

Inspection report for early years provision

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 404420 |
| Inspection date | 03 September 2007 |
| Inspector | Justine Leong |
| 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 1998. She lives with her two children aged 13 and 10 in Braintree. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding six children under five years and seven children over five years on a part-time basis. The family have no pets.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group and takes children to the local parks and town. The childminder is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted and they are developing awareness of good hygiene practices as they follow simple daily routines. The childminder reminds children to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating or participating in cooking activities. Children are kept safe from infection and illness as the childminder requests parents collect children if they become ill at the setting, helping to minimise cross-infection. The childminder has completed paediatric first aid training, helping to ensure children's health is promoted in the event of a medical emergency.

Children are acquiring habits that promote a healthy lifestyle as, for instance, the childminder provides a range of nutritious snacks such as fresh fruit, breadsticks or cheese crackers. Packed lunches provided by parents are appropriately stored in the fridge until lunchtime to ensure they remain fresh. Children have access to drinks such as juice or milk although these must be requested, meaning younger children could potentially become thirsty.

Children are given plenty of opportunities to enjoy physical activity and fresh air as they play in the safe and secure garden or visit local areas such as the park. They are developing good physical skills including balance and coordination as they play with a range of large wheeled toys, slides and swings. Babies benefit from having ample space indoors to pull themselves up and move around safely; the childminder provides a range of cause and effect toys to promote their physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright, welcoming and warm environment that offers all necessary facilities to promote their overall development safely. Children are able to move about freely and independently under the childminder's close supervision. Their risk of accidental injury is minimised because the childminder has taken sound steps to reduce possible risks, for example, fitting cupboard locks and using safety gates to exclude children from the stairs. Security is given good priority as external doors to the property are kept locked and visitors are vetted and their identification checked before being given access. There are fire alarms throughout the property and a fire blanket is in place in the kitchen. The childminder has practised evacuation plans with the children to ensure everyone knows what to do in the event of an emergency.

Children have access to an interesting range of good quality toys and equipment that meet safety standards. These are mainly stored in the main playing area and are regularly cleaned and checked for signs of damage. All resources are stored at child-height to enable children to self-select. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as the childminder reminds them of house rules such as having a maximum of two children on the trampoline at any one time. Children's welfare is safeguarded and well promoted because the childminder has a good understanding of her role and responsibilities in protecting children. Recent training ensures the childminder is confident and competent in following correct procedures and knows who to contact should she have any concerns about the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and well settled in the welcoming and child-friendly environment. The childminder provides a range of interesting resources and stimulating activities to encourage development of children's emotional, social, intellectual and physical abilities. Children enjoy exploring the wide range of imaginative play resources such as small world toys, dolls and train sets, developing good language skills as they play socially. Older children have independent access to toys and resources, including maths games and puzzles, helping to develop mathematical thinking. The childminder also provides regular opportunities for children of all ages to participate in craft activities such as painting, cutting and sticking and cookery. The childminder has a good understanding of the differing abilities of the children in her care and adapts the activities accordingly, supporting children through effective questioning.

Children's natural curiosity as learners is built upon and the childminder uses her knowledge of the children to provide activities that will be of interest to them. For instance, children join in willingly with a writing activity when it involves writing the names of their favourite football players and teams. This ensures children remain motivated and focused throughout. Children's progress is recorded in a scrapbook which is shared with parents. However, the childminder does not keep a record of children's progress, potentially hindering progress.

Children are beginning to build positive relationships with adults and other children. They are comfortable in the care of the childminder and often chat to her. Children are developing in confidence and self-esteem as the childminder listens attentively and values their responses. The childminder generally joins in with children's play, encouraging them to take turns and share to further develop social skills. Children have independent access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books and enjoy sharing stories with the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a good sense of belonging because the childminder knows them and their families well and ensures they are all valued and included. Children have built good relationships with the childminder, who responds sensitively to them and respects their individual personalities. All children have equal access to toys and equipment that meet their individual needs so they can become confident and independent. The childminder has several resources reflecting diversity, including dolls, posters and books and discusses people's similarities and differences with children, helping to develop an understanding of others.

The childminder has a positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She has considered how the environment and activities could be adapted and is willing to work with parents and other agencies to ensure inclusion. The childminder has already undertaken a selection of short courses which further enable her to accommodate an individual child's needs and promote their welfare.

Children are developing responsible attitudes as the childminder encourages them to tidy away toys after playing with them and before beginning a new activity. The childminder acts as a positive role model and deals with behaviour in a calm and consistent manner, she encourages self-discipline and respect for others. Information is shared with parents verbally and via a daily diary to ensure their changing needs are met and provide continuity of care. The childminder

is aware of her duty to make parents aware of how they can make a complaint and she knows to log complaints, should she ever receive any.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are very well cared for by a motivated and experienced childminder who organises her day in order to provide a good balance of activities both in and outside. The childminder has attended a range of relevant training to support her registration and underpin her good practice. Children are secure and confident and clearly benefit from the individual care and attention given.

The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards and her responsibility to comply with these and the details of her registration. Ongoing self-evaluation allows the childminder to be reflective and ensure improvement in her own practice. Accurate checks are in place to ensure children are cared for by a suitably vetted person and children are never left alone with any person not vetted.

Documentation is well-organised and includes written permissions, to promote children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. All children's details are stored securely and confidentially and the childminder ensures children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the childminder ensure a way of recording medication given is in place. This has now been addressed and the childminder keeps a written record, signed by parents, of any medication administered.

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):

- consider keeping a written record of children's progress

- ensure children have constant access to drinks.

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