

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122994
Inspection date	05 February 2008
Inspector	Judith Mary Scott

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 1999. She lives with her husband and son aged 15, plus one adult son. They live in a four bedroom detached house in Wandsworth Common, London, within walking distance of shops, schools, parks, the common, a library and transport links. The ground floor of the property is currently used for childminding. This includes a living room with an adjoining conservatory, a kitchen/diner and a downstairs toilet. One bedroom on the first floor can be used for children's rest. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play.

The family have no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for four children at any one time. She is currently caring for a child aged two years full time and a seven year old before and after school five days a week, plus occasional holidays.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean home that is welcoming and friendly. They benefit from the childminder's good physical and emotional care and receive plenty of affection, reassurance and attention. Children experience lots of positive interaction and close contact with the childminder who is attentive and caring and continually meets their needs. They enjoy lots of hugs and are comfortable and settled. Children benefit from a structured but flexible routine and are able to freely express their feelings. For instance, they say the childminder's name to get her attention and ask for help with play activities. They talk about what they eat for their snack, "I like mango, it tastes nice". Children have naps or quiet times before lunch.

Children's meals and snacks are currently supplied by parents although the childminder is happy to provide these if required. Food supplied is nutritious, homemade and balanced and meets children's dietary needs. Water is available at all times. Children are encouraged to feed themselves and generally sit together with the childminder and talk. When she cuts up the fruit, children discuss and explore the different appearances, tastes and textures. Children's healthy eating is maintained by the childminder in conjunction with parents through discussion, role play and creative activities. For example, children paint and draw 'good' foods on an 'eat well' plate.

Children's health is sufficiently protected by the childminder's knowledge of health and safety and general good hygiene practice. Her first aid qualification has expired but she has arranged for its renewal as soon as possible and has a well stocked first aid kit. Children learn the importance of good personal care and independence through discussion and daily routines, they wash their hands regularly after using the toilet and before meals and snacks. Toilet training is supported together with parents and appropriate nappy changing arrangements are in place.

Children benefit from opportunities to be physically active and help them develop control of their bodies. The garden is used in better weather for outdoor play with outside play equipment that includes a sand pit, a tricycle, sit and rides, plus skittles, bats and balls. There are also trips to parks and groups where children have opportunities to use large apparatus and walk, jump, climb and run around with the childminder's support and encouragement to develop physical skills. Children also enjoy dancing, singing and music indoors and demonstrate how to do exercises.

The children's individual needs are met and information shared adequately with parents by the childminder maintaining records regarding accidents, incidents and medication.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from an organised home. They are safe and secure in this environment and can move around the ground floor. They can easily access toys and activities provided by the childminder. She has taken suitable measures to reduce potential hazards and does daily checks. For example, radiators are monitored to a low, constant heat by a central thermostat and socket covers are in place. Hazardous items and medication are stored safely and an additional lock was fitted at the inspection on a low level kitchen unit.

Children are made aware of the importance of using toys and play equipment safely through demonstration, discussion and explanation with the childminder. For instance, they are reminded gently not to mix up the different pots of play dough or take it all out at once. Children are supported when using large equipment like the big slide in the park to build their confidence. Children are given clear boundaries and the childminder ensures they are safe on outings and walking to and from school. They are supervised closely and the childminder takes their details and a mobile. Appropriate safety restraints are used, children hold on to the buggy and walk together. They are encouraged to stop, look, listen and wait at the kerb to increase their awareness of road safety.

Children have access to a range of childcare equipment. There is a varied selection of toys, books and play materials that are accessible, and stored and presented effectively. This includes creative materials, puzzles, imaginary and role play, books, construction, games, dolls, puppets, interactive toys, and table top and floor activities. The childminder monitors and ensures the play provision is suitable for children's ages and stages of development.

Children's welfare is paramount and they are safe and protected as the childminder has a reasonable understanding of child protection issues and procedures. She is aware of the importance of observing children, keeping accurate records and seeking advice if necessary. She has local contact numbers but there are no updated child protection information guidelines available for reference.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy being with the childminder and interact warmly and affectionately. They are talked to and played with at regular intervals, responding with animated speech, laughs and smiles. Children are offered recognition, acceptance and comfort by the childminder and given lots of praise and encouragement. They are happy and content and relate well to adults, this contributes to their sense of belonging.

Children experience a structured but flexible childminding routine that includes outings, indoor and outdoor play activities, meals, quiet times and naps. They have regular trips out to a parent and toddler group, the one o'clock club, shops and visiting friends. These provide chances to have new experiences and socialise with others. Children use different equipment with more space to develop their physical skills and play with a variety of resources such as paint, sand and water. On outings to the park, children explore the exercise trail and the natural world of insects, animals and nature. They feed the ducks and collect flowers and leaves to use for craft activities. Children also go to the library to choose books.

