

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY222885
Inspection date	14 March 2008
Inspector	Deborah Jaqueline Newbury
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.

At the time of the inspection there were no children on roll. Ofsted judges that the provider remains suitable to provide care.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder registered in 2002. She lives with her husband and three children, aged 20, eight and three years in Twickenham, Middlesex. The childminder's grandchild, aged six months, also lives in the family home. The home is close to local schools, shops and bus and train routes.

Childminding takes place on the ground floor of the property with toilet facilities provided in this area. An upstairs bedroom is used for sleeping. There is a secure garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for two children under eight years of age. There are currently no children on roll.

When a provider does not have children on roll at the time of the inspection, inspection judgements are based on evidence gathered from discussions with the provider and an inspection of the premises, equipment and relevant documentation. As there are no children 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 satisfactory.

The childminder provides a clean environment, that is warm and welcoming. Through discussion, the childminder demonstrates awareness of how to promote children's good health. She understands the need to ensure good standards of hygiene and she does not care for children if they are sick. Children are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times; such as, before and after eating, before taking part in any cookery activities and after using the toilet. The childminder shows children how to wash their hands properly and she provides them with individual towels. The display of a hand-washing poster in the bathroom acts as a useful visual reminder for older children of the need to wash their hands. Such measures minimise the potential for the spread of infection and help to protect everyone.

The childminder maintains a valid first aid certificate and is able to explain how she would deal with any accident involving a child. Accident and medication records available for viewing at the time of inspection have been completed appropriately.

The childminder encourages children to be physically active by providing opportunities for garden play and by taking them to the park where they can run around and explore the play equipment available. She prefers to walk with children; for example, to school or nursery, in preference to transporting them by car. Children who need a sleep do so according to their individual need and their parents' wishes. The childminder sets up a travel cot in an upstairs bedroom and checks on sleeping children at regular intervals to ensure their safety.

The childminder discusses and agrees arrangements for the provision of food with children's parents. She seeks information about dietary needs and parents' preferences and explains how she follows good food hygiene procedures. The childminder aims to provide children with a balanced diet and to promote their understanding of healthy eating through discussion about the type of foods that are good for them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Through discussion, the childminder demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of child protection issues and the action she should take to safeguard children. She is aware of the importance of maintaining a record of any pre-existing injuries children may arrive with. However, she does not talk to parents about her responsibility with regard to child protection to ensure they are fully aware of the action she will take if she has any concerns about the children in her care.

The premises are secure and include appropriate facilities for children. The childminder implements generally suitable measures overall to ensure most areas used by children are safe and that most risks are identified and minimised. However, a broken fence panel in an area of the garden that would be accessible to children poses a potential hazard. Children learn how to keep themselves safe with the support of the childminder. She speaks to them about 'stranger danger' and helps them understand the importance of not approaching any dogs they may encounter when they are out and about. Children are taught about road safety and what they need to do if they hear the smoke alarm sound whilst they are at the childminder's home.

Children use suitable toys and equipment that are checked regularly by the childminder to ensure their cleanliness and safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Evidence gathered through discussion suggests that children would experience activities, inside and outside the home. The childminder indicates that she would generally take children to different drop-in groups during the morning where they could participate in the different activities on offer and explore the toys available. They would also be able to develop their social skills through mixing with the other children and adults present. The childminder also takes children to the library and local shops as part of her usual childminding routine, which enables them to become familiar with their local community.

The childminder explains how she promotes children's learning and supports their overall development by providing them with different play materials. She changes these throughout the day to maintain children's interest and offer variety. Talking, singing and reading stories are used to encourage children's communication skills and their creativity and imagination is promoted through the provision of small-world and role-play toys and activities, such as collage, painting and dance. The childminder has attended a workshop to promote the use of art and sensory experiences with babies.

Most children's play materials are stored in the hallway where they can be easily seen. The childminder gets things out for children and seeks their input about anything in particular they want to play with.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Through discussion, the childminder demonstrates an awareness of issues relating to equal opportunities and special needs. She understands that children are individuals and is aware of the importance of meeting their individual needs. Children have access to resources within the home that reflect positive images to help them gain awareness of the wider world in which we live.

The childminder has put together some brief written statements about some aspects of her childminding service which she shares with parents. She supplements this with informal discussion at the start of a child's placement with her. A daily exchange of information is used to ensure parents are fully informed about how their children spend their time. The childminder is willing to complete a diary if parents so wish. She is aware of the need to seek written consent from parents for most aspects of their children's care. Records show that previously, the childminder has obtained consent for outings and to transport children in a vehicle. However, she is unaware of the need to seek permission for emergency medical advice or treatment and has not had this in place in the past.

The childminder explains how she uses distraction and explanation to help children understand acceptable ways to behave and the importance of right and wrong. She uses praise to foster their self-esteem and confidence.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Evidence suggests that appropriate use of those areas of the home used for minding ensures children are comfortable and have room to move around independently. The childminder is aware of most required paperwork and a sampling of records held on previously minded children show that these have been completed correctly. Documentation is stored securely and made available for inspection.

From discussion with the childminder and information recorded in the attendance register, it is evident that for a period of three months last year, the childminder acted in breach of her conditions of registration in respect of the number of children she cared for at any one time. The childminder was under the impression that she could care for two children under eight years of age at any one time, although this was not the case. A warning letter has been issued.

The childminder has some awareness of how she should deal with a complaint if this relates to a National Standard, although is not fully secure in her knowledge of all aspects. She has not devised a system for ensuring parents are sufficiently well informed although she does provide them with information about how to contact the regulator at the start of their child's placement.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the childminder's last inspection, three recommendations were made. These related to improving security of the front door, obtaining and developing knowledge of the government booklet 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused' and improving one aspect of paperwork. Suitable measures are implemented to ensure the security of the front door and thus promote children's safety. The childminder has updated her knowledge of child protection by attending a basic child protection course and she advises she has obtained a copy of the current government booklet on child protection procedures. However, this was not available for viewing during the course of inspection as the childminder has put away some documentation relating to childminding activities as she is not currently minding. A sampling of records shows that the childminder now asks parents to countersign the medication record to acknowledge any medication given to their children.

The measures taken to address the issues raised contribute to the overall health, safety and welfare of children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 01 April 2004 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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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):

- assess the risk to children in respect of the broken fence panel and take steps to minimise this
- ensure information relating to safeguarding children is easily accessible
- improve further existing knowledge about the procedure to follow in the event of a parent making a complaint and ensure parents are sufficiently well informed of this.

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