

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	159910
Inspection date	11 February 2008
Inspector	Tina Anne Mason
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

the time of the inspection there were no children in receipt of nursery education. Ofsted judges that the provider remains suitable to provide nursery education.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2000. She lives with her husband and two adult children in Grays in Essex. The whole of the downstairs is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently caring for three children who all attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks or drives to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends local parent/carer and toddler groups. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network and is currently not in receipt of funding for nursery education for three- and four-year-olds.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and very well-maintained home where the childminder follows good procedures to help meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene throughout the daily routine. However, children are not introduced to good hygiene practices for hand washing as they are not provided with individual hand towels. Therefore children are not protected from the spread of infection. The children's welfare is taken into account if they are sick and there is a written exclusion policy shared with parents. The administration of medication is well documented, along with parental consent.

The children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise as the childminder has a good sized garden which children can access directly from the kitchen/diner. Once outside, children can use equipment to help develop their larger muscle skills, for example, throwing and kicking a ball. The childminder also encourages children's finer motor skills and hand-eye coordination by providing activities such as a different utensils when playing with play dough, painting and puzzles.

Children's dietary needs are well met. The childminder works in partnership with parents and carers to meet each child's individual needs. While parents currently provide meals for their children, the childminder has an understanding of what constitutes a healthy and nutritious diet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are safe and secure; as a result, children are able to move around freely and safely. In addition, appropriate security on the front door means children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. Toys are clean and in good condition because the childminder checks and cleans them. There are effective procedures in place for the safe collection of children, to ensure they are only collected by authorised adults. Smoke alarms are in place and the fire evacuation plan is known by the children and as a result, prompt action will be taken in the event of a fire.

The children are kept safe on outings because the childminder applies appropriate safety measures such as ensuring she talks to children about road safety and the importance of not talking to strangers. In addition, children's contact details are taken on outings to ensure parents can be contacted promptly in the event of an emergency.

The childminder keeps a well-stocked first aid box for use in the event of an accident and she ensures details of accidents are recorded correctly. Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted appropriately because the childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of issues and procedures relating to child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The carefully prepared, well-organised and nurturing environment helps children to settle quickly. The childminder is attentive and caring in her approach and the children are content and settled in her care. The effective questioning techniques help children to develop their language for thinking and provide opportunities to recall past events, helping children to consolidate their learning fully.

The childminder ensures she shares her time equitably amongst the children, supporting and encouraging them in their play and learning. She ensures the children receive lots of praise and positive intervention, helping to build on their self-esteem and confidence. Regular visits out in the community help children learn about the environment, for example, children enjoy walks to the park and local shops.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The childminder has sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn, through both her training and experience. She plans her activities for funded children taking into account the six areas of learning, to steadily help children to progress at their own pace. This results in children having a very broad range of play experiences that are suitably challenging.

There is plenty of flexibility within the childminder's planning allowing for child initiated play. The childminder plans a broad range of activities that are varied and interesting for children. She ensures children have good opportunities to learn about sharing and taking turns. The childminder ensures that children have a good range of opportunities for mark-making, during daily routines and role play and activities such as crayons, pencils and painting. She encourages children to engage in conversations in developing their language and communication skills. The childminder ensures children have good opportunities to use a range of books, encouraging their appreciation of books and helping children to predict stories and events. The childminder provides good opportunities for children to experience early mathematical concepts through their play and early calculation skills are developed through every day experiences such as cooking to develop children's understanding of weight, size and capacity.

The childminder ensures that children have good opportunities to explore a range of creative activities such as painting, sticking and collages. Children's manipulative skills are encouraged through using a broad range of resources, such as mark-making tools, puzzles, scissors and threading equipment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and the childminder shares her time fairly amongst the children. A child record form details children's dietary requirements, medical needs and likes and dislikes, all of which help the childminder provide the appropriate care. The childminder demonstrates a strong commitment to provide a service that is underpinned with

equal opportunities. As a result, she takes a holistic approach to both the care and range of experiences she provides for children to ensure their individual needs are met. This includes providing children with a range of toys and resources that reflect positive images of society. As a result, children learn about different lifestyles, beliefs, traditions and customs. Although the childminder has not yet cared for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, she demonstrates a commitment to provide an inclusive service.

Children are settled and enjoy a consistent routine that affords them opportunities to be active and relax. Realistic expectations and a consistent approach by the childminder helps the children to learn about right and wrong. As a result, children's behaviour is good. A strong commitment to work in partnership with parents underpins positive relationships. Effective communication contributes to meeting the individual needs of all children and formal contracts detail business arrangements to ensure the care required is provided.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. The childminder is very aware of the need to develop sound relationships with the parents and she is committed and professional in her approach. Information on the Foundation Stage curriculum is available to be given to parents and carers. There is verbal communication in place which contributes to children's continuity of care. Parents and carers have access to relevant information about her practice, which includes; certificates, reports, policies and guidance.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The childminder helps children learn about their emotions and how to respond to their own feelings as well as those in others. Children are given opportunities to talk about their own homes and families with the childminder and with each other.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and settled in the well-organised, child-centred environment in which they come first. Play experiences are effectively organised to accommodate children's individual needs. The childminder continues to update her childcare practice by attending an extensive range of courses, including safeguarding children and observation and assessment in the Foundation Stage.

The childminder has an excellent range of policies and procedures in place that she uses to promote the care and welfare of children. Records and documentation have been effectively organised, enabling the childminder to spend her working day with the children. The childminder has a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance, however, as she is currently not in receipt of funded children she needs to ensure that she keeps up to date with current practices by reviewing and evaluating her practice when caring for funded children. She is very professional, committed and enthusiastic in her approach to childminding and she works extremely hard to ensure that the childminding runs smoothly. This results in providing good continuity of care.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the following recommendations were made: Ensure an incident book is used to record incidents; ensure procedures are in place to identify dietary requirements; ensure that parents sign consent forms for administering medication; obtain written permission to seek emergency medical treatment; provide resources that promotes equality of opportunities and physical skills and record when fire drills and smoke alarm tests take place.

An incident book for the recording of all incidents is now in place; parents consent is obtained in writing for any medication to be administered by the childminder; written permission to seek emergency medical treatment has been obtained from each of the minded children's parents and carers; Children's dietary requirements are obtained from the parents and carers, details are entered on the children's details forms; Written information is kept of any fire drills carried out and testing of smoke alarms in the property. This ensures the welfare and safety of the children is maintained at all times. Resources that promotes equality and physical skills has now been obtained and is used daily to promote the children's development, knowledge and understanding of each of these areas.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the 1 April 2005 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.

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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 good hygiene practices are implemented in order to prevent the spread of infection.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop a system to evaluate and review the quality of nursery education delivered to ensure good standards are maintained.

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