



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	159926
Inspection date	26 July 2005
Inspector	Josephine Geoghegan

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 was registered in 2001. He lives in the New Cross area of Lewisham with his partner who works as his assistant. He has two children under eight years old. The whole of the ground floor and one room on the first floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and when working with an assistant may care for seven children at any one time. He is currently minding 12 children under five with his assistant, of these 11 children aged under five attend on various full days and one child over five attends before and

after school on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local children's group. The family do not have any pets.

The childminder does not provide overnight care. He is a member of the National Childminding Association. The childminder subscribes to the Steiner Waldorf education approach.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are able to play in a clean, bright, stimulating environment. Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills as they regularly use the garden as part of their daily routine, enabling them to gain exercise and fresh air. Children make good use of the large garden and actively engage in physical play; they use balls, wheeled toys, rope, tyre swings and the slide enthusiastically, developing good balance, spatial awareness and co-ordination. Children are helped to feel safe and secure with lots of cuddles and comfort continuously offered by the childminder, developing their emotional wellbeing.

Children benefit from an efficient and flexible nappy changing routine that caters for their individual needs. Some children are escorted to the toilet as they are toilet training, while others lay contently as they are changed in a well organised and calm manner. Children learn a good hygiene practise within the daily routine, such as washing their hands after garden play and before meals. They are encouraged to use tissues appropriately and put them in the bin after use. Good systems are in place to promote hygiene within the home and help stop the spread of infection, such as using disposable gloves when nappy changing, individual bedding and checking the garden is clean before use.

Children are offered a balanced and nutritious diet of freshly cooked meals that include organic produce and fresh fruit and vegetables. Children's individual dietary needs are known and catered for, including any special dietary requirements. Children enjoy the food offered that is served at the table by the childminder, creating a relaxed and sociable mealtime. Children often participate in the preparation of cooking with the childminder, such as preparing vegetables and tasting them raw.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are able to play in a safe and well maintained home and garden. The home, toys and resources clearly reflect the Steiner approach that the childminder adopts, such as natural resources, neutral tones and real objects. Children have access to a very good range of child-sized furniture and equipment, such as tables, chairs, highchairs and cots; these are suitable and sufficient for the number of children attending, for example, there are six cots available. Most furniture, equipment and

toys are made from natural resources; they are good quality and well maintained.

Children select toys and resources that are stored at ground level in baskets and containers, enabling them to make choices and develop skills of independence. They have access to a broad range of resources that include real objects such as large paper weights and wicker balls, and copper saucepans in the role play kitchen area that are graded in size, developing children's maths skills of weight, space and measure. Children have good opportunities to use a variety of resources to design and construct, for example, they use blankets and ropes to make tents with the childminder. Children have access to a range of materials that develop their creative skills, such as musical instruments that reflect a variety of cultures, role play and dressing up clothes and art materials, such as paints and crayons that are stored in small wooden bowls and sorted by colour.

Children are kept safe within the home and garden as the childminder has taken positive steps to promote safety, such as using safety gates and setting clear safety routines when going through the kitchen to the garden.

The childminder is aware of Child Protection procedures and keeps the Lewisham Child Protection guidelines for childminders easily accessible.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy, settled and purposefully engaged in play. They make good use of all resources available, freely selecting and replacing toys. Children are able to share and take turns, for example, they share the trains and take turns adding pieces to build the wooden train track.

Children communicate well with each other and the childminder and are confident speakers; they use language to negotiate and enjoy singing familiar songs and rhymes. Children have opportunities to use books, but mainly have stories told by the childminder who develops the storyline with the children who name the characters.

Children have very good opportunities to learn about nature and living things. They take notice of birds and animal sounds and talk enthusiastically of how they put food on the bird table and watch the birds. They are able to explore and observe seasonal changes, as nature is strongly emphasised by the childminder, for example, children use the wild nature area at the rear of the garden to observe the foliage and butterflies. They are aware of how the mulch bin is used to make compost.

Children are encouraged to use the natural resources in the garden to develop maths skills relating to shape and size; they use pieces of branches to build and construct and use mathematical language when using sticks to make patterns in the earth. Most play is child initiated with the childminder providing support as needed and skilfully extending children's learning, for example, children identify the shapes then drawn in the earth by the childminder.

Children enjoy being imaginative as they dress up and play with soft toys, and while

using large sit-on wooden trucks with the tent as the garage; they play co-operatively, absorbing themselves in role play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The needs of all children are met well by the childminder. Children have good opportunities to learn about cultures and beliefs; they use a range of resources in the home, such as dolls and musical instruments that reflect a variety of cultures. Children also participate in creative activities that relate to festivals and regularly attend children's groups and outings in the local community.

Relationships are excellent at all levels. Behaviour is of a consistently high standard; children are kind, considerate and respond positively to the daily routine, for example, children share and take turns while using toys and equipment, they play co-operatively and all help to tidy up and prepare for lunch when requested by the childminder. Children show an excellent understanding and willingness to keep themselves safe and healthy, especially when using the garden. They form an orderly line to walk through the kitchen and then sit on the patio before taking turns to wash their hands to go in for lunch. Children show a good sense of belonging as they separate with ease from their parents, talk about events at home and younger children snuggle in for lots of cuddles with the childminder.

Children's individual needs are met well by the childminder who works in partnership with parents to ensure all care needs are known. Parents are offered written information about the childminder's service, including contact details for referees. Effective settling in procedures help new children part from their parents with ease and feel secure, for example, the childminder encourages parents to settle children in gradually over two weeks before their child begins. Parents are kept well informed about their child's day and developmental progress as the childminder makes time to discuss the events of the day when the parents collect their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom he provides. The childminder and assistant work closely together throughout the day, resulting in a calm, productive and cohesive atmosphere. The childminder holds appropriate qualifications for childminding and first aid and also holds a diploma in Childhood Studies, enabling children to benefit from his knowledge and understanding of caring for children which is evident in the service provided. Most required documentation is in place and stored and retained appropriately, however, the children's daily record of attendance is not effectively maintained and does not clearly show their times of arrival and departure. Child to adult ratios are effectively maintained; the childminder cares for many children who attend on different days of the week and the childminder ensures ratios are appropriate.

Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to providing a service which relates to a specific educational approach. Children are able to play in an extremely well organised environment where they can reach toys and resources easily. The time children spend with the childminder is well organised, enabling children to have access to a varied range of age-appropriate activities that are both challenging and interesting and promote all areas of development.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has taken positive steps to address all actions and recommendations set at the last inspection. The childminder has improved the organisation of care by completing a first aid course and Ofsted vetting checks for his assistant and ensuring all documents are accessible. He has also made improvements to ensure children stay safe by fitting electric socket covers and a smoke alarm to the upper floor. He has also provided new travel cots and mattresses for children to use for sleep and obtained the Lewisham Child Protection guidelines for childminders.

Complaints since the last inspection

Not Applicable.

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):

- Ensure the children's daily record of attendance is appropriately maintained and clearly shows the times of arrival and departure.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk