

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY265655
Inspection date	04 January 2008
Inspector	Toni Hanson
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 good. 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 2004. She lives with her husband and two children aged seven and nine years. The family live in a house in a residential area of Hornchurch, Essex, which is within walking distance of local schools, shops, parks, bus routes and a main line train station. All areas of the property are used for childminding. A fully enclosed garden is available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children aged under eight years at any one time. She is currently minding nine children aged one to 10 years. All attend on a part-time basis. The childminder takes and collects from school and to a local pre-school group. She is a qualified Nursery Nurse and has completed the Introducing Childminding Practice (ICP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean, well organised, childminding home. Areas where they sleep, eat and play are hygienically maintained. The childminder has an up to date knowledge of first aid and keeps two appropriately stocked first aid boxes, one of which she takes with her when she and the children go out. The childminder knows individual children's health needs well and works closely with parents ensure they receive any additional care they need. Children are learning about the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Older children use the toilet independently and know they must wash their hands with soap afterwards to get rid of 'germs'. Paper towels are provided for hand drying, to reduce the risk of cross infection.

The childminder's menus are healthy and balanced and contains nutritious options, such as vegetables with roast dinners and snacks of fresh fruit. Convenience foods including chicken nuggets and oven chips are limited to once a week. The children sit together to eat meals and enjoy chatting about their day and sharing their news. Each child has their own, personal sports drink cup and their drinks are replenished regularly during the day.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities, which contribute to their physical good health. Weather permitting they enjoy vigorous exercise in the garden, including bouncing on the large trampoline and riding scooters as fast as they can up and down the patio slope. They visit the park regularly and enjoy using the play apparatus provided there. Younger children have a quiet rest or sleep according to their individual needs. Older children snuggle up on the settee with a blanket, rest and enjoy quiet activities such as reading books or drawing when they return tired from school.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure, safe and child centred environment. Space within the childminder's home is well organised. Children have ample room to play, a quiet place to rest and a comfortable area to enjoy their meals. They move safely, freely and independently around the childminder's house and know they must ask permission before playing upstairs or in the garden. Daily checks of the house and garden by the childminder and her good supervision of children help ensure they are protected from harm. The childminder takes appropriate safety measures, for example she turns electrical items such as the washing machine and dish washer off at the wall switch before toddlers arrive, as they like pressing buttons.

Children have access to a wide range of safe and suitable furniture, toys and equipment. These are age appropriate and in good condition. Appropriate safety equipment is provided to keep children safe, these include a fire blanket in the kitchen and smoke alarms at both levels of the house. Children are developing an understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They know that the zip on the trampolines safety net must be secured before they begin to bounce. Older children remind the younger children how to hold and carry child sized scissors safely.

Children are kept safe on outings. The youngest children are appropriately secured in a push chair. Older children know they must hold the childminder's hand and walk sensibly when out walking. The childminder is developing children's knowledge of road safety by talking to them about the safest places to cross and encouraging them to stop, look and listen. Before taking

children on outings and trips, she visits the places of interest first to complete a risk assessment and ensure all the facilities she might need are provided. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place to protect children and make sure that concerns about a child's welfare would be dealt with appropriately. All adults living in the childminder's home have complied with the required suitability checks and the childminder ensures that unvetted adults, such as visitors to her home are never left alone with children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled gradually into the childminder's care to ensure they and their families get to know her well before the placement begins. This helps to ensure children develop warm, secure relationships with the childminder and parent's wishes for their children's care are respected and met.

The childminder plans and provides a wide range of interesting indoor and outdoor activities to promote children's learning and ensure they have fun. Play resources are stored appropriately, so children can easily find the toys and activities they need. They have good opportunities to be creative, making colourful, glittering pictures from collage materials and carefully colouring wild animal masks. A good selection of outdoor play equipment in the garden allows children to enjoy being active outdoors throughout the year. They also enjoy quiet, relaxing activities such watching a children's comedy film during school holidays. Children receive warm, consistent care at the childminder's home and have good opportunities to play, learn and have fun with other children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well, for example, the childminder follows very young children's routines established at home to provide continuity of care for them. Routines are adapted and changed in consultation with parents according to children's changing needs as they grow and develop. The childminder works closely with parent's to support children with additional health needs or disabilities.

The childminder organises her time well. Meals are generally prepared before the childminding day begins to ensure children get the adult support they need. The childminder makes sure children have lots of interesting activities to choose from to keep them stimulated and occupied. Children know and understand house rules, such as no running on the stairs and are clear about what is expected of them. Older children learn about responsible behaviour as they help make drinks, serve meals and set the table for dinner. Children are praised frequently for positive behaviour such as sharing, negotiating with others and helping to tidy up. Consequently, their behaviour is very good.

Children explore their local community as they visit the library and park and walk to and from school. They enjoy outings to places of interest during school holidays, such as Colchester Castle, the zoo, London museums and a nature reserve. Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about the wider world. They have access to a suitable range of play resources designed to increase their awareness of diversity, including dolls, puzzles and books. Children have regular opportunities to develop their understanding of other cultures and lifestyles through planned activities. At Chinese New Year they eat fortune cookies, stir fry meals and make dragon puppets.

For Christmas, the children make cards to take home and visit a local farm to see a nativity scene complete with real donkeys.

An effective partnership between the childminder and parents ensures children's care meets their needs well. Good systems are in place to keep parents informed about children's progress. The childminder provides parents of younger children with daily written reports. These detail the food they have eaten, their sleep times, nappy changes and what activities children have enjoyed during the day. The childminder exchanges information verbally with all parents at the end of each childminding day. Parents receive a welcome pack when they enquire about childcare. This includes information about the childminder, her qualifications and family. Also, her aims, policies and procedures and Ofsted's contact details.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are confident, happy and feel at home in the welcoming, child centred, childminding environment. Their health needs are met well and children's safety is a priority. The childminder has a good understanding of child development and children enjoy the interesting and fun activities she provides. Their behaviour is managed consistently, calmly and positively and as a result they are polite and behave well. The childminder is keen to work in partnership with parents to ensure children's care is consistent and their individual needs are met well.

Children also benefit from the childminder's well organised and safely managed childminding service. All the required documentation necessary to safeguard children is efficiently maintained, up to date and stored securely. Although detailed records of occasional accidents are recorded appropriately, the childminder omitted to inform Ofsted of a significant event. She is fully aware that this is an important procedure that helps to protect children and has ensured this will not happen again. The childminder has produced a book of useful information to share with parents, which includes her childminding registration certificate. The certificate however, is not displayed where it is easy for parents to see and read every day.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, hand washing arrangements for children have improved and now help to protect children's health. Children also have increased access to activities and resources that help them explore diversity and the wider world.

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 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 good. 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):

- ensure that the childminding registration certificate is available for inspection at all times
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters.

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