

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	203357
Inspection date	06 December 2007
Inspector	Amanda Jane Gray
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 outstanding. 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 daughters aged four and nine years.

They live in a house on Canvey Island within walking distance of shops, the park, school and pre schools. The whole house excluding the loft extension is used for used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered to provide care for five children at any one time and is currently minding two children aged three and five years on a part-time basis. The childminder is not currently minding any funded children. The family have a guinea pig.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an exceptionally warm, clean and welcoming environment. The childminder has an extremely comprehensive understanding of health, hygiene and nutrition. Children's health is very well promoted because the childminder follows very effective procedures. For example, anti-bacterial spray is used on kitchen surfaces and disposable gloves are worn when changing nappies and dealing with bodily fluids. Children learn to understand good health and hygiene practices because the childminder explains to them, for example, about germs. Tissues and wipes are readily available and children learn to use and dispose of them appropriately in an effort to reduce the spread of infection. Children also benefit through the excellent practice of toys being washed and cleaned on a regular basis and the use of individual flannels and towels. The childminder has trained in food safety and holds a food hygiene certificate further adding to children's overall health. Environmental Health inspected the childminder's premises in 2006 and reported that standards of food hygiene and knowledge were good.

Children's health is further promoted through the sick child policy which contains information about infectious illnesses and suggested exclusion periods. Should a child become ill whilst in the care of the childminder, their parents are notified and the childminder ensures children remain comfortable and reassured until they are collected. The childminder gathers relevant information about children's health and dietary requirements at the beginning of the placement, so that she is fully informed and able to meet children's individual needs. The childminder is qualified to administer first aid and is very confident in her ability to deal with minor accidents ensuring that children's welfare is extremely well maintained at all times.

Children are exceptionally well nourished in this setting. Drinking water is available at all times and children enjoy healthy snacks of fresh and dried fruits. Each child has their own meal requirement which is discussed with parents at the time of placement. Meal times are seen as social occasions when children talk about what they are eating and the childminder helps them to learn about what foods are good for them.

Children thrive and remain healthy as they enjoy an abundance of opportunities for physical activity. Outdoor play and physical activities form part of the daily routine. The childminder will on occasions take children out when it's raining and in the snow to look at the weather. Children develop skills of control and co-ordination as they ride, climb, run and balance. Children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs. There is usually a quiet time during the day when children enjoy sitting with the childminder, looking at books or watching some suitable television programmes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from the childminder's extremely vigilant procedures including a systematic written risk assessment and health and safety policy. This ensures a very safe and secure environment is provided for children at all times.

Children have plenty of space to play, both inside and outside in the garden area, which is also checked frequently and incorporated within the daily, weekly and quarterly written risk assessments. Children are encouraged to learn about keeping themselves safe as they practise emergency evacuation procedures with the childminder and talk about the dangers of fire in an appropriate way. The childminder monitors children's attendance to ensure that all children are participating in fire drills and talks about safety. Children's safety is further enhanced by the regular testing of the carbon monoxide alarm. There is an emergency plan in place should the childminder be compromised and the service is further enhanced by the implementation of comprehensive policies and procedures for lost and uncollected children, all of which are shared and agreed by parents at the time of placement.

Effective organisation of equipment and resources allow children to access these freely and safely to promote independence and choice. Toys and equipment are of very high quality and well maintained. They are checked regularly for damage and wear and tear and remain extremely suitable for the ages and stages of the children using them.

Children are very well protected from non-accidental injury and neglect as the childminder has an excellent understanding of safeguarding children procedures in line with local guidelines. This information is shared with parents so that everyone is clear about the childminder's role and responsibility to protect children. The childminder has teamed up with another local registered childminder and between them they are able to offer emergency cover for each other, ensuring that children are kept safe in any eventuality. In addition the childminder enhances her care for children through the use of her own written child protection procedure and the implementation of a password system. This is used when parents require another adult to collect their child. This increases the already stringent security measures that are in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder is highly skilled and uses her exceptional understanding of early years guidance, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide high quality care. Each child has a long term plan from birth to three years containing clear and concise information which is used to assess their development and in conjunction with their parents help move their development onto the next stage. As a result children benefit from a positive learning environment where they play and have fun and through the childminder's skilled use of observations and planning are continually given opportunities to help them develop to their full potential.

