

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY251030
Inspection date	17 December 2007
Inspector	Jean Evelyn Thomas
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 satisfactory. 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 2003. She lives with her husband and children aged 10, 15 and over 16 years. The lounge and kitchen on the ground floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding. The toilet facilities are situated on the first floor level. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five years all day and three children over five years before and after school on a part-time basis. Older children attend. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group. The family has a cat and a dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean setting. The childminder protects children from the risk of cross-contamination by providing individual towels for hand drying and by regularly washing

toys and equipment. Children's needs are generally met if they become unwell. Clear procedures are in place to meet the needs of children who are not well. The parents are made aware of the sick child policy before the arrangement commences. However, parental authorisation is not obtained to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

The children benefit from a nutritionally balanced diet comprising of mainly home-cooked meals incorporating fresh meats, vegetables, dairy products and fruit. Information is obtained from parents to ensure foods are not given which may trigger an allergic reaction.

Children participate in activities that promote a healthy lifestyle, such as having regular fresh air and exercise. They are taken to parks where they play on apparatus and enjoy open spaces, which helps them to gain control of their bodies. Children walk to and from school. The childminder helps babies progress to the next stage of development through use of the domestic furniture to help pull themselves up and specifically designed baby toys and equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a homely and welcoming environment. Children's artwork is displayed to promote their self-esteem and sense of belonging. The children confidently move around the registered areas of the home as they pursue their play ideas. There is a satisfactory range of play materials which are at a low level, allowing children to make their own choices in play. The range of play materials sustains children's interest. For the younger children the childminder has a variety of age-appropriate play resources that are rotated to maintain their interest.

Children are cared for in a generally safe setting. The childminder has completed a risk assessment of the home and uses safety equipment to minimise hazards, such as isolating the kitchen with the gate when cooking is taking place. However, the covering over the pond does not ensure children will not access the water and the water feature has not been made inaccessible, which compromises children's safety. This omission by the childminder is a breach of the conditions of registration to meet the National Standards. Children develop an awareness of road safety when they are out and about in the community through following routine procedures and discussion with the childminder. They learn to look after themselves as they practise the evacuation plan.

Children are protected as the childminder has an understanding of child protection issues and is clear about her responsibility in following procedures to safeguard children. The childminder has completed child protection training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children share a warm relationship with the childminder as they talk and laugh together. The childminder responds to children's questions and comments with interest, showing respect in what they are doing and saying. The childminder's settling-in procedure for new children helps them feel more familiar and comfortable in their care setting.

Children enjoy a variety of activities including painting, play dough and craft. Children develop their skills as they roll out the homemade play dough and cut out shapes. The childminder incorporates number, shape and colour into her language to extend the children's learning. There are opportunities to use their imagination as they pursue role play using the kitchen,

utensils, dolls and prams. Children eagerly involve the childminder as they choose a large snake jigsaw to complete together. They develop good level of concentration as they persevere with this challenging activity with the childminder's positive support. The younger children select the musical instruments which triggers the interest of others. The childminder makes sure all the children have instruments to play and they have fun creating their own sounds. The children move their bodies in different ways to the rhythm of the beat.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are treated with equal concern in an inclusive setting. The childminder understands the children's needs and that these may be varied. Their individual needs are well met as the childminder obtains relevant information from parents. All children have equal access to the play materials. As a result, they benefit from the full range of play experiences. There is a limited selection of resources to increase their awareness of diversity of society; these include books and dolls. The childminder regularly uses the toy library for this type of play material. Children confidently self-select toys they want to play with and there is no gender bias.

Children's behaviour is good. The childminder uses positive strategies and support to encourage children's behaviour and to develop their understanding of right from wrong. The childminder reminds children to take turns and to consider the needs of others in play. A poster is on display detailing the house rules which the childminder talks through with the older children. The childminder's behaviour management policy is shared with parents before the arrangement commences.

The childminder works in partnership with parents to meet children's individual needs. She values information obtained from parents to ensure the appropriate care is offered to children. Information is displayed and the policies and procedures manual is available to keep parents informed about the service their child receives.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are safeguarded as the childminder ensures persons who are not vetted do not have unsupervised access to the children. The childminder is also aware of her responsibility to inform Ofsted of significant changes. The childminder has completed training to enhance the quality of care provided. However, she has not familiarised herself with the 'Birth to three matters' framework to improve outcomes for the younger children in her care.

The childminder ensures that the children have sufficient space in order to play in comfort and organises her resources to promote children's independence, encouraging them to make choices about their play. The facilities allow children to rest and relax on comfortable domestic furniture as they wish. However, the childminder is not using the low-level table for meals or table top activities for children's comfort in play and to promote social skills. The adult to child ratios are met to support children's care, learning and play.

The childminder's recording systems are up to date, clear and readily available when needed. The attendance register is marked daily. Confidential information is securely stored to ensure it cannot be accessed by unauthorised persons. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children from whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the banister and gas fire were made safe. These recommendations have been met for children's safety. It was also recommended that the childminder obtains written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. This recommendation has not been met.

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:

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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):

- obtain written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment before the arrangement commences
- complete a risk assessment of the garden and ensure the pond and water feature are made safe and inaccessible to children
- develop knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support children's development in their earliest years
- consider the use of the low-level table and chairs to support children's learning when involved in play activities and eating their meals.

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