Children benefit from a designated area. They play with suitable and age appropriate toys and are interested and involved. They make choices about their activities and confidently select toys from the supplies provided. Children are absorbed in a play dough activity using cutters with different shapes, numbers and letters. This provokes much discussion, counting rhymes and choosing colours. Children often initiate their own play and engage with eye/hand co-ordination toys. They concentrate and persevere with construction blocks with counting spots, together with the childminder. Children respond and smile when praised for correctly placing the pieces together. They experiment with interactive toys that make a variety of sounds and press buttons to answer questions about what they can see. Children engage in role play with gestures, actions and dialogue using puppets. They make them wave and shout, "Look, quick, quick!".

Children like music and experiment with a toy guitar, creating different sounds and applause. They dance and move to the different rhythms. Children are encouraged to develop their speech and communication skills by the childminder through talking and listening everyday. They are introduced to new descriptive and positional words, plus colours, numbers, letters and shapes in a variety of ways such as interactive games. They enjoy listening to stories and looking at picture books.

Children participate in a variety of stimulating play activities on a weekly basis that contribute to their enjoyment and learning such as painting, sticking, drawing, colouring and mark making. Children like floor games using a large soft die and enjoy completing an alphabet floor puzzle. Other activities include free play, music, construction and imaginary and role play. They enjoy making chapatis with the childminder and in the summer, help to plant and grow herbs in the garden. After school, children are often tired so they like quiet activities such as reading, board games and watching children's television. They also enjoy craft activities such as making jewellery, origami, printing and making masks.

Children receive support to develop their independence, confidence and ability to make choices. The childminder promotes pre-school and social skills and encourages children to learn to put on and take off their coats, to select toys and to feed themselves. She extends play activities such as introducing more difficult equipment when children are ready. Children experience a warm, consistent standard of care from the childminder who has a good awareness of their needs and development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from introductory sessions that are arranged to suit families' specific requirements. The childminder finds out about children's needs, routines, likes and dislikes, comforters and favourite toys to help them settle as quickly as possible. She gets to know them well and communicates with parents regularly regarding their care and progress. Children benefit from the positive partnerships that the childminder has formed with parents who indicate they are happy with the standard of care provided. However, parents are not made fully aware of a complaints procedure or the regulator's details and there is no suitable system in place for recording complaints.

Children are given clear boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, plus expectations, in conjunction with parents. For example, they are encouraged to share, to take turns, have good manners, to be nice to one another and play co-operatively. Children are kept well occupied and behave well, responding positively to the childminder's requests and guidance. For instance, they are asked to tidy up the current activity before getting out any more toys. Children benefit from the childminder's suitable and age appropriate behaviour management strategies such as anticipation, distraction, talking, explaining, time out to calm down and withdrawal of privileges for older children. Desired behaviour is promoted and rewarded with praise and positive language.

Children are treated as individuals and with equal concern. They have access to the full range of activities offered. This includes a selection of resources such as books and dolls that promote a positive view of the wider community and increase their understanding of diversity. However, there are no positive images of disability. Children enjoy a variety of music indoors and experience different festival celebrations such as Divali, Eid and Christmas at groups. The childminder displays positive attitudes towards children with learning difficulties/disabilities.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children enjoy close relationships with the childminder and their needs are supported so they can enjoy and achieve in a child friendly home with a variety of resources. They are comfortable and secure in an organised environment which helps them gain confidence and be independent. Parents have access to the childminder's existing written policies, procedures and details about her service. Verbal information is exchanged on a regular basis regarding children's well-being, food and drink intake, activities, nappy changes, sleep patterns and outings. The attendance register is maintained and completed with children's arrival and departure times.

The childminder keeps the required records that contribute to children's health, safety and well-being, however, some systems lack details. There are no written consents from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and emergency contact numbers have not been obtained for all children. The childminder displays positive attitudes towards attending future training and amending documentation to promote further good practice. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection, the childminder has completed a first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children. However, this has now expired and is to be renewed. Her daughter-in-law no longer acts as a childminder from this address so minded children remain in her sole care at all times. She has improved fire safety precautions by maintaining a smoke alarm on every floor of the home and also checks them to ensure they are in working order.

Record keeping has progressed and a daily attendance register, medication records and an evacuation plan are maintained and in place. However, the confidential incident record needs to be filed separately and there is still no system to seek parents' permission for emergency medical treatment or advice.

The childminder has developed a working knowledge and understanding of child protection issues through her current NVQ Level 3 training. She provides a wider range of toys and activities to meet the developmental needs of children from four to under eight years. Resources are available which depict positive images of race and gender and they are used as an integral part of everyday play. However, this does not include positive images of disability as yet.

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

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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):

- ensure a current first aid qualification is maintained that includes training in first aid for infants and young children
- ensure that parents are made aware of the complaints procedure and suitable systems are in place for recording complaints
- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and obtain emergency contact numbers for all children

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