

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 322172
Inspection date 02 April 2007
Inspector Jean Evelyn Thomas

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 1996. She is registered to work with an assistant. The childminder lives with her husband and child aged over 16 in Liverpool. The family has a pet rabbit. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed outside play area.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time when working alone and 10 children when working with her assistant. There are currently 11 children under eight years on the register. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children.

The childminder is suitably qualified and has approximately 30 years child care experience. Her assistant is also qualified and is experienced in child care.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean setting where hygiene procedures are implemented to help prevent the spread of infection. For example, toys are cleaned on a regular basis and children follow basic hand washing procedures before eating and after toileting. Children learn about the importance of personal dental care as they clean their teeth at the setting. Children introduce this understanding in their role play as they clean the doll's teeth. Children are protected when they are ill because the childminder follows appropriate measures including making the children comfortable and contacting parents. The childminder and her assistant are both qualified to administer first aid.

Children benefit from vegetables and fruit being included in their daily diet. However, convenience foods are regularly used as the main ingredient of the meals. Drinks are provided throughout the day and older children learn to respond to their bodily needs and ask for a drink when thirsty. The childminder is aware of children's individual dietary needs and ensures these are met.

Children participate in activities which promote a healthy life style, such as having fresh air and exercise. The outdoor play area is used throughout the year. Children play with a range of equipment, such as balls and tunnels, climbing frame and bikes. They walk to local parks where there are open spaces to be enjoyed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming home where space is well organised to allow them to move around independently. The walls are brightly decorated with the children's art work which they are proud to show to visitors. The range of furniture and equipment ensures children are able to play, eat and rest in comfort. The childminder has a wide range of play materials. This stock is further improved by the regular use of the toy library facilities to offer children greater variety and stimulation. Children make their own choices in play as they select toys and resources stored at low level.

Children are cared for in a secure and well maintained setting. Children can not leave the premises unsupervised. Children receive close supervision indoors, outside and during outings, which contributes to their safety. They learn to keep themselves safe as they hold the childminder's hand when out on walks and follow the simple rules of looking and listening when crossing roads. The younger children wear reins for additional safety. Although safety equipment is used to isolate hazards, such as the fire guard and socket covers, harmful substances have not been made inaccessible in the kitchen. This compromises children's safety when they are in this area. The emergency escape plan has not been practised within the past twelve months to assess its effectiveness and to help children become familiar with the procedure.

Children's welfare is protected through the childminder's appropriate knowledge of child protection issues and of her role and responsibility to protect children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and relaxed as they enjoy a good relationship with the childminder and the assistant. They are shown affection which increases their sense of belonging and well-being. Children are motivated and interested in play, which they pursue confidently either independently, with other children or with the positive interaction of the childminder and the assistant. Children have fun; they laugh together as they pursue play. Plans are in place to offer children a range of play and learning opportunities. The childminder ensures children have time to play at their own pace and make their own choices. This unhurried approach enables children to develop skills through practice and helps to develop their levels of concentration.

There are good opportunities for children to be creative. For example, the children dress in clothes selected from the 'dressing up' box, then use the construction blocks and small world play resources as their play idea develops. The children make Easter cards using a variety of materials and glue. The younger children explore the different textures. The childminder is introducing the 'Birth to three matters' framework into her practice. The youngest children benefit from many play opportunities where they learn through using their senses as they investigate paint, dough and water. The older children decide to work on jigsaws and this triggers the interest of all the children. The childminder responds and sets out a selection of jigsaws suitable for the varying ages of children. The childminder supports their play and learning by talking about the shapes needed to complete the task. As a result children gain a sense of achievement with their end result. All children develop their language skills because the childminder and assistant respond to the babies' babbling. They talk to children clearly and ask questions to prompt a reply. The children enjoy stories and singing rhymes to further promote their language development.

Children are taken on outings to develop their understanding of the local community and the natural world. These include trips to the parks, the pet shop, library and toddler groups.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and the childminder meets their needs well through daily routines, which are discussed and agreed with parents, for example sleeping, eating and outing arrangements. The children have equal access to the toys and resources. As a result children enjoy a wide range of play opportunities and experiences. There is a satisfactory range of resources showing positive representation of diversity within society.

The children's behaviour is good. The children are learning how to share and take turns with gentle guidance from the childminder and the assistant, who are good role models. They both show children respect and interest in what they are saying and doing. Their consistent manner helps children feel secure, learn what is right and wrong and to be considerate towards each other. Children's self-esteem is developed through the childminder and the assistant giving purposeful praise for their achievements and efforts.

Children benefit from the childminder and parents working in partnership together. Effective communication links with the parents help the childminder find out about the daily needs of the children. The children have individual diaries documenting a photographic record of activities they have participated in and a log of their achievements. These are available to parents at all

times. Information is displayed for parents and a manual is available detailing policies including the complaints procedure.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder ensures persons who have not been vetted do not have unsupervised access to the minded children to protect them from harm. The childminder is aware of the need to inform Ofsted when there are any changes to circumstances.

Children are cared for within a secure routine. They are happy and settled in the environment which is organised appropriately to meet their needs. The organisation of the play areas enables children to choose their own activities and freely access the available resources. The facilities allow children to pursue both energetic and quiet play.

Children's information is securely stored and organised to ensure their privacy and safety. However, not all the documentation is maintained as required. The records are signed by parents after medicine has been administered, however, the parental consent to administer the medicine is not always obtained. The daily records do not show when the assistant has been involved in looking after the children and written permission has not been obtained from parents for the assistant to be left in sole charge of the children. This constitutes a breach of the National Standards and conditions of registration.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has reviewed the policies to reflect the service provided. For children's welfare the attendance register details their actual times of arrival and departure, the complaints procedure is in place and the sick child policy has been formalised including obtaining written consent to seek emergency medical treatment.

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 complaint 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):

- review the nutritional value of some aspects of the menu provided
- ensure children can not access harmful items in the kitchen and practise the emergency escape plan to make sure it is effective for children's safety
- obtain written parental consent for the assistant to be left in the sole charge of the children and before administering medicine
- maintain a daily record of who is looking after the children.

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