

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	124850
Inspection date	09 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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1992. She lives in a residential area of South Croydon, within walking distance of shops, schools, library and parks. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, this includes bathroom facilities. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children aged under eight years at any one time. Three children were on roll at the time of the inspection and two children were present during the inspection visit.

There are no pets in the household. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

The procedures for administering medication are suitable and accident records are appropriately maintained. Written parental permission for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment is now in place. However, a valid first aid certificate is not held. This was highlighted during the previous inspection. Some dressings and bandages in the first aid box have expired and are therefore not suitable for use on minded children. These failings pose risks to children's health and welfare, as the childminder may not be able to meet the children's needs fully in an emergency.

Young children are cared for in a clean and welcoming home, where the childminder takes generally effective steps to promote the safety and well being of the children in her care.

For example, separate nappy changing bags and mats are used for each child, therefore effectively reducing the risk of cross infection. The use of anti-bacterial gel after each nappy change also helps to promote effective hygiene practice.

Children have regular opportunities to take part in physical activity when they visit one of the three local parks on a daily basis. They enjoy walking with the childminder to local facilities, including the local shops, where they are encouraged to select an apple or an orange to enjoy after their lunch.

Children are offered a healthy varied diet by the childminder who is happy to supply food once children are able to eat finger foods. Minded children were observed enjoying a breakfast of sliced apple, dried cereal and toast on the day of the inspection. Sample menus are available for parents to view and parents are informed at the end of each day what their children have eaten. This helps to ensure their dietary needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and welcoming home environment, where they have access to clean and well maintained toys that are safe and suitable for their use. The childminder ensures the children are adequately supervised when playing and checks and washes the toys on a regular basis.

Children's risk of accidental injury in the home is minimised because the childminder takes generally effective steps to identify and reduce hazards. However, there remains a risk that minded children may gain access to the steep and narrow stairs that lead to the first floor, as the safety gate is not always in place. This poses a risk to the children's safety.

The childminder ensures that harmful objects and substances are not easily accessible in the kitchen. The garden is secure and the childminder has taken effective steps to ensure this is a safe place for the children to enjoy fresh air and exercise. These precautions promote the children's safety.

Fire safety arrangements are in place, including the presence of a fire blanket in the kitchen as required. There is however, only one smoke alarm in place and although there is an emergency

evacuation plan in place, it has not been practised with the minded children. This affects the childminder's ability to act quickly in the event of an emergency.

In the main, the childminder describes a sound understanding of Safeguarding Children procedures. However, she has not advised the parents of her responsibilities to notify social services if she has any concerns about the children in her care. This does not fully safeguard or promote children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children are made to feel welcome in the home and have a warm and secure relationship with the childminder. Young children benefit from receiving lots of affection from the childminder and they respond well to the attention given to them. Consequently, the children are happy and confident in the childminder's care.

The childminder is attentive to the children's needs and spends time talking to and playing with them. She joins in with their activities, for example, helping with jigsaw puzzles and colouring in pictures from children's comics. Children have a varied weekly routine that includes taking part in a variety of activities both inside and out of the home, such as trips to local parks. This contributes to their development and extends their environmental experiences and learning. Young children also benefit from exploring other worthwhile activities such as balancing and climbing on the play equipment in the park. This helps to develop their large motor skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder obtains relevant information from the parents before caring for the children, this is used to help her to offer the children care in consideration of their individual circumstances. Communication between the parents and the childminder is satisfactory, a diary is used for babies, whilst verbal feed back is used for the older children. Written agreements are available which fosters the children's welfare.

The childminder has a positive attitude towards diversity and has some resources that reflect positive images of the wider world to complement the minded children's understanding of equality.

The childminder has not cared for minded children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but 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 children understand right from wrong. Distraction is the main form used and the childminder is aware of the benefits of the value of praise.

The childminder is aware of the need to have a detailed complaints procedure in place, and to ensure this is made available to the parents.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care.

The childminder has failed to maintain a valid first aid certificate and has insufficient dressing and bandages in the first aid box. This impacts on her ability to promote the children's health sufficiently.

Most of the documents required are in place, however, the daily attendance records do not include the actual times of attendance which is a breach of regulations. These issues have an adverse impact on the running of the setting and therefore on the wellbeing of the minded children.

Home safety precautions are not fully effective as young children have opportunities to access the stairs to the first floor. Fire safety precautions are also not fully effective as there is only one smoke alarm in place and children do not have opportunities to practise the emergency evacuation procedures. These issues do not fully promote the safety of the minded children in an emergency.

The childminder generally organises her home around the needs of the children, she has ensured they have sufficient space to play and makes sure that they can easily reach the toys and play materials. Young children move freely and confidently around the home. These considerations help children to make the most of the play and learning opportunities provided.

The childminder has written policies and procedures for the parents' information and the information about the children and their families is treated in a sensitive and confidential manner.

Improvements since the last inspection

During the previous inspection, several actions and one recommendation were set in order to improve the quality of the service that was being provided to minded children.

The actions that were set, have in the main been met, however, one action is still outstanding and has been reset following this inspection. This relates to the attendance of first aid training for infants and young children. The childminder has failed to maintain a valid first aid certificate and this poses a significant risk to children's health and welfare.

During the previous inspection, the childminder was also required to ensure that the garden and electrical leads were made safe. Both of these hazards have now been addressed satisfactorily, therefore ensuring that they are no longer posing hazards to the minded children's safety.

The childminder was also required to obtain written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment, to ensure parents sign to acknowledge the medication records and to keep a record of significant incidents. All of these are now in place and go some way to improving the service that is provided.

The recommendation was in relation to maintaining confidentiality when keeping records of accidents and medication. The childminder now ensures that these records are stored in a confidential manner, therefore improving the partnership with parents and the organisation of these records.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- complete a first aid course which includes training in first aid for infants and young children
- ensure the contents of the first aid box are checked frequently and replaced as necessary
- ensure the daily attendance record includes the actual hours of children's attendance.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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