

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY256994
Inspection date	19 November 2007
Inspector	Gill Thornton
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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2003. She lives with her husband and three children aged 13, 12 and one aged under one year in Chelmsford. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and she is currently minding six children under eight all on a part-time basis. The childminder's husband sometimes works with her as an assistant.

The childminder takes and collects children from the local school and attends local parent and toddler groups. The family has two guinea pigs and a rabbit. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children are not adequately protected in the event of an accident or illness. Despite being a recommendation from the previous inspection, the childminder has failed to provide an appropriately stocked first aid kit. In addition, she has failed to maintain a valid first aid certificate. As a result her knowledge in the treatment of accidents and injuries is not up to date and children's health is compromised. The childminder has adequate procedures in place to record details of accidents or medication administered.

The childminder follows parents' wishes when providing meals and snacks that take account of children's individual dietary needs and preferences to ensure they are suitably nourished. They are offered regular drinks so that they remain hydrated.

Children take part in activities that contribute to their health and physical fitness. They regularly walk to and from school and to the local park. Babies and young children have ample space indoors to practise their physical skills in safety and they have access to a good range of toys and equipment to promote their large and small physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children's safety is not adequately promoted. The childminder has taken some steps to reduce possible risks to children, such as ensuring cleaning chemicals are stored in a locked cupboard. She excludes children from the stairs through supervision and by keeping relevant doors closed to prevent their access. The front door is kept locked to prevent children leaving the premises unsupervised.

Most fire safety precautions are in place, however, the childminder has not devised and practised an emergency escape plan and a fire blanket is not provided in the kitchen. Consequently, comprising children's safety in the event of a fire. Children have access to an appropriate range of clean and well-maintained toys and equipment. The childminder supervises children's play to ensure that toys are suitable and used appropriately.

Children are kept safe on outings and when walking to school because the childminder follows appropriate procedures. Their welfare is safeguarded because the childminder is conscious of her responsibilities to protect children and she is aware of the correct procedures to follow if she has a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle and become happy because the childminder is sensitive and caring towards them. She plans her day around young children's normal routines, such as their individual sleep patterns, to help them feel confident and secure. The childminder provides children with an appropriate range of activities based on her sound knowledge of child development. When children arrive home from school she encourages them to take part in craft activities or play board games, although they often want to just chill out after a long day at school.

Babies and toddlers are provided with a good range of suitable toys laid out in the lounge to stimulate and motivate their interest. The childminder interacts well with babies in her care, playfully responding to their babbling and mimicking their responses to encourage their early communication skills. She makes good eye contact during their personal care and encourages their enjoyment in simple nursery rhymes. For example, singing 'This little piggy went to market' to them while tickling their toes, consequently, children develop a sense of self-worth. The childminder takes children to local toddler groups and story time at the local library to provide them with opportunities to develop their social skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop a sense of belonging because the childminder provides them with access to toys and equipment to meet their individual needs so they can become confident and independent. Children have some opportunities to learn about diversity through discussions about people's similarities and differences. The childminder is aware that some children may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and understands the importance of working in partnership with parents and other professionals to promote children's welfare and development.

The childminder sets clear boundaries of expected behaviour which are shared with children and their parents to help them understand responsible behaviour. All the required documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are cared for according to their parents' wishes. The childminder shares information about children's daily routines with their parents via daily diaries and through discussion on arrival and collection to promote consistency of care. Parents receive good quality information about the childminder's policies and procedures via a comprehensive information pack. Parents provide references praising the flexible and caring childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The childminder has failed to meet the requirement of the national standards to maintain a current first aid certificate and she has not met all the recommendations from her previous inspection. Overall, children's needs are not met.

The childminder displays a photocopy of her registration certificate in the porch, so that it is clearly visible as parents enter the premises. All the required checks have been completed on the childminder and her husband and she follows appropriate procedures to prevent children having unsupervised contact with people who have not been vetted. The organisation of documentation ensures that records are accessible while remaining confidential. The childminder maintains an accurate register of children's attendance and shares her written policies and procedures with parents to inform them of her childminding practices. The childminder is aware of the importance of notifying Ofsted of any significant changes or events

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to request written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment, complete a first aid course and provide a first aid box. The childminder now requests parents' prior written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. She did attend first aid training but the certificate has since expired. The

childminder has failed to ensure that she provides a suitable first aid box. Thus compromising children's safety and well-being.

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 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- attend an appropriate first aid course as prescribed by the local authority
- provide a first aid box, the contents of which will be determined in the first aid training course, and are checked frequently and replaced as necessary
- ensure a fire safety blanket, which conforms to BS EN safety standards, is provided in the kitchen and devise and practise an emergency escape plan.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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