

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118862
Inspection date	18 March 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 November 1996. She lives with her husband and 16 year old daughter. The family live in a house in Harold Wood, Essex, which is within walking distance of local schools, shops, parks, bus routes and a main line train station. Apart from the front room, the ground floor is the main area used for childminding. Children also have access to a bedroom and the bathroom on the first floor. A fully enclosed garden available for outside play. This is temporarily not being used for childminding while fencing that has blown down in high winds is being repaired. The family has a pet cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children aged under eight years at any one time. She is currently minding five children aged four to 10 years. One attends on a full-time basis, the others are cared for before and after school and during school holidays. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She takes and collects children from school and takes children to a local pre-school group. The childminder has completed the Developing Childminding Practice training (DCP). She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm, welcoming childminding home. Their good health is promoted well, for example paper towels are used for hand drying to prevent the risk of cross infection. The childminder has an up-to-date knowledge of first aid procedures to ensure she can deal with accidents and minor injuries correctly. She has completed food safety and hygiene training and makes sure children's food is stored and prepared safely. The childminder liaises with parents to find out what children usually eat at home and uses this information to plan healthy and balanced menus. Children are provided with nutritious and substantial meals, such as shepherd's pie with carrots and broccoli. The childminder uses discussion and displays of food posters to promote children's understanding of healthy eating. Children are offered drinks of water and squashes regularly to ensure they do not get dehydrated.

A good range of indoor and outdoor activities are organised for children each day, these contribute to their physical good health. They walk to and from school and pre-school and visit the local park to play on the swings and other play apparatus provided there. Younger children enjoy visits to a soft play centre. In warmer weather, when the childminder's garden is secure, children have access to a suitable range of outdoor play equipment including bats, balls, a football net and a hopscotch mat. Children are able to have a quiet rest or sleep according to their individual needs. The childminder provides a travel cot for use by younger children.

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. The childminder's daily safety checks of her house and garden and her good supervision of children help ensure they are protected from harm. The childminder uses a checklist to ensure her carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are checked each month and maintained in full working order. The childminder has devised a suitable evacuation plan and practises this with children each month, to ensure she can evacuate children quickly in an emergency. Appropriate safety equipment is provided to keep children safe, including a fire blanket in the kitchen, smoke alarms at each level of the house, cupboard locks on low level kitchen cupboards and window locks to secure first floor windows.

A wide range of safe and suitable furniture, toys and equipment are provided for children's use. These are age appropriate and well organised. The childminder checks her equipment and toys regularly to ensure they remain in good condition. Children are developing an understanding of how to keep themselves safe, younger children are reminded to walk down stairs sensibly and hold onto the banister. They move around the childminder's home safely and confidently. Children are kept safe on outings. The childminder develops the older children's understanding of road safety by talking to them about potential dangers and teaching them how to cross the road safely at pedestrian crossings. The childminder has a secure understanding of child protection issues and attends refresher courses to keep her knowledge up to date. She shares her child protection policy and procedure with parents, to make sure they are clear about her responsibilities. All adults in the childminder's home are appropriately vetted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Appropriate settling in procedures are in place to ensure that new children are settled gradually into the childminder's care. Children have access to a wide choice of good quality play resources suitable for their ages and stages of development. These are stored at children's level, so they can independently choose the activities and books they need and enjoy. The childminder rotates her play provision to ensure the children remain stimulated and do not get bored. Children are keen to talk, they chat happily to the childminder who listens to them carefully and encourages their language development.

The childminder plans and provides interesting activities for children that take into account their individual interests. They enjoy art and crafts and colouring in hand print pictures. Children have good opportunities to use their imaginations, they play racing games with small, plastic dinosaurs. The children learn to take turns and co-operative with others as they play board games. The childminder uses play experiences effectively to help children develop their letter and number skills. Younger children name the numbers on the fire engine number plate correctly as they complete a large floor puzzle. They learn to recognise colours and solve problems of size and shape as they build towers with bricks. The childminder supports school aged children with homework, for example helps them learn spellings. She is interested in what children do and say and provides them with good opportunities to play, have fun and develop new skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are settled and confident in the childminder's care. They have appropriate opportunities to learn about diversity and the wider world, through resources such as books, small world people, dolls and puzzles. The children make chick models at Easter and cards at Christmas. The childminder sponsors a child living in India. Older children look at the map to see where she lives and talk to the childminder about other countries and lifestyles. Children explore their local community as they go for walks and visit the park. During school holidays they enjoy outings to the cinema, seaside, zoo and bowling centre.

The childminder treats children with care and respect. She manages children's behaviour firmly, calmly and patiently. Praise is used effectively to reward children's positive behaviour, such as helping to tidy up toys. This promotes their self-esteem. The childminder works closely with parents to meet children's individual needs. Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to working in partnership with parents. She maintains a comprehensive and useful folder of information that is shared with parents. This gives them full details of her policies, procedures and care practices. Financial and care arrangements are agreed and confirmed through the use of written contracts, to ensure continuity of care for children. The childminder makes parents welcome in her home. She gives them verbal feedback about their children's progress each day and keeps parents up-to-date with information from playgroup and school.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children confidently make themselves at home in the safe, welcoming, well organised childminding environment. They benefit from the childminder's commitment to working in partnership with parents and providing continuity of care for children. The childminder organises her home, resources and time very well to meet the needs of the children in her care. She plans

and provides interesting and enjoyable activities for children each day, to ensure they can relax, have fun and learn through their play. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

The childminder ensures children are safeguarded by notifying Ofsted of relevant changes and ensuring members of her household are vetted as required. Children are supervised well and all areas of the premises are safe and suitable. Children's health is protected and their dietary needs met well. All the required documentation is efficiently maintained, up-to-date and stored securely, taking into account the need for confidentiality. This supports children's welfare.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder agreed to complete additional first aid training to ensure she met the required 12 hours of training. Since then she has kept her knowledge and understanding up to date by completing two, relevant paediatric first aid courses. This enables her to take appropriate action if a child has an accident

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):

- provide further opportunities for children to explore and learn about diversity and the wider world.

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