

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY256681
Inspection date	23 October 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 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 two children aged 12 and 10 years in Silver End, Essex. Most of the ground floor 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 a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding four children over five years of age on a part-time basis. The family have a rabbit and a hamster.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to follow simple health and hygiene practices as the childminder reminds them to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet or after playing in the garden.

Children are generally kept safe from illness and infection as the childminder shares her sickness policy with parents and discourages them from bringing children to the setting if they are unwell. However, the childminder does not have current first aid training or written parental permissions to seek emergency medical treatment for all children in her care, failing to ensure children would be well cared for in the event of a medical emergency.

Children learn about healthy eating through example as the childminder provides a range of freshly cooked meals, such as shepherds pie or roast dinners at meal times. They also enjoy a variety of healthy snacks, such as, fresh fruit, vegetables or rice cakes which help ensure individual needs with reference to food and drink are met. Children have constant access to water and juice to ensure they do not become thirsty.

Children have regular opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise as they access the garden. They play with scooters, bicycles, small world toys and ball games, developing physical skills including balance and coordination. Children also benefit from outings to local areas of interest such as the park or the zoo.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a warm and welcoming environment, where they can move around freely and independently under the childminder's close supervision. They have ample space to play outside as they access the secure garden. Children's safety is enhanced and the risk of accidental injury is minimised because the childminder has taken effective steps to reduce possible risks. For example, low-level glass has been covered with safety film and cupboard locks have been fitted where appropriate. Fire alarms and a fire blanket are in place and children confidently explain the emergency evacuation procedure, clearly demonstrating that it is regularly practised.

Children access good quality play resources to support their overall development. The childminder provides a broad range of toys and play equipment which are regularly rotated to maintain interest. All resources are appropriately stored to allow children to access them safely and independently and are regularly cleaned and checked for signs of damage. Security is given good priority at the setting. All external doors are kept locked and visitors are vetted to ensure children remain safe.

Children's welfare is protected as the childminder understands her role in child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. The childminder is aware of who to contact if she has concerns about a child in her care. A clear written record of any existing injuries is kept to further promote children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a good balance of activities that help with their learning and development. They enjoy free play much of the time in the home making their own choices from a wide range of appropriate resources. Many activities provide opportunities for development of social, emotional, physical and intellectual capabilities. For instance, children play a board game together, taking turns and listening carefully to one another. They then decide between them to play a different game that requires good calculation and reading skills. Children work together to support each other and ensure they can all participate fully.

Children have access to a broad range of resources, such as games, puzzles, small world toys, musical instruments and books. Their natural curiosity as learners is built upon and all resources are stored for children to access independently, helping to ensure they select activities of interest to them. Children benefit from regular opportunities to be creative as the childminder provides a variety of craft activities, such as painting, collage and drawing.

Children are increasingly confident and developing good self-esteem as the childminder listens to them attentively and demonstrates that their ideas are valued. Independence is encouraged as the childminder has high expectations of the children and allows them time to complete activities by themselves before offering assistance. Effective questioning by the childminder during activities encourages children to ask questions and use their imagination. The childminder is consistently polite and respectful and consequently children at the setting are polite and well-behaved.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed and settled as the childminder knows them and their families well and ensures they are all valued and included. Children celebrate their birthdays at the setting and receive a birthday cake and card, helping them develop a strong sense of belonging. Children build good relationships with the childminder who responds sensitively to them and respects their individual personalities. Information about each child's needs are shared with the childminder through their personal details forms and this ensures that children are provided with an individual approach. The childminder provides resources such as dolls and puzzles reflecting diversity. She discusses people's similarities and differences with children, to help them develop an understanding of others.

Children's behaviour at the setting is good as the childminder is consistent and uses appropriate explanations to promote children's understanding of responsible behaviour. The childminder is attentive and polite, acting as a positive role model for the children in her care. This helps children begin to manage their own behaviour and develop an understanding of the needs of others. The behaviour management policy is shared with parents to promote a consistent approach.

The childminder has a positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She considers carefully how the environment and activities can be adapted to ensure inclusion. The childminder works closely with parents to promote children's welfare and development. Children benefit from the positive relationships the childminder fosters with their parents. Most of the required documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are cared for according to their parents' wishes. Daily discussions ensure that parents are kept fully informed of the kind of day their child has had and any significant events. There is a complaints procedure in place which is shared with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her home to provide a welcoming environment in which children participate in a range of activities to support their care, learning and play. She has submitted to checks to ensure suitability to work with children unsupervised and has undertaken training to support her practice. The childminder follows sound procedures to promote children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

The childminder has an understanding of the National Standards and her duty to comply with these and the conditions of her registration. However, her first aid training has lapsed, potentially compromising children's good health in the event of a medical emergency. Most required documentation is in place including several written parental permissions to ensure children are cared for in line with parents' wishes. However, these are not in place for all children, potentially compromising children's safety. All children's details are stored confidentially. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the childminder ensure that children have access to a range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity. This has now been addressed and children have access to books, dolls and puzzles that help to foster a positive view of diversity.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- undertake up-to-date first aid training
- obtain written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for all children.

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