

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133293
Inspection date	19 October 2007
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 1994. She lives with her husband and three adult children in Lower Holloway in the London borough of Islington. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five during the day and one child over five after school. The childminder walks to local schools to collect children. The childminder attends local support groups.

The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The premises that are available for childminding are very clean and well organised. All play areas are clean and maintained in a hygienic condition which allows children free access to explore and play with minimal risk to their wellbeing as there is a reduced risk of the spread of infection. The childminder has in place written procedures for the recording of accidents and the administering of medicines. Children's good health and wellbeing is promoted by the childminder's good use of this retained information. This is further enhanced as the childminder has obtained written permission from parents to allow her to seek emergency medical advice and treatment, should it be required. In addition infectious children are excluded from the setting further promoting children's good health. Children regularly wash their hands while in the setting and brush their teeth after having meals. Children are cared for very well if they sustain a minor injury as the childminder holds an up to date relevant first aid qualification and has proper first aid equipment to hand.

Children are given very healthy and nutritious snacks while in the setting. The childminder ensures that children have a balanced diet while in her care and food given to the children properly reflects the amount of time that the children spend in the setting. Children are developing good eating habits; for example, they are provided with fresh vegetables, fruit and pasta. The childminder is qualified in safe food handling and ensures that all meals are well balanced and freshly prepared. Children are able to freely access fresh drinking water independently during the day and with their meals or snacks. Parents are able to provide information to the childminder about their children's dietary needs; the childminder ensures that she follows this advice carefully.

Children are able to develop their physical skills very well as the childminder makes available to them a large range of indoor and outdoor activities. Indoors children can use age and developmentally appropriate equipment to develop their fine motor skills. These include, jigsaws, puzzles, threading games and mark making equipment. The childminder also provides a well equipped and secure outdoor play area where children can use slides, play on wheeled toys and use small games apparatus. In addition the childminder makes very good use of the locality as she regularly undertakes walks and visits to local parks and a city farm. She also walks to other facilities that include a local library and leisure centre. Children are able to mix with other children and access additional resources as the childminder makes very good use of local networks and drop in centres. This contributes very positively to their health and physical wellbeing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder provides children with a secure and safe environment to play and develop in. She ensures that the main activity room is well organised with sufficient uncluttered floor space to promote free movement by children. Resources are stored both to be accessible and make the available space safe as used resources are stored away from the play areas. Children are able to be active or take rest as they require it. The childminder maintains very good levels of supervision of the children ensuring that all of their care needs are met and that potential hazards are minimised; for example; resting children are monitored, children taking food in the kitchen are kept under supervision and children are not left unsupervised as they enthusiastically

use the outdoor play area. 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 know how to keep safe in the event of an emergency as the childminder has a well rehearsed emergency evacuation plan in place, which she shares with parents and children. The childminder has good fire detection and control equipment in place. The children are developing a sense of safety both in the home and on their regular outings as the childminder constantly talks to the children about safely using resources and being careful of roads while on their walks.

Children are provided with a very good range of play equipment. Children's learning in all areas is very well supported by resources that are suitable for their age and level of development. The childminder has given considerable thought to the range of play equipment that she provides; she maintains it all in good working order, ensures that it is hygienic and constantly monitors its use to be sure that it engages children and meets their needs. Children are able to freely access play equipment as they enhance their physical development, learn about their environment, experience music or learn more about speaking and language.

The childminder has a very good understanding of child protection policy and procedure. She is able to recognise signs and symptoms and how to proceed if she were to have concerns about a child's welfare. This promotes and safeguards children's welfare within the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle quickly into the childminder's home; they freely access resources, confidently use them and become engrossed in what they do. Children are very secure and comfortable within the setting; they are supported very well by the childminder who has developed a caring and trusting relationship with the children. The use of language by the childminder is excellent; she constantly asks questions, encourages children to think about what they are doing and promotes meaningful discussions to enhance children's understanding and learning. Children engage in play which is child initiated with the childminder making appropriate interventions only when she thinks that they are necessary. As a child looked at photographs of children's activities the childminder answered the child's questions about what he was looking at, for the remaining time the child described what he saw in great detail. The childminder constantly strives to ensure that the children have access to a range of activities to support their continued development; children are able to take part in role play activities, play with shapes or different materials and take part in a range of messy play activities. As children exercise choice in the setting they are also able to decide how they spend their time as the childminder seeks their opinions and interests and facilitates opportunities for them to fulfil their ideas. The older children independently made activity books which were based on their own ideas while other children invented games that the childminder played with them. Children are very happy in the setting, they are engaged in purposeful activity, they are becoming increasingly articulate, independent and are developing in all areas of learning.

The childminder enhances this excellent provision by ensuring that children regularly meet other children within the community as they visit other groups and drop-in centres. This helps children to develop socially, access additional play materials and experiences and develop new skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder maintains a good working relationship with parents to ensure that all information about the children is shared and acted upon, this results in children developing very well as their personal needs are known and skilfully accommodated within the setting. Thus children's dietary needs, medical details and interests are known by the childminder and acted upon to enhance her level of provision. The childminder evolves good relationships with the children who are respected as individuals and who interact very positively with her. Children are developing a good awareness of themselves and of the diverse community around them. The childminder provides play materials that reflect positive images of diversity; for example, through dolls, stories and music. The childminder has a very good understanding of working with children who may have special needs; she is experienced in working with these children and would be able to provide an inclusive and supportive environment, if these needs were to arise in the future.

The behaviour of the children is very good, they are very well cared for by the childminder who provides them with a range of stimulating activities in a supportive environment of play and learning. Central to the work of the childminder is good relationships based on mutual respect while ensuring that children are motivated, engaged and active participants within the setting. Children respond very well to this environment and develop well with an ever growing understanding of right and wrong.

Children's wellbeing and development is very well promoted by the relationship between the parents and the childminder. Parents mainly have a long association with the childminder and are very familiar with the service that she provides. All policies and procedures are in place that outline important aspects of the childminder's work, all are shared with parents. Most communication between the childminder and parents is verbal; though records of children's achievements are collated and available to parents, they do not have access to daily diaries that would enable parents to have an on-going understanding of children's development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are very content and fulfilled within the setting. They settle quickly and confidently, taking advantage of the well organised environment in which they play. Children have access to a good range of stimulating activities that they become engaged in and which give them opportunities to develop and learn. The childminder works enthusiastically and tirelessly to ensure that all children's needs are met. The childminder constantly ensures that her skills are updated by undertaking significant amounts of training and development. She meets all the National Standards as children participate in a clear routine which is planned to meet individual needs through; for example, play and visits to groups within the community.

Children are very safe and secure within her home as all adults undergo suitability checks. Though parents are kept informed of children's progress by regular verbal updates they do not have access to simple written records from which they could gain a greater understanding of their children's development. The childminder has ensured that all necessary documentation is 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

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to: make a written emergency evacuation plan available; request parental permission for children requiring emergency medical treatment; and make a written complaints policy available. Since that time the childminder has undertaken work to fulfil all of these recommendations.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- devise daily diaries to be able to exchange written information with 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