

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	506231
Inspection date	28 August 2007
Inspector	Suzanne Joyce Stedman
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 1989. She lives with her husband and one adult child in Billericay, Essex. The whole of the childminder's house, excluding two bedrooms on the first floor, is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding nine children, three of whom are over eight; all these children are cared for part time. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler group. The family has a cat.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from cross-infection and their good health is promoted because the childminder follows appropriate hygiene practices in order to prevent the spread of infection. For example, the older children wash hands before eating, younger children have their own changing mats, wipes are used to clean hands on outings or they use an anti bacterial gel and children have their own hand towels. Children effectively learn about their own personal hygiene and how to keep healthy through daily routines.

Most of the required documentation to promote the children's good health is in place. However, due to a change in the contracts not all parents have given written permission for outings and emergency treatment. The childminder has a good range of well-written policies and procedures which underpin her working practices in all other areas.

Children's parents and carers can choose to provide food for their children or the childminder provides good healthy home cooked meals including produce grown and harvested in the childminder's vegetable patch. The children enjoy helping to care for the runner beans and tomatoes and picking and eating the plums. Children have access to fresh drinking water throughout the day.

Children experience physical activity and develop their skills because the childminder plans a good range of activities and play opportunities to develop the children's physical development. For example, they walk to and from school and visit the park most days. They go swimming, to toddler group and enjoy milking the pretend cows, feeding the animals in the petting area and riding on tractors and cars when they visit a local farm and craft centre. Children benefit from lots of fresh air and exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are welcoming and friendly, which fosters the children's sense of security and belonging. Children have lots of space to play freely and to be active or rest as they choose. Children's safety is promoted well because the childminder takes good steps to ensure that hazards to children on the premises, both inside and outside, are minimised.

Children's development is effectively promoted because the childminder has a good range of suitable toys and play resources available for indoor and outdoor play. Children benefit from variety in their toys as they choose and exchange further equipment from the toy and book libraries. Children's safety is promoted because the toys and equipment are in good repair and clean.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe because the childminder encourages the children to begin to understand about safety issues both within the setting and outside. She uses daily routines to remind children of everyday safety issues such as holding hands when crossing the road. They go for walks so they experience first-hand the safe way to cross the road and to wait at the park gate for the childminder.

The childminder has all the required documentation to promote the children's safety. In addition the childminder has attended safeguarding children training and has the latest local child

protection guidance. She therefore has a good understanding of her role and responsibility regarding safeguarding children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from the superb and meaningful interaction of their caring childminder. Children receive excellent support as the childminder provides a broad range of experiences to promote their all round development. The childminder knows the children well and makes useful observations of what they can do to help her plan stimulating activities to help them achieve their next steps and fulfil their potential.

Children's early language development is promoted extremely well and at every opportunity. This is because the childminder tunes in to the young children's early development very effectively. Young children are encouraged to experiment with sounds as they join in with music sessions and sing songs like Baa Baa Black Sheep to much praise and encouragement. Children enjoy everyday routines as the childminder sings and chats with them encouraging them to vocalise and to link words with actions.

Children are encouraged to respond to the world creatively by promoting repetition in their movement, language and sensory experiences. Children develop their imaginative skills as they explore a range of items such as small world toys and dressing up clothes. They investigate messy play through a range of activities both in and out of the home. For example, they enjoy cooking biscuits, cake, bread and rolls. They also enjoy sensory experiences while playing with sand and water in the garden.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in an environment where the childminder promotes equality of opportunity for all children. Children's individual needs are met because the childminder gets to know the children well. Children learn about the wider world and our differences and similarities through good everyday opportunities and discussion with the childminder, for example, looking at and sharing books of varying people and customs.

Children behave well because they are given clear and consistent boundaries by the childminder. Children are beginning to share and take turns with the childminder's good support. The children are polite and helpful and learn to show consideration for others and their environment.

The children feel a sense of belonging because the childminder makes them feel at home. Children develop good relationships with the childminder and the other children as they participate in outings and activities together.

The childminder works closely with parents and carers to enable the children to settle well and to ensure children are cared for with consistency. The childminder makes time each day to speak to parents and carers to share information about their child's day so that they are well informed. Photographs of children's enjoying themselves at different activities are available for the parents to view and they often take home their cooking to share with their families.

The childminder's portfolio ensures that parents and carers are fully informed about the childminder's working practices. Many references and thank you letters show that parents and carers greatly appreciate the childminder's positive input to their children's development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are protected because the childminder and other adults in the household have undergone the appropriate checks to ensure that they are suitable to look after or to have unsupervised access to children. Children are not left unsupervised with other persons.

The childminder meets required adult to child ratios. She demonstrates a very good understanding of the requirements of the National Standards both in her daily practices and through the excellent range of policies, procedures and information available to parents and carers.

The childminder has attended training and shows a strong commitment to further professional development. This commitment to developing her skills and knowledge has a positive impact on the children's care and learning opportunities. Children are protected because the childminder has attended first aid training which enables her to act appropriately in medical emergencies. However she needs to ensure all permission slips are completed by current parents.

All of the records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe running of the provision and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are efficiently maintained.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure that hazards to children on the premises, both inside and outside, were minimised, to keep a record of significant incidents and to ensure that all persons over the age of 16 living on the premises undergo checks.

All the above items have been addressed, therefore children are able to play in safety and they are only in contact with persons that have been suitably checked. All significant incidents are recorded.

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 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 permission for outings and emergency treatment or advice is in place for all minded 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