

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	124748
Inspection date	17 October 2007
Inspector	Sandra Patricia Jeffrey

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 has been registered to care for children since 1998. She lives with her three children aged 10, 16 and 21. She is also an approved foster carer but is not currently caring for foster children aged under eight years. The family live in a three bedroom house in a residential area of Thornton Heath.

The open plan living/dining room is the main area used for childminding. Children do not use first floor except for the bathroom and toilet. A fully enclosed garden is available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children aged under eight at any one time and is currently minding three children under eight and two children over eight. All children attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder holds an NVQ Level 3 in childcare. The childminder is a member of an accredited childminding network. The family do not have any pets.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young children are cared for in a clean and comfortable environment where they are beginning to learn the importance of personal hygiene. They receive appropriate support to develop their personal care, for example, they are all supplied with an individual flannel to use when washing their hands and faces before and after meals. This helps to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

Parents are invited to supply their children with toothbrushes and tooth paste if they wish, to enable the children to keep their teeth clean after meals. There are suitable procedures in place for nappy changing; including the use of gloves.

Parents know from discussion and the written policies and procedures that they should not bring their children to the childminder if they are unwell, which helps to prevent the unnecessary spread of infection. Children's health is further protected because the childminder is happy, with parental consent, to give minded children medication if required. Medication records are well maintained and are signed by the parents. This fosters good practice.

The childminder has a written policy detailing her responsibilities if the minded children have an accident or become ill. However, she has not specifically obtained written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment in the event of such circumstances. This hampers the childminder's effectiveness in meeting the children's needs fully in an emergency.

The childminder holds a valid first aid certificate and has three first aid boxes, one in the home, another in the car and the third is carried when out on foot with the children. This promotes the children's safety and wellbeing.

Children enjoy healthy meals and snacks that the childminder provides. The childminder discusses children's dietary needs with the parents when the contracts are being completed, to ensure that she is aware of any allergies or special requirements. She provides the children with a balanced diet and endeavours to make meals appealing to all children in her care, encouraging them to make their own sandwiches on 'tea day' for example.

The children enjoy a variety of physical activities, which includes attending local toddler groups three days a week, where they can enjoy using larger play in a safe environment. The childminder described a good understanding of the benefits of visiting other environments with the minded children to broaden their experiences and to ensure younger children's physical developmental skills are extended.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in a warm, welcoming and child friendly environment where they have good space to play and rest. They have a good range of appropriate toys and play resources that are safe and are made easily accessible to them. This helps the children feel at home in the setting and encourages them to make choices and decisions for themselves in their play. Close supervision by the childminder enables young children to play safely.

The premises, including the garden, are secure and there are good procedures in place to prevent the children from leaving unsupervised. An alarm sounds when the front door is opened, allowing the childminder to hear if a child should manage to unlock this door. This promotes the children's safety.

Fire safety arrangements are in place, including the presence of two smoke alarms and a fire blanket. The location of the smoke alarms was discussed with the childminder, as they are wall mounted and not ceiling mounted as is customary. The childminder believes these were placed in accordance with the manufactures instructions but is going to seek clarification on this.

An emergency evacuation plan is also in place, and is regularly practised with the minded children. This helps children become familiar with the routine in the event of an emergency. Records are kept but only consist of the date of the drill and do not allow for any evaluation of the evacuations.

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and knows how to proceed if she has concerns about a child in her care, in line with the latest government guidance. The childminder has attended training in Safeguarding Children (child protection), this supports children's wellbeing.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children were observed to settle quickly and to enjoy toys and activities that meet their developmental needs. Older children feel a sense of belonging because they are encouraged to play an active part in choosing their own activities, particularly after school. They enjoy a varied range of activities, including playing on the computer as well as ensuring that they complete any homework or school reading books with the childminder. Older children are encouraged to help younger children access the computer and all are encouraged to share and take turns.

Children receive good care and affection from the childminder, who sits on the floor with the younger children, ensuring that she is attentive to their needs. Young children respond well to the attention given to them and are happy and content in the childminder's care.

The childminder has attended training on the Birth to three matters framework and is aware that it would be beneficial to relate this training in her planning, to ensure she is providing a good routine for the younger children. Young children are encouraged to complete puzzles with the childminder who then leaves these out for the parents to view when they collect the children at the end of the day.

Children enjoy having stories read to them and are encouraged to recount the events in the story and to recognise letters and familiar words. Posters displaying the alphabet and numbers are displayed in the setting, supporting young children's learning in these areas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the setting and valued as individuals. The childminder finds out about their individual needs before they start and ensures that these needs are respected.

Children and their families are treated with respect and receive good support and encouragement to promote their self-esteem.

Children begin to develop a positive awareness of other races, cultures and abilities through a suitable selection of resources and activities. The childminder is a positive role model and has a positive attitude towards diversity, which encourages the children to develop a greater understanding of the community they live in and the wider world. The children are shown books portraying people from different cultures and learn about different festivals such as Eid and Christmas. These give children opportunities to gain an insight into our multi cultural society.

The childminder has previous experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and displayed a positive attitude to caring for children with such needs. Appropriate strategies, according to the age and stage of development are in place to help young children understand right from wrong. The older children have drawn up a list of house rules with the childminder, which includes the need to share and explains that rudeness and bullying are not acceptable.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents provide relevant information about their children to the childminder when they start, this helps to ensure children receive individual care and attention. The childminder however, still uses forms designed by the previous regulator which may lead to some confusion for the parents. Regular informal discussions and the completion of a weekly contact book for babies by the childminder, helps to ensure continuity of care for the children. Copies of written policies and procedures used by the childminder in her daily routine are given to the parents to enable them to be aware of all aspects of the service provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a clear understanding of her role in supporting young children in their play and learning. The children benefit from a well-organised environment where they receive good adult support which helps them feel secure and confident. The childminder ensures that she attends training on a regular basis which underpins the work she does with minded children. The childminder's knowledge of the requirements of the National Standards is demonstrated well in her extensive portfolio of documents that are shared with the parents.

Most of the documents required to promote the health, safety and welfare of the children are in place, but written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment has not been sought. This may have an adverse impact on the safety and wellbeing of the children. Some aspects of the fire safety arrangements are not fully effective and the documents used when obtaining information about new children are not always appropriate. These issues have some implications on the effectiveness of the organisation.

Comprehensive policies and procedures guide the childminder in her daily practice. This ensures children's needs are generally well met and relevant information is shared with the parents on a daily basis. Written information kept about the children is treated in a sensitive and confidential manner. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

During the previous inspection, the childminder was requested to ensure the safety of children when using the toilet. The childminder has now taken appropriate steps to ensure that the children cannot lock themselves in the toilet, with the addition of a new lock. This improvement promotes the safety of the minded children.

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 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):

- request written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment
- improve fire safety precautions:- seek the advice of the fire safety officer in relation to the proper location of the smoke alarms
- improve fire safety precautions:- keep more detailed fire drill records to enable their effectiveness to be evaluated
- improve record keeping: - update the forms used for written agreements with parent's

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