Children flourish in this extremely caring and happy atmosphere where they are offered an excellent range of activities and outings. Planning is given good thought to ensure children's development is promoted in all areas whilst being flexible to allow for spontaneity. Children's

opinions are incorporated within the planning of activities which captures their interest and enables them to consolidate their learning throughout a number of different experiences. In addition older children benefit from a full written list of all equipment stored which they can choose from, aiding children's independence and enhancing reading skills.

Children develop extremely positive relationships with the childminder and each other. They are extremely happy, enthusiastic and content. Their individual needs are incorporated into daily routines so there is time for rest, refreshment and active play. Children are actively encouraged to be independent, make choices and select what they want to play with from the extremely stimulating range of resources available. The childminder's use of praise is appropriate and linked to children's achievements which gives them a good sense of accomplishment and fosters positive self esteem.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Although the childminder has not cared for funded children since accreditation, through discussion there is enormous evidence to suggest that the childminder has a clear understanding of the foundation stage and how to implement this. Through discussion the childminder demonstrated that through the use of regular observations she would help identify the next step in children's learning. Daily focused activities would have clear learning outcomes and help children progress through their stepping stones. All six areas of learning would be planned and provided on a regular basis ensuring children receive a balanced curriculum.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children feel extremely valued and respected as individuals as the childminder knows them very well and takes a great interest in what they do and say. The flexible settling-in period forms the basis of future strong and trusting relationships with children and their families. Children's individual needs are very well catered for. Parents provide valuable information about their child's medical and dietary requirements in addition to their likes and dislikes. This provides continuity between home and the childminder which helps children to settle quickly. Children benefit from the effective implementation of the childminder's equal opportunities policy which promotes inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice. They are beginning to learn about our diverse society through playing with a range of books and resources that reflect a variety of cultures and beliefs.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. There is a robust procedure in place for recording complaints and parents are provided with an excellent range of information about the childminder's services and her policies and procedures, including the educational programme. A variety of methods are used to ensure that parents are extremely well informed about their child's activities, food intake and mood during their time with the childminder. A daily diary is kept and parents are able to comment on things their children have done over the weekend. Parents are clearly happy with the service provided and as such have provided written references. Parents speak highly of her attentiveness, the knowledge she has of their children and her professional manner.

Children demonstrate a clear sense of belonging in the way they interact with the childminder and seek support when necessary. Clear and consistent boundaries help children to understand what is expected of them and, consequently, they behave very well. The relaxed and supportive atmosphere and positive approach further promote good behaviour. The childminder has an excellent understanding of child development and how young children learn, so has realistic expectations for children's conduct. She carefully explains acceptable behaviour to children and provides gentle and appropriate support to help them deal with their emotions.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are very comfortable and at ease in this well-organised home environment provided by the childminder. Children benefit from her strong knowledge and exceptional understanding of how to provide a stimulating and interesting range of opportunities and experiences which they thoroughly enjoy, and through which they learn and develop. Highly detailed record keeping provides a clear picture of these activities and children's progress and achievements.

Space and resources are organised successfully and spontaneous and inspired activities provide young children with interesting and exciting experiences to broaden their overall development. Children are stimulated and play effectively, independently and with others. They benefit from the unquestionable commitment of the childminder. The professionalism and exemplary documentation describes the service provided and is completed to ensure children's individual needs are recognised and successfully met. A high level of confidentiality is maintained.

The professional development of the childminder is ongoing as she is currently training towards an National Vocational Qualification (Level 4) in childcare and education. She is proactive in seeking out new training opportunities which benefit her service. As a result children are provided with a fresh and exciting play environment where the childminder remains current and up to date in her knowledge regarding childcare legislation.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure children had an appropriate range of activities and resources that promoted equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, this referred to disabilities. The childminder has increased her provision for children which gives them good visual images of people with disabilities and has increased her knowledge and understanding in this area. As a result children are developing their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

The childminder was also asked to obtain a copy of "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused". This has been obtained and was available for inspection, ensuring the childminder has a clear understanding of procedures to be taken if an allegation of child abuse is made. This enhances children's safety.

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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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):

- continue to keep knowledge up to date in relation to the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage.

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