

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY103441
<b>Inspection date</b>	04 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Anne Daly
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 good. 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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children, aged five and 10 years, in a residential area of Hockley, Essex. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time, currently minding three children under five years and two children over five years before and after school. In addition, one child over eight is minded. The childminder supports children who have English as a second language. She walks to the local school to take and collect children and takes them to the park, the woods, soft play areas and the library. The family has a dog, a cat and two guinea pigs.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and an accredited member of the Castle Point and Rochford Children Come First Network, although she presently does not care for any children in receipt of funded early years education.

As there are no children receiving nursery education on roll, the quality of the provision cannot be judged better than satisfactory because there is no reliable evidence on which to assess its impact on children.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through daily routines and by following the childminder's good hygiene procedures, such as regularly washing hands after blowing their noses to prevent germs spreading to their friends. Children's welfare is being protected by a childminder holding a first aid qualification to enable her to act in their best interests if they are ill or have an accident. They are protected from the spread of infection by the childminder's written sickness policy being shared with parents and carers to ensure that they know when to keep their unwell children at home. Children's well-being is being promoted through the childminder recording details of any accidents and ensuring that parents and carers countersign in confirmation that they have been fully informed.

Children enjoy eating nutritious, balanced meals supplied by their parents or their childminder. They are beginning to understand why fruit and vegetables are good for them and why certain foods should only be eaten as occasional treats through their childminder talking to them. Their dietary needs are being well met through the childminder requesting information from their parents and carers about any dietary requirements and allergies to ensure that they are safeguarded from any adverse reactions. Toddlers are developing physical and emotional independence by learning to express their needs. They are beginning to independently meet their own needs, for example, when accessing their beakers of water.

The childminder has secure practices to ensure that she keeps her home as a clean and healthy environment for children, for example, by keeping food preparation surfaces clean and correctly storing food.

Children have daily opportunities to choose from a varied range of physical activities, both indoors and outdoors, to contribute to their good health. They play in the garden and go on trips to the local park and soft play areas to enjoy physical freedom in environments contributing to a healthy lifestyle. The childminder values the benefits of fresh air to children by ensuring that they walk or ride in a buggy to and from school.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are made to feel welcome in the childminder's comfortable home. They are benefiting from having plenty of space to move around and from being able to play freely and to enjoy

using a good range of toys and equipment appropriate for their stages of development. Their independence is being encouraged through being able to self-select activities from a good varied range of toys and equipment meeting safety standards. The childminder regularly cleans, checks and replaces the toys and equipment supporting children's enjoyable activities to ensure that they remain safe for their use.

Regular visual risk assessments undertaken by the childminder help to safeguard children from some potential hazards. Steps have been taken to minimise some hazards by the use of safety equipment, such as locks on cupboards containing potential hazards and blind-cord fastenings out of children's reach. However, insufficient steps have been taken to fully minimise all hazards as the conservatory doors leading to the garden are not fully covered with protective safety film and the rotary clothes line is uncovered.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe when outside the home, particularly when enjoying outings to local amenities. They are learning not to play near swings being used by others and not to talk to strangers. The childminder gives priority to helping them to understand how to keep themselves safe, for example, by ensuring that they are being transported in age and stage appropriate car seats. Children confidentially describe the childminder's routine when they are being transported in her vehicle and how they must hold tight onto the buggy until all of them are outside the vehicle. They are transported in a vehicle with appropriate documentation and the childminder has requested parents' written permission to take their children in her vehicle and on outings. Children learn how they can keep themselves safe by practising the 'Green Cross Code' during their walks to and from school.

Babies are being consistently monitored while they are resting in travel cots in an upstairs bedroom through the childminder switching on her listening system to ensure that she can hear them when they wake up.

The childminder has a good understanding of her safeguarding responsibilities, ensuring that children are only collected by authorised persons, while also having appropriate procedures if a child is not collected. Children are safeguarded by the childminder having attended a training course to ensure that her child protection practice is being underpinned by good, up-to-date knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse. She shares a written statement of her role with parents and carers to ensure that they understand her responsibility to record and report any concerns.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem through the childminder ensuring that there is time for them to focus on activities and experiences to develop their own interests, such as creative work. They have many opportunities to be challenged and to use imagination when creating pictures using acrylic paints. They are happy and are developing warm and caring relationships with their childminder, who provides many worthwhile activities and opportunities for them to play and learn independently.

