

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY281248 |
| Inspection date | 28 August 2007 |
| Inspector | Sandra Daniels |
| 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 April 2004. She lives with her husband and two children aged three months and two years in a residential area of Loughton. The home is close to shops, local parks and schools. The whole of the house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for no more than four children under eight years at any one time and is currently caring for two children aged six and three years, both on a part-time basis. The childminder has two rabbits as pets and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy because the childminder is a positive role model and maintains good levels of hygiene within the home. The table is cleaned before snack times and the childminder uses anti-bacterial spray to clean spillages on the floor. Children wash their hands prior to eating and after using the toilet, playing in the garden or helping to feed the rabbits. They begin to learn why this is important

as the childminder explains to them about germs. Older children take themselves to the bathroom and are able to manage their own personal hygiene needs very well. They take pride in remembering to wash and dry their hands independently and receive praise from the childminder for this. The childminder liaises closely with parents to follow home eating and sleeping routines, to ensure children are content and able to enjoy their play. Children's health is further protected as the childminder is confident in her ability to administer first aid if required. The childminder informs parents about her policy with regard to the care of sick children, in order to protect them and others from the risk of infection. Children do not attend if they are unwell and, should a child become ill whilst in the care of the childminder, they are cared for sensitively and appropriately until they are collected.

Children have their health and dietary needs met and increase their understanding of healthy living because the childminder takes care to record individual requirements, such as allergies and preferences, following detailed discussion with parents. Nutritious and well balanced meals and snacks are provided for children, for example, fresh fruits, vegetables, chicken casserole and pasta dishes. Children sit together with the childminder and her family at the table for meals. These times are seen as social occasions where children can discuss what foods are good for them and what they like best. Sometimes, children help to make their sandwiches at lunch time and this further develops their awareness of healthy eating and hygiene issues.

Children enjoy regular fresh air and experience the elements as they walk to and from school with the childminder. They have opportunities to develop large muscle skills and co-ordination in the garden as they bounce on the trampoline, ride wheeled toys and climb the slide. They practise control and independence in their physical skills as they use resources for art and craft activities, such as scissors, pencils and glue. Children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and child-friendly home where the childminder gives high priority to their safety and takes positive steps to maintain a secure environment for them. For example, she ensures that exposed plug sockets are covered and keeps all dangerous tools and substances out of children's reach in the kitchen. The garden is fully enclosed and provides a safe and secure outdoor play space. Within the home, the childminder organises space and resources well to reduce the risk of potential hazards and actively promote children's independence. Children benefit from the use of a dedicated playroom where they use a broad range of good quality toys and equipment, which meet safety standards and are appropriate for their ages, helping them to enjoy a wide variety of experiences safely. All toys and resources are regularly checked and cleaned by the childminder; any damaged or broken toys are immediately discarded. Resources are set out so that children can access them easily, independently and safely.

Children develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe as the childminder involves them in everyday activities both indoors and outside. For example, children enjoy supervised cooking activities where they learn about safety in the kitchen. When out walking with children, the childminder teaches them to cross roads safely and to be aware of what is going on around them. In the car, each child is kept safe through effective use of restraints and seats appropriate for their age and height. Children learn to take pride in tidying up after themselves and maintaining a safe environment. Children learn the values of responsible behaviour to avoid accidental injury to themselves and others as they follow the good example

set by the childminder. For example, they move around sensibly, without running indoors, to avoid collisions.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder's clear understanding of her responsibilities within child protection procedures. Her willingness to record any concerns and discuss these with parents ensures that the welfare of children in her care is given priority and she is confident in her ability to protect children and keep them safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are extremely happy, settled and confident in this setting because the childminder is very welcoming, gives them lots of attention and has established very comfortable relationships with them. Play is child-centred and the childminder actively encourages children's ideas and is intuitive of when to join in their play, question and provide good support to extend their play further. Children take part in a wide range of stimulating and practical experiences which follow their interests and help them to learn. Creative activities are a particular favourite in this setting. Children enjoy painting, cutting, sticking and even sewing as they make colourful bags and decorate them with the childminder. Children also love to spend their time imaginatively in the home corner where they prepare and cook meals for each other, feed their babies and hold interesting conversations. When playing with dough, children make a line of people and imagine it is a train. Children are taken on many outings. They visit local attractions such as parks, fields, the swimming pool and various groups and, further afield, to wildlife parks, the beach and the O2 Centre where they make sand castles on the indoor beach.

Younger children enjoy many activities and experiences to support their play and learning. However, the childminder is not yet familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and how it can be implemented to improve outcomes for children under three years.

Children develop positive relationships with the childminder and with each other. She enables them to develop their own play ideas, but is readily available for support if needed. Children develop a strong sense of self-esteem as they are able to make choices and decisions about their play. Their behaviour is good and is sensitively supported by the childminder's example. Home experiences are built on well by the childminder as she fully respects their independent choices and her caring, supportive interactions encourage confident play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued and respected as individuals, helping them to feel good about themselves. Their emotional security and resilience is enhanced through the positive and supportive relationships the childminder has fostered with parents. Parents receive lots of verbal and written information about the setting at the beginning of their child's placement. The childminder helps children to settle by asking parents for appropriate information concerning their child's routine and individual needs. This means that children receive continuity of care and, consequently, feel secure. Regular and constructive feedback is given to parents on a daily basis.

Children behave very well and older ones understand right from wrong. They respond well to the childminder's calm and consistent approach. They know what is expected of them and where the boundaries are. Children are encouraged to follow the good example set by the

childminder. They learn to be polite and courteous and to consider the needs of others. Children clearly develop a strong sense of belonging in this setting. This is fostered through the warm, welcoming and homely atmosphere in this setting. A range of good quality resources provide children with positive images of cultural diversity and disability, for example, dressing up clothes, books and small world characters. This enables children to learn about the wider world and to acknowledge and respect differences. They enjoy planned activities that extend their knowledge and understanding of diversity, as well as respecting their own cultural and religious festivals. Children happily discuss where members of their family come from and their different characteristics. Although not currently caring for any children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the childminder is aware of the need to ensure that all children are fully included in the life of the setting at all times.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall children's needs are met. Children are secure and relaxed in this environment where available space and resources are organised and used effectively to enable them to make choices and use their initiative. Children's care, learning and play is well supported by the childminder who is knowledgeable about childcare issues and works hard to provide the best possible service for children and their families.

All required documents, such as contact details and information on children's individual needs are methodically maintained and are readily accessible to support children's care and safety. The childminder has developed a unique set of policies and procedures which she shares with parents at the beginning of each child's placement.

The childminder is proactive in developing her service and is keen to attend further training. Recording procedures are good and effective and the childminder is aware of recent changes to the regulations. Good communication between the childminder and parents ensures that parents are fully informed and have a shared understanding of how care arrangements support and promote children's welfare and well-being.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to complete an appropriate first aid course. Children are safeguarded as she has since attended a first aid course relating to babies and young children and is confident in her ability to deal with accidents or medical emergencies should they arise. The childminder also agreed to obtain a copy of the leaflet 'Early Years and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995'. This is now kept on file and has increased the childminder's awareness of the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

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):

- improve outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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