

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260151
Inspection date	06 September 2007
Inspector	Sharon Dickinson
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 2002. She lives with her husband and two teenage children. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding with access to the bathroom and two bedrooms on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five all day and four children over five for various sessions before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has a dog and a guinea pig.

The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network and receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, well-maintained home. Good hygiene practices such as the provision of individual beakers, hand towels and a clear sickness policy help prevent the spread of infection. However, hand washing procedures are not consistently implemented as children were not observed to wash their hands after playing outside before eating snack. This does not promote their understanding of basic personal hygiene and puts their health at risk. The childminder is fully equipped to deal with accidents or injuries sustained by children. She holds a recognised first aid certificate and provides a fully stocked first aid kit accessible both on the premises and on outings. All required documentation is in place in relation to accidents and the administration of medication which are shared with parents. However, 'blanket' consents to administer non-prescription medications are not clear. Particularly as they do not indicate specific health reasons to administer such medicines and regular reviews are not made of such agreements to take account of any changes.

Children have their dietary needs met because the childminder works effectively with parents and provides meals in line with their wishes. A good range of freshly prepared, nutritious meals are provided in sufficient quantities which children enjoy. Appropriate furniture is available for mealtimes. Both younger and older children sit together for meals helping to make them relaxed, social occasions. Children have regular access to fresh air and exercise developing a positive attitude to a healthy lifestyle. They have access to the rear garden and a good range of outdoor toys and equipment such as a slide, bouncy castle and a selection of age-appropriate wheeled toys. Trips and outings in line with children's interests are planned, such as visits to the park, farm and railway centre, giving children opportunities to socialise and learn about the wider community.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The welcoming home helps children feel secure and confident in their surroundings. Space is effectively organised to meet children's needs and allow a good balance of quiet and more active play opportunities. Children enjoy regular access to the secure garden area, and on the day of inspection spent the whole morning engrossed in imaginative play with the cars and garage on the patio. A satisfactory range of toys and equipment is provided which are age-appropriate and promote children's all-round development. There is sufficient storage available for toys and children make their own decisions about their play and learning by requesting resources which the childminder promptly accommodates. Procedures are in place to ensure toys and equipment are safe for children's use.

The childminder has a generally good awareness of safety issues and completes daily risk assessments to ensure hazards to children are minimised. The premises are generally safe, except for low-level kitchen cupboards containing cleaning materials which pose a hazard to children. Children's safety awareness is promoted when they practise fire evacuation and discuss the importance of not running off from responsible adults when out and about. Good supervision of children is maintained, particularly on outings. Children wear fluorescent wrist bands on outings, which have the childminder's contact details on in case the child became lost.

The childminder is fully aware of her responsibility in relation to the protection of children and appropriate procedures are in place to safeguard children's welfare. She has attended child protection training and is knowledgeable about types and indicators of abuse and relevant recording and reporting procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's home. The childminder adopts a warm and friendly manner with the children. They form strong relationships with her and confidently engage in conversation. An older child reminded the childminder about a reward he was promised for behaving well on the school run that morning. Children appropriately engage in parallel play, and with a few gentle reminders happily share and take turns with toys. Some activities are pre-planned such as crafts, pirate themes and planting seeds but the daily routine remains flexible to allow for children's choice and mood. Children display high levels of concentration when playing with resources that maintain their interest, for example, they played imaginatively for over an hour with small world figures, vehicles and a pirate ship. A good range of play opportunities are also provided outdoors. For example, malleable activities such as sand and water play, imaginative and role play experiences as well as a wide variety of physical opportunities such as using wheeled toys and trampolines. The childminder has attended training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework but does not currently implement this into her practise. However, she is fully aware this will be a future requirement of her registration.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder works closely with parents to find out about children's individual needs and routines. She provides an inclusive environment and promotes anti-discriminatory practice, for example, boys enjoy caring for 'baby' dolls and taking them for rides in cars and tricycles. Some toys and resources reflect positive images of diversity and children learn about the wider world through practical activities such as tasting food from different cultures. Effective systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and ensure they are fully involved in the daily routine and activities provided.

Clear boundaries and routines help children become aware of expectations within the setting. Satisfactory behaviour management procedures are in place and are discussed with parents on entry. Younger children are appropriately redirected from unwanted behaviour. The childminder helps children begin to learn right from wrong by talking about the reasons behaviour is unacceptable at a level appropriate for their age and maturity. Good behaviour is encouraged through praise and recognised through rewards such as stickers, raising children's self-esteem.

Children benefit from a positive working partnership with parents which promotes consistency and continuity of care. The childminder exchanges information verbally with parents about their child's day and achievements. Appropriate records are in place to gather relevant information about the child's personal care needs and the childminder is respectful of parents' wishes. Useful information is made available to parents including access to the setting's policies and procedures. These include information about how to raise a complaint about the service and include the contact details of the regulator. Clear collection procedures are in place which further protect children's safety.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder updates her knowledge and skills by attending further training which helps improve the care and learning for all children. Limited space is used effectively to meet children's needs and enable free and safe access to the variety of play activities. Suitable contingency arrangements are in place to deal with unexpected emergencies ensuring children's welfare is paramount. These arrangements are discussed and agreed with parents. Most required records and documentation are in place for the safe and efficient management of the provision. Documentation is stored appropriately protecting children's privacy. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to provide an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice. The childminder has loaned resources from the local childminding group such as, dolls of various races, dressing up outfits from different cultures and jigsaws depicting different festivals and cultures. Various festivals are recognised such as Chinese New Year and Diwali and practical first hand experiences are provided such as food tasting to develop children's awareness and respect of other cultures. Non-stereotypical play is promoted in the setting as both genders are encouraged to participate in all activities and access all resources as they choose.

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 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 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):

- minimise hazards to children in the kitchen, particularly in relation to low-level cupboards.
- implement consistent hygiene practices, namely hand washing, in order to prevent the spread of infection and help children learn about personal hygiene
- clarify written parental consents for the administration of non-prescription medications

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