

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY285416
Inspection date	11 March 2008
Inspector	Nicola Hill
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 has been registered since 2004. She lives with her husband and their three children, aged 19, 16 and 12, in a semi-detached house in Hampton, Middlesex. The property is close to local schools and amenities and there is a park nearby. The whole of the house is used for childminding, with toilet facilities available on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and holds a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 in Early Years Care and Education. She holds a valid first aid qualification. She is registered to care for a maximum of three children at any one time. She is currently minding one child aged five, who attends after school only. She is not registered to provide overnight care.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they are taught the importance of personal care, for example, washing their hands after toileting and before eating. The childminder explains to them why this is important and models good practice. Children are protected from infection because the childminder carries out suitable procedures when children become unwell and provides each child with their own towel to dry their hands. The childminder maintains an up-to-date first aid certificate and has appropriate permissions and records in place regarding administration of medication and treatment of injuries.

The childminder ensures that there are daily opportunities for children to spend time outside and benefit from the fresh air. She walks each day from school, which encourages the children to develop a positive attitude towards exercise. In addition, children can play in the childminder's garden and visit the nearby park, where they can climb on large equipment and run around. Children are able to rest and be active according to their needs.

The childminder has appropriate systems in place to gather information from parents regarding medical needs, dietary requirements and allergies. Children have frequent drinks, as the childminder recognises the importance of keeping them well hydrated. Children start to learn about healthy eating, as they help to grow fruit and vegetables in the garden, such as tomatoes and pumpkins. However, doughnuts, cakes, and bread and jam are often provided for snack, with healthy options not always offered alongside these as an alternative.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident and settled in the childminder's home. Appropriate items of equipment and furniture are available, allowing the children to play, rest and eat in comfort. Children select activities from a satisfactory range of developmentally appropriate resources, which meet safety standards. Some toys are easily accessible to the children, allowing self-selection. They are stored in a range of boxes in the lounge to encourage independent access. Other toys and books are rotated in the downstairs room on a regular basis to ensure variety.

Children are generally kept safe through a combination of supervision by the childminder and appropriate use of some safety equipment, such as electrical socket covers and smoke alarms. The childminder is aware that some plants in the garden are a potential hazard and is willing to make these inaccessible to the children. The childminder ensures the premises remain secure, as the front door is locked at all times. Children are learning about the importance of staying safe, as the childminder discusses strangers and road safety with them when out on walks and ensures fire evacuation procedures are practised. However, fire safety is not fully promoted as the fire blanket is stored in such a way that it cannot be easily and quickly accessed in an emergency, and the childminder has not put her fire evacuation plan in writing.

Children are suitably protected as the childminder maintains constant supervision both inside and outside the home. Unvetted persons are never left alone with children and the childminder is in the process of ensuring all family members over the age of 16 complete a criminal records check. She has a sufficient understanding of child protection issues, including the possible signs and symptoms of child abuse or neglect. However, the childminder is not fully confident

in her knowledge of all aspects of child protection, and is not currently aware of the guidelines available in the 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' booklet.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are comfortable, happy, confident and content in the childminder's care. They settle into activities quickly on arrival and make themselves at home. Children are given lots of individual attention. The childminder smiles and continuously talks to them, which helps them develop their sense of trust. She responds to the children's interests and talks to them about their family and what they have been doing at home and at school.

The children receive plenty of praise and encouragement, which increases their sense of well-being and encourages them to be increasingly independent and self-assured. They enjoy their time at the end of the school day, when they can relax or be active in accordance with their interests. Children are provided with a range of toys and games that are interesting and suitable for their age and stage of development. For example, they enjoy putting puzzles together and talk with the childminder about what they see. When completing an alphabet puzzle, they are encouraged to recognise the different letters and chat about the different people in the puzzle and their jobs. One child talks about the roles of the police ('if somebody is naughty they will put them in prison') and the job of an astronaut ('he goes into space and sees all the planets'). Children enjoy playing on the toy computer and with different types of fastenings, such as zips, buttons, laces and buckles. They concentrate for some time with this and develop their fine motor skills.

Children have opportunities to visit the library and local parks, and take part in art and craft activities, such as painting, junk modelling, collage and cooking. The childminder ensures children are given time to do homework if necessary, but makes sure that they also have plenty of time to play and enjoy themselves.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel good about themselves, because the childminder treats them with respect and as one of the family. The childminder has a knowledge of different cultures and festivals. She provides an adequate range of resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase children's awareness of diversity. The childminder encourages children to discuss and accept differences and learn about cultures other than their own. For example, the children made cards for Mother's Day and made candles during Diwali.

Children's self-esteem is promoted through encouragement and reassurance. They are learning to behave because the childminder uses a range of positive strategies to manage their behaviour. For example, she uses stickers and gives praise to promote good behaviour, and uses distraction and gives explanations as to why certain behaviour is unacceptable. Strategies used take into account children's different ages and levels of understanding.

Parents' views about their child's needs are actively sought before the child enrolls, enabling the childminder to ensure continuity of care. The childminder takes time on a daily basis to exchange information with parents about their child's care and achievements. Although the childminder discusses some aspects of her practice with parents, she does not discuss other

important aspects, such as child protection, or give parents any information in writing to fully inform them of her roles and responsibilities, such as the procedure for making a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder makes sound use of her time and resources to create an orderly environment for the children. As a result, the children are happy and settled. There is sufficient space to allow children to play freely and they have regular opportunities to relax as well as be active within the daily routine. Required adult to child ratios are maintained at all times, ensuring the children are appropriately supported.

The childminder has a sound understanding of the National Standards, although she has no knowledge of the regulations set out in the most recent amendments (October 2005), and she has not displayed her certificate of registration clearly for visitors and parents to view. The childminder has a range of suitable documentation in place which generally enables her to meet the children's needs. However, not all records are effectively maintained in order to safeguard the children's welfare. For example, the childminder has not obtained written permission from the parents to transport children in a vehicle, and she does not always promptly record children's arrival in the register. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the previous inspection, the childminder was not minding and two recommendations were raised. These required the childminder to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment, and to ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

The childminder now ensures that parents give their consent for the childminder to seek emergency medical treatment. This consent is held on individual record cards for each child. The childminder has made some attempts to increase her range of resources that promote positive images of diversity, which now include a small selection of books and dolls. She also regularly visits the library to enhance her provision of books showing images of children and families with different cultures and disabilities. Children also benefit from celebrating a variety of cultural festivals with the childminder.

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):

- further promote the good health of children by expanding the range of food items offered to children at snack time to ensure they have a choice of healthy options
- improve fire safety precautions by recording a fire escape plan and ensuring that the fire blanket can be easily accessed in the kitchen
- further develop awareness of child protection procedures and the guidelines detailed in the 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' booklet
- further improve the information provided to parents to ensure they are aware of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint, the childminder's responsibilities regarding child protection and the childminder's policies such as sickness
- further improve organisation of documentation by ensuring the time of children's arrival is promptly recorded in the attendance register and by requesting parents provide written consent to transport children in a vehicle
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in the October 2005 amendments to the National Standards, and ensure the certificate of registration is clearly on view at all times when minded children are present.

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