adopts an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They have access to toys and materials which promote their physical development and take part in activities which help them to develop an interest in the world around them. Babies are able to become fully engaged in all activities as the childminder constantly talks to them and involves them in everything that is happening. This successfully helps babies to learn from what they see, hear and feel in the world around them.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children take part in a wide variety of activities which are carefully planned to help them make excellent progress towards the early learning goals for nursery education. Children's achievements and progress are consistently recorded and are used effectively to plan future activities. These assessment records are detailed and meaningful, making it easy for the childminder to identify individual children's next steps for learning. The childminder has an in-depth understanding of what individual children need to do next in order to make good progress and she carefully plans and adapts activities accordingly to provide rich and stimulating learning opportunities for all children.

Children actively develop social and self care skills as they play games together, help to get the table ready for snack and meal times and put on their own shoes and coats. They effectively develop early reading and writing skills as they follow recipes to make cookies and use their imagination to make up their own stories. They develop good communication skills as they talk

about the games they are playing, describing the cards they need to win the game, and talk with enthusiasm about events from home. They develop further language skills as they play games and read books in French. Children enthusiastically learn about numbers and counting as they sing number rhymes and play games involving counting and numbers. They delight in solving simple problems as they check to see if there are enough placemats out for lunch and give out the cards for matching games.

Children effectively learn about the world around them as they talk about, and taste, food from different countries, share past and present events in their own family lives and plant and grow their own plants and vegetables. Children enjoy developing physical skills as they use scissors to cut, make Lego models, play outside and go on regular walks and trips to the park. Children are able to be creative and express themselves as they paint, draw, dance, sing, dress up and make up their own games and stories.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Special attention is paid to ensure that all children are cared for as individuals. The childminder and her assistants are extremely sensitive to the needs and interests of each child and work hard to make sure that their care and education are adapted accordingly. Children feel highly valued and included as they have their birthdays' celebrated and have abundant opportunities to share and talk about items of interest they have brought with them from home. They develop a strong sense of belonging as they have their pictures and craft work displayed from the walls and ceiling around them, helping to create a rich and vibrant environment. Children learn about differences and diversity as they find out about life in different countries and learn about the festivals and celebrations of different world cultures and religions. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The care of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is very well managed. The childminder works closely with parents and her assistants to ensure that all needs are identified and plans are put in place to ensure all children take part in appropriate activities to help them enjoy and make progress. Children behave extremely well and are effectively supported and encouraged by the childminder. They learn to share and take turns as they play board and card games and are involved in developing simple house rules.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. The parents of children in receipt of funding for nursery education receive good quality information about the Foundation Stage and the progress their child is making towards achieving the early learning goals. They are also invited to attend an annual open day where they can see what their child is doing and have a look at their assessment and progress records. Parents are very happy with the care and education their children receive, writing many letters of thanks and commenting that the childminder is patient, warm, understanding and reliable with excellent communication, interpersonal and organisational skills.

Parents receive detailed and clear information on their initial visit and have time to talk and find out as much as possible about the care their children will receive. The childminder obtains all relevant information, including all necessary written parental permissions, to allow her to

provide a high level of care and uses this well to provide appropriate food, activities and medical attention. Parents are encouraged to talk to the childminder at any time should they have any worries or concerns and are also told how to make more formal complaints should they wish to do so. They also have access to a suggestion box. As a result of this parents feel fully involved and included in all elements of the care and education their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a child-centred environment. The childminder and her assistants have a high regard for the well-being of all children. Time, space and resources are thoughtfully organised to allow children to feel secure, play freely and enjoy learning. The childminder is dedicated to improving her skills, attending regular training including areas such as behaviour management, food hygiene, healthy eating, in-car safety and child protection. Assistants are carefully chosen for their ability to work well with children and undergo relevant police and vetting checks. They are clear of their roles and responsibilities, ensuring that the care of children is of a consistently high standard. All relevant documents are in place. These are very well organised and effectively contribute to the high level of care provided to all children.

The childminder has a clear focus on providing children in receipt of funding with high quality educational opportunities. She works very well with her childminding network, receiving regular support visits which help her to reflect upon and constantly improve the care and education she provides to all children. The childminder ensures that her assistants clearly understand the role they can play in helping children to learn and achieve and involves them in developing planning and assessment records. She completes regular self-evaluations and as a result of this is able to make effective improvements to the care and education she provides.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection safety has been improved. The childminder keeps the side gate locked at all times, ensuring that children are safe and secure when playing in the garden.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted which 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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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