

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY246421 |
| Inspection date | 26 March 2008 |
| Inspector | Jenny Read |
| 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 2003 and may provide care for a maximum of three children under eight years at any one time. She currently cares for one child under three years on a full-time basis and one child under three years on a part-time basis all year round.

The childminder lives with her husband and six-year-old son in the London Borough of Chelsea and Kensington. The whole of the basement flat is used for childminding. The main areas used are the open-plan sitting room and kitchen, hall way and bathroom facilities. The smallest bedroom is used for sleeping children when required and the master bedroom as additional space under close supervision. There is an enclosed rear garden with grass and patio surfaces for outside play.

The childminder speaks Spanish, Italian and English. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's daily cleaning routines and good example. This maintains high standards of hygiene and ensures the play areas are clean and children are well protected from infection. As the children become older they learn how to care for their personal needs, washing their hands at the appropriate time and brushing their teeth after eating. The childminder sets a good example by immediately washing her hands after nappy changes and before and after preparing food and meal times. She is prompt in wiping the babies' noses when they have a cold. This minimises the spread of germs and infection.

The children's health is supported well if they are ill because the childminder is very attentive, sensitive to their needs and provides lots of cuddles and reassurance. The childminder has an up-to-date first aid qualification to enable her to provide appropriate treatment for minor injuries. She has two fully stocked first aid boxes, one of which is kept in the play area for easy access; although contents of the second box are mostly out of date. The childminder maintains sufficient records relating to any accidents or administration of medication and most are signed and shared with parents. She seeks written permission from parents before giving any medicines to children in line with the requirements of registration; although written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is not in place for all children.

Children's dietary needs are extremely well met because the childminder has an excellent knowledge of children's individual requirements. She shows great awareness of the importance of children eating and drinking regularly to maintain their health and well-being. The childminder is very proactive in liaising with parents and devises specific menu plans with parents' approval, which take account of children's allergies, dietary or medical needs. Subsequently, children enjoy wholesome, nutritious, home-cooked meals, such as sweet potato and spinach, autumn vegetables or savoury pork and apple casserole. These are pureed and served at the correct temperature for babies. Meal times are a social occasion because the babies sit in their highchair with the childminder and her family. This promotes a healthy environment for the children to eat and encourages their enjoyment of food.

The babies enjoy fresh air and exercise. The childminder takes them for walks in the pram to the local park where they sit on the swings and gain balance and control of their body as they sit on the rockers at the toddler group. The children are also able to have opportunities for rest when they wish, the childminder recognising familiar signs when children are tired. There are good arrangements in place for a baby to have a sleep because they each have their own travel cot and bedding and are visually checked every few minutes to ensure they are safe. The childminder sensitively wakes the child, speaking softly and giving lots of cuddles to introduce the child back to play, therefore nurturing their well-being.

The babies learn to crawl as they are provided with space and resources, such as a tunnel and tent. They practise supporting their weight on their legs as the childminder holds them or encourages them to walk along the furniture whilst playing. They are gaining new physical skills as they learn to clap, excitedly repeating as they respond to the childminder's praise. The garden is now available for use and observation of the outside area and photographs show there are a broad selection of outside toys to challenge and extend children's fitness and large physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The children have more than adequate space to move freely and great emphasis is given to making sure the environment is welcoming and child-friendly to aid their development. Sensory media and coloured circles hang and reflect in the hallway, word and picture cards hang from the ceiling and toys and child-sized furniture are organised to allow children to access for themselves, promoting their independence. The space is used innovatively, utilising the hallway as additional play space with a floor-level storage unit for the children to set up and play with their trains and to allow the babies and younger children to help themselves to toys of their choice.

Children's safety and security is given high priority because the premises are maintained to a good standard and all areas, including gas and electrical appliances are checked yearly by the landlord to ensure they are safe and in good working order. Children access a broad range of well-maintained toys and play materials including a large selection of books, musical instruments, home corner equipment and vehicles. The childminder rotates these on a regular basis to provide children with different experiences.

The childminder maintains good levels of safety to give maximum protection to the children in her care. She is vigilant and very aware of potential dangers in the house and supervises the babies closely. For example, ensuring they are strapped in the highchair or buggy and holding her arm at the back of the child in case they fell backwards when practising their standing and playing with the toys. The childminder meets all named persons for collection and obtains written consents for some children to go on outings and travel on public transport to safeguard their welfare. The childminder provides clear explanations for safe play, however, discussion and practise of the escape plan does not take place to help the younger children begin to understand and raise awareness of safe action to take in an emergency.

The children are generally well protected from abuse and neglect because the childminder has a good knowledge and understanding on how to protect the children. She shows sound awareness of the signs and indicators that may raise her concern and is very aware of her responsibility to report any concerns. However, her knowledge of current referral procedures is not secure.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and have lots of fun because the childminder has a sound knowledge of child development and the Birth to three matters. She plans children's experiences to ensure they focus on their interests and sensory and imaginative development. These are flexible depending on how the children are feeling or what they show interest in during the day.

