

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	203229
Inspection date	12 September 2007
Inspector	Jenny Howell
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 1999. She lives with her husband and two children aged 16 and 12 years. They live in a house in a residential area of Wickford. The whole of the house is registered for childminding. Minded children have access to the whole of the premises. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. There are local schools and parks close by. Other facilities located close by include shops, a community centre and a library.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently caring for four children on a part-time basis. The childminder takes children on outings and she attends various toddler groups with minded children. The childminder is a member of the National Childminder's Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted as they learn to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet or playing in the garden. The childminder reinforces this by explaining why

children need to wash their hands. They are cared for in a clean environment and the childminder has a good understanding of food hygiene. Children are well cared for if they have an accident or become ill. The childminder has up to date training in first aid and keeps a first aid kit close to hand at all times. This effectively ensures that children can be cared for quickly and appropriately. The childminder discusses medical details with parents and keeps a record of all relevant information, including written parental permissions to seek emergency medical advice and treatment. As a result of this children can be well cared for in line with their individual needs and parents' wishes, should they have an accident.

Children learn about healthy living as they enjoy regular opportunities to play and exercise in the garden and around the local area. Children visit parks and local soft play centres to walk, run, climb and explore. They frequently play in the garden with access to equipment including see-saw, slide, bikes, bats and balls, all of which encourage exercise and the development of physical skills. Children learn about making healthy choices as they enjoy the wide range of nutritious, home-cooked meals provided by the childminder. These are adapted to meet the likes, dislikes and dietary needs of individual children. Snacks are provided to help children maintain energy levels throughout the day and include a good variety of fruits and vegetables, some of which are home-grown. Children have free access to drinks throughout the day, ensuring that they are well hydrated.

Children are able to rest and sleep in security and comfort according to their individual needs. The childminder works with parents to ensure that children have a routine which suits them and provides a travel cot with fresh bedding for each child. She monitors sleeping children frequently to ensure they are safe and comfortable.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very safe and secure environment where the childminder takes appropriate action to ensure the safety of all children. A fire blanket and smoke detectors are in place to ensure that children can be kept safe in the event of a fire. The childminder makes good use of door guards and a stairgate to ensure that children do not have access to unsuitable products or areas. All toys and resources are appropriate to the ages of the children present and the childminder takes care to ensure that toys with small parts are not used when babies are present. Children are kept safe on trips and outings as the childminder makes use of reins when walking and uses appropriate car seats and restraints when travelling by car. Children are starting to learn about how they can keep themselves safe, for example, by learning how to cross roads safely.

The childminder has a very good understanding of her responsibility to protect the welfare of all children in her care. She has attended training in child protection and ensures that she has relevant advice and contact numbers to hand. She shares this information with parents, reassuring them about her high level of commitment to promoting the safety of all children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children gain in confidence and self-esteem as they develop a close and caring relationship with the childminder. They are warmly welcomed with their parents each day and the childminder talks to them about important events in their lives, helping them to feel secure and valued. Children enjoy a wide range of planned and spontaneous activities. The childminder plans topics

and activities which help children to learn about the world around them through games, crafts and outings. Children are also free to choose from the range of toys and equipment which are carefully stored to allow children to help themselves with ease. Activities and resources are interesting and stimulating, including cooking, arts and crafts, puzzles, construction, musical instruments and cars. Children frequently go on trips and outings, including to local parks and shops, as well as regularly meeting up with other children to develop social and communication skills.

Children under three are well cared for as the childminder adopts an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She ensures that a wide range of stimulating and suitable toys and equipment are within easy reach and provides low tables and chairs for babies to practise pulling themselves up on. She works well with parents to establish a routine which meets the needs of the individual child and responds sensitively to children's changes in behaviour to establish if they need a sleep, feed or nappy change.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a sense of belonging as the childminder shares her attention equally and involves children in making decisions about what to do. Children are able to choose freely from the toys and resources, allowing them to direct their play according to their own interests. The childminder is very aware of the individual needs of each child. She works closely with parents to identify any special needs and ensures that children have access to toys and activities which help them to develop and enjoy playing.

Children develop a good understanding of difference and diversity as they play with toys and read books which help them to learn about different cultures, countries and ways of life. Children find out about varied festivals and traditions such as Ganesha-Chaturthi, Chinese New Year and Christmas as they try different foods, share relevant books and make pictures.

Children behave very well. They are learning to share and take turns with others through simple games and routines. The childminder's effective use of frequent praise and encouragement helps to reinforce positive behaviour. Older children may be rewarded with stickers, helping them to feel proud of their achievements.

The childminder ensures that parents are well informed about the care their children receive. Effective use of a daily diary shares information about what children have played with and eaten each day as well as details of nappy changes and sleeps where appropriate. Parents receive good quality information about the childminder before she cares for their child. She shares written policies and procedures with them which help to give a clearer picture of the care children will receive. Parents are very happy with the care the childminder provides commenting that children love staying with her, that she works well with them to manage teething and toilet training and that 'It's all enjoyment for children'.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder organises time and resources very well to provide children with a wide variety of opportunities and experiences. Her home is organised to allow children to play, eat and relax in comfort, with routines organised to make meals and snack a social experience. Children can access toys freely and can also choose to play inside or outside. Regular trips and outings

effectively add variety to the daily routine, keeping children stimulated and providing additional learning opportunities.

The childminder is committed to providing a high standard of care to all children. She has produced a wide range of written policies which effectively support the care she offers and also provide parents with additional information. The childminder is continuing to develop her childcare skills as she is registered on a level three training course; as a result of this the care and learning opportunities she provides for children will be developed and enhanced. Documents are well organised, with children's details recorded confidentially, contracts in place with all parents and relevant written permissions kept on file.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to inform parents of the procedure to follow should they have a complaint and of the commitment to working with children with special needs. The childminder has developed her written policies and procedures to include complaints and special needs. These are shared with parents, effectively informing about the care provided by the childminder and the procedures to follow should they have any complaints.

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):

- attend relevant further training in childcare in order to continue to improve children's play and learning opportunities.

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