Babies are able to make positive relationships and are learning that experiences can be shared by responding with smiles when their childminder tells them how clever they have been. They respond when their childminder looks at and reads picture books to them and they are becoming familiar with sounds and words to develop their communication skills.

Children are able to become increasingly independent through their childminder's encouragement to attempt new skills and to gain proficiency, for example, by putting on and fastening their shoes. Their enquiring minds are being challenged when building with construction toys and they can find and describe why shapes are the same and why some are different, such as big and little. Friendly interaction is being encouraged by their childminder spending time talking to all of them to ensure that the younger ones are building positive relationships with the older ones, for example, during imaginative role play.

Children are acquiring new knowledge and skills, for example, when helping to care for and to feed the guinea pigs. They are learning how they need to take care of plants, for example, planting seeds in a propagator, watering them to ensure that they grow, before planting the seedlings in the garden. Children have plenty of time to use everyday technology, for example the computer is switched on at their level to enable them to complete simple educational programmes. Children are engrossed in their play because the childminder provides a good variety of age-appropriate activities and resources to enable them to learn.

Nursery Education.

The childminder:

- \* has a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn
- \* is able to plan and provide a suitable range of activities and experiences across the six areas of learning, taking the needs of individual children into account
- \* is able to assess children's progress towards the early learning goals and help move children to the next stage in their learning.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals by the childminder meeting their needs by following their normal routines as discussed with parents and carers. She finds out about children's cultures, home languages and diets to ensure that she can specifically meet their individual needs. Children are able to make choices and to take decisions, such as choosing with what they wish to play. They have a good sense of belonging through having low-level coat pegs on which to hang their coats and possessions.

Children learn about the wider world through everyday activities. They read books showing positive images of people from a variety of cultural backgrounds and with varying needs to help them to appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences. They find out about

different family customs and beliefs through their childminder celebrating different cultural festivals. For example, the Chinese New Year, with them dressing up and eating Chinese food.

The childminder demonstrated that she has regard for the Code of Practice (2001) for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs. She is aware that some children may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She demonstrated that she will seek further advice, with parents' and carers' consent, to ensure that children receive all the necessary support to enable them to take part in activities appropriate to their individual needs.

Children are developing an awareness of themselves by finding out what they can do, while testing out the boundaries with a childminder they trust. They understand the 'house rules', for example, tidying away one activity before choosing another. Their childminder responds to this desirable behaviour by giving them plenty of praise. Children are becoming more aware of their own needs and of the needs of others by developing social skills, for example, taking turns and sharing toys.

Children are benefiting from their childminder building trusting partnerships with parents and carers, who are made very welcome and kept informed of their children's experiences through a daily exchange of information. Younger children who have no or little language have their day recorded on daily sheets to keep their parents or carers fully informed and to ensure continuity of care. The childminder is able to act in children's best interests through personal details, contracts and parental consents being maintained for each child, setting out the expectations of all parties. Parents and carers are informed of the childminder's complaints procedure, including details of the regulator and how they can express any concerns. Parents value the efforts of the childminder, who they find friendly and approachable. They write positively about her and appreciate the care and individual attention being given to their children.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are being cared for by a childminder who holds a Level 3 Child Care and Education Diploma and a current first aid certificate to support her care practices and children's health and well-being. She has attended many other training courses to further develop and support her child care practices.

Children feel at home and enjoy the space to move freely between rooms. Their needs are well met by the childminder arranging the rooms for different types of activities and by making resources freely available to enable them to choose their play and learning. The childminder carefully balances a varied range activities to ensure that children have some time to play independently as well as undertaking activities requiring more of her support and encouragement.

Children are protected from adults who have not been vetted as the childminder ensures that they are always within her sight. Information about children's progress and well-being is shared with parents and carers to ensure that they are fully informed and able to contribute to the continuity of their children's care.

Records are maintained and all the required parental consents are freely available to enable the childminder to act in children's best interests. She shares her well-written policies and procedures with parents and carers to ensure that they are aware of her role to promote their children's care and learning.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the childminder was issued with two recommendations; to ensure that parents sign the consent agreements in the contracts and to review how medication records are kept.

Since the last inspection, the childminder has ensured that parents have signed the consent agreements in the contracts and has reviewed how she keeps her medication records. She now ensures that parents and carers are fully informed of their children's care and that she is able to act in children's best interests at all times.

### **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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

At 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 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):

- ensure that hazards to children on the premises are minimised with reference to the low-level glazing and the rotary clothes line.

#### **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):

- there are no recommendations raised, as no children receiving nursery education were on roll at the time of inspection.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)