Weekly plans, photograph albums and the children's monthly assessment folders show a good array of enjoyable activities that develop fine muscle skills, problem solving and their creativity. These include painting, playing with water and sand, spaghetti and exploring shredded paper. Additional activities, such as, investigating the music box, sensory tub and introducing sounds through rhyme and songs when looking at the 'Jolly Jingles' book extends children's enjoyment and heuristic experiences.

Children show interest in what they do because the childminder knows the children well, responds well to their ideas and readily joins in their play to help guide and develop their play further. For example, she said a child has a really positive interest in books, so they visit the library each week to promote and develop the child's interest and development further.

The youngest children develop their early communication and language skills because the childminder constantly talks to the children about what they are doing, naming the toys and introducing colours, shapes and numbers to extend their knowledge and understanding. She shares the three-dimensional builders' book, talking about the pictures and showing the child how to operate the moving parts on the page. The children smile and listen intently as the childminder sings familiar songs, such as 'The wheels on the bus' from the bus book, while looking at the pictures and helping to turn the pages.

The childminder discusses how she feels it is very important for the children to be stimulated and to be around children of a similar age. Consequently, they enjoy wonderful opportunities to develop their social skills and regularly visit places of interest in the London area that introduce them to new experiences. For example, they attend the toddler group, play parks and visit the children's section in the Science Museum where the youngest children safely explore numerous objects and investigate lights, press buttons and textures. Children develop confidence and have a strong bond with the childminder because she is full of enthusiasm and puts lots of energy into her work with the children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and treated as individuals because the childminder ensures that she has the relevant information, such as, their specific medical and health needs, to provide good quality care for the minded children. Letters observed from the parents praise the childminder and the support given to their child with their eating difficulties. The childminder has experience of working closely with other professional agencies and has clear understanding and awareness of the processes to follow should she have any concerns about a child's development and progress.

The childminder implements innovative systems to aid settling of new children by creating an album of photographs supplied by their parents of special people and animals in their life, so that they can share this throughout the day and be able to see familiar faces. Children have access to a selection of resources that help them learn about our diverse society. These include a range of books and musical instruments, including some from the childminder's native country of Columbia. The childminder speaks a number of languages, including Spanish and Italian and works closely with parents who wish for their children to hear and learn their own or different languages.

Lots of enthusiastic praise and smiling, for example, when the child clapped for the first time, values the children's new achievements and promotes their confidence and self esteem. As a result, children are well behaved. The childminder focuses greatly on empowering the children and helping them to understand responsible behaviour and good manners from a young age by devising certificates which, for example, praise them for being cheerful and friendly that month.

Children benefit from a very positive, friendly and close working relationship between their parents and the childminder. Parents complete written business arrangements and receive very

good information about the setting, the activities and how she will communicate with them to ensure they are fully informed about the service she offers. She shares photograph albums showing examples of activities and her colourful 'Taty fun' childminder folder. This contains photographs and information about her family, letters from previous parents, examples of menu plans and activity plans with information explaining the Birth to three matters. Parents also receive a vibrant and beautiful monthly update on their children's progress through a creatively designed and bound scrapbook of photographs and comments collated under each area of the Birth to three.

Parents take an active part in the setting. They attend the regular social events organised by the childminder to enable them to get to know each other and to encourage them to bring food and share aspects of their own cultures. In addition, they spend time each morning and afternoon with the childminder, talking and sharing useful information, thus encouraging a two-way exchange of information. Children are cared for according to parents' wishes because most written permissions are in place. Letters observed show parents value the family orientated and loving home and actively praise the childminder's professional and flexible attitude. They acknowledge her excellent knowledge of child development and feel this is reflected in the range of stimulating toys and activities provided and the way she interacts with the children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is highly committed, very enthusiastic and professional in her approach to providing the best possible care for the children. She states she loves her job and this is reflected in the quality of the care she offers and the happiness of the children in the setting. She has a high regard for children's welfare and a strong focus on nurturing their emotional well-being, working closely with parents and carers to ensure their individual needs are well met.

The childminder enjoys attending additional training to extend her knowledge and seeks regular guidance from her husband, who was a registered childminder and attended all the training, to ensure her comprehension of English is correct and her understanding of the procedures and National Standards are secure. For example, requesting checks on her helper, who assists her in the care of her son to ensure minded children are protected and not left alone with persons who have not completed the checking process.

All the required records and documentation are in place and most contain sufficient details. Appropriate records and information are signed and shared with parents, including information about contact details of the regulator should they have any concerns about the childminder or the service she provides. The childminder ensures all records are well organised. Each child has an individual record for attendance, accident and medication and a named section in a concertina filing box with written agreements, child record forms and most written permissions.

Children benefit from the well-organised setting where toys are easily accessible and space is used creatively. This maximises their play opportunities and experiences and promotes their enjoyment. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection recommended the provider increased the range of toys that reflect diversity, improved children's safety inside and out by identifying and removing potential risks, kept a daily record of attendance and obtained written parental consent for emergency medical advice

or treatment. The children access a selection of resources that raise their awareness of diversity. Children are safe and secure because they are closely supervised to minimise potential risks. The attendance register is completed for each child and times are mostly accurate, although a record of all adults present at the setting at any one time is not clear. Written consent is being sought from parents to ensure children's health is promoted.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 good. 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):

- obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment
- increase awareness of the current child protection referral procedures.

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