

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133230
Inspection date	15 January 2008
Inspector	Tom Radcliffe
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 1997. She lives with her husband and three children aged 22, 21 and 15 in Holloway in the London borough of Islington. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five all day. The childminder attends childminders support groups. The family has a pet cat.

The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder has made a very clean and well organised play environment available for the children that she minds. All areas are clean which allows children to explore with no risk to their

well being as there is a reduced risk of the spread of infection. The childminder maintains good written records when recording accidents and administering medication. She also takes great care to ensure that all information is shared with parents to help further ensure children's good health and well being. In addition to this the childminder has obtained written consent from parents to allow her to seek urgent medical treatment or advice, if the need should arise. Children's health is further enhanced as infectious children are excluded from the setting and the childminder ensures that all children have a good understanding of personal hygiene; for example, children regularly wash their hands while playing in the setting. Children are cared for very well if they sustain a minor injury as the childminder holds an appropriate first aid qualification and has first aid equipment available.

The childminder promotes children's health as she provides nutritious meals and snacks that are commensurate with the hours of children's attendance. The childminder ensures that children have a balanced diet and that they are developing good eating habits; for example, they are provided with fresh vegetables, fruit and home made meals such as casserole. The childminder handles and serves all food hygienically and stores food sent by parents correctly and safely. Children are able to have free access to fresh drinking water during the day and the childminder always takes into account children's eating habits which are discussed with parents.

Children have access to a good range of activities both indoors and outdoors to develop their physical skills. Indoors children can use age and developmentally suitable equipment to develop their fine motor skills; for example, when mark making, using key boards and as they dress dolls. A good outdoor space is also available to children with a good range of equipment to allow children to take exercise and develop a greater range of skills and competencies. Outdoors children can use swings, bicycles and small games apparatus. In addition the childminder makes regular use of the locality to enhance her level of provision as children walk to local network facilities. Children are able to mix with other children and access additional play resources and opportunities. This contributes very positively to their health and wellbeing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure and safe environment. They have access to well organised space which supports their free use of play equipment, allows movement between areas and has safe storage of toys and resources. Children have access to table top activities and uncluttered floor space where they can take part in levels of activity that suits their needs; for example, individually, collectively, active or more sedentary. The childminder maintains very good levels of supervision of the children ensuring that all of their care needs are met and that hazards are minimised; for example, as they play independently, work with her or have snacks together. In addition to this the childminder makes good use of safety gates to prevent children from going upstairs and all doors and windows are locked. Children in the setting can be kept safe in the case of an emergency as the childminder regularly practises an evacuation procedure. The childminder has good fire and detection equipment in place. Children in the setting are developing a sense of their own safety in the way that they use resources and when on their regular outings into the locality; for example, when crossing roads and walking safely in busy areas.

Children are provided with a good range of play equipment. Children's learning is well supported in all areas by resources that are age and developmentally suitable. The childminder constantly ensures that all resources are suitable and that a range is available to meet the children's needs; this is very important as the children belong to different age groups. She also maintains all

resources in good working order and in a hygienic condition. In order to meet the changing needs of the children the childminder monitors how the children play to be sure that they are engaged by the activities that are available to them and that development takes place. Children freely access play equipment that enhances their physical development, understanding of language and knowledge of their environment.

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection policy and procedure. She is able to promote and safeguard children's welfare within the setting as she recognises signs and symptoms and is secure in her knowledge of how to proceed if she were to have concern's about a child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle very quickly and confidently into the childminder's home, they independently access activities and initiate conversations with each and the childminder as they plan and think about the day's activities. The children are very comfortable and secure in the setting and they are supported very well by the childminder who has a good relationship with the children. The childminder ensures that all the children are involved in meaningful conversations as she asks questions, prompts answers and encourages the children to both express themselves and to think about what they are doing. In this way children talk to the childminder as they share books, play games and explore the use of colour, shape, number and animal names. The children show increasing levels of independence as they select activities such as keyboards and shape games or undertake mark making or role play games. At these times the childminder intervenes to give support and guidance without interrupting the children's play activity. At other times the childminder and children will work together as they share books, talk about animals or listen to music and songs. As children play with toy telephones the childminder prompted the children to use more descriptive words and greatly enhanced the experience for the children. The childminder ensures that children are engaged at all times and gain from the experiences that they undertake. In order for this to happen the childminder makes sure that children have access to range of activities that allow development in areas such as language, an understanding of number and increasing control of their bodies as they develop physical skills. The older children in the setting are very good communicators and talk with expression, clarity and confidence. These children are very actively involved in the setting as the childminder includes them in how they spend their time while in the setting. The children are happy, occupied and stimulated by their time in the setting and they are developing in all areas of learning.

The childminder enhances this very good provision by ensuring that children regularly meet other children and access additional play opportunities as they visit network groups locally. This helps children to develop socially and develop new skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a good working relationship with parents which helps to ensure that all information about the children is shared and acted upon, this results in children developing well as their personal needs are known and met. Thus children's dietary needs are known and the childminder's provision reflects this; for example, a child requiring vegetarian food has food provided from home. The childminder has very good relationships with the children who are respected as individuals and who interact very positively with her. The childminder provides

play materials that reflect positive images of diversity; for example, through dolls, books and toys. Consequently the children are developing a good awareness of themselves and of their diverse community. The childminder has an understanding of working with children who may have special needs, her inclusive approach would support these children well, if these needs were to arise in the future.

The behaviour of the children is very good; they are engaged in meaningful activities, feel valued and cared for in a supportive play based environment. The children thrive in an environment where they are respected and show respect for others. They have an ever growing understanding of right and wrong

Children's wellbeing and development is very well promoted by the partnership between the parents and the childminder. Parents expressed very positive views about the care and service received from the childminder. They are pleased with the progress shown by their children and that their children are treated as individuals and are consequently very happy and settled in the setting. Policies and procedures are in place reflecting the childminder's service and these are shared with all parents. The interaction between parents and childminder at the start and end of the day is very positive with important exchanges of information. Most communication at these times is verbal; to support this the childminder is developing portfolios of children's work. This would provide parents with an additional valuable source of information about their child's development as at present they do not have access to even simple daily diaries.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are very content and fulfilled while in the setting, they settle quickly to activities that engage them with good levels of independence, responsibility and language skills. Children have access to a good range of activities from which they learn and develop in a well organised environment. The childminder is constantly developing her skills as she undertakes a large amount of training and development. The childminder meets all the National Standards as children participate in a clear routine which meets their individual needs through; for example, play and visits to local network groups.

Children are very safe while in the childminder's home, as all adults undergo suitability checks, they are also secure and have a growing sense of how to be healthy as they acquire important life skills. Parents are very happy with the service provided by the childminder and they take part in regular and meaningful conversations with the childminder. However they do not have access to written records from which they could gain a greater understanding of their child's development. The childminder has all necessary documentation in place. This impacts positively on the safety and wellbeing of children. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection recommended that the childminder provided more resources to promote equal opportunities. Since that time the childminder has ensured that resources have been provided to meet this need.

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):

- to continue to develop portfolios of children's achievements and simple written development records for parents.

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