

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135694
Inspection date	10 January 2008
Inspector	Carolyn Mary Hasler

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 was registered in 1989. She lives with her husband and three children, one adult child and two others aged 13 and 10 years in a quiet residential area of Enfield Highway, an area of the London Borough of Enfield. The childminder lives in a three bedroom semi detached house, and the minded children have access to both the ground floor and first floor of the premises. The bathroom is situated on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden. The premises is close to local parks, schools and shops. She takes and collects children from the local schools. The childminder is registered to care for five children at one time, she has five children on roll, one of which is over the age of eight years. The childminder works with an assistant part of the week. She is a member of Enfield's Childminding Network and the NCMA.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning how to lead healthy lifestyles. They have opportunities for fresh air and exercise each day because they walk to and from school, play in the garden with push alongs,

trikes and bikes and visit the local park where they have access to large apparatus such as swings and slides. Open fields offers them opportunities to play with balls and run around. Regular exercise helps children build muscular strength and healthy habits for the future.

All children are learning about good hygiene. Good routines such as washing hands before eating and after nappy changing time help children learn important skills in becoming independent. They are set good examples by the childminder who ensures that her home is clean and tidy before children arrive. Toys are regularly washed, particularly those for very young children. The kitchen, bathroom and nappy changing materials receive particular attention to ensure that cross contamination of germs is limited. If children become sick, the childminder has appropriate procedures in place including those for emergencies which are understood by parents and ensure that the best interests of children are maintained. If children become injured they can access immediate first aid because the childminder holds a current first aid certificate and ensures that a first aid kit is always accessible. All the required records and documentation are in place to ensure children's health and well-being is protected.

Drinks offered throughout the day ensure that children do not become dehydrated, they are offered a variety of healthy choices at meal times. Snacks of fresh fruit and a healthy balanced cooked meal during the day help them to build healthy bodies and gives energy to help them learn and play. Although children are offered healthy choices, mealtimes lack a feeling of sociability and this can lead to children feeling isolated. The childminder ensures that she records and takes account of their individual dietary needs.

The childminder works with an assistant who helps to maintain a supportive role in setting good examples, and helping children lead a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to both the first floor and the ground floor of the childminder's home. However, the first floor is restricted to those who are over five years or those who need access to the toilet and bathroom. At these times they have supervised access only. The ground floor consists of a through lounge, kitchen and conservatory which has been turned into a play room. There is ample space throughout to move around freely. Children have access to comfortable places to sit and rest. The floor is laminated, however rugs have been provided which offer them warmth while playing at floor level. There is access to natural light from both the front and the back of the house, the premises is centrally heated and kept at a comfortable level conducive to playing and learning. They feel welcomed by the childminder and her assistant who are warm and friendly and because they have a special place to play which is colourful and inviting.

An extensive range of toys and play equipment offers children choice and variety. The low storage of resources helps them build independent skills and allows them to choose for themselves which toys they wish to play with. Play equipment, nursery furniture and safety equipment are of good quality, age appropriate and well maintained ensuring that children's safety is considered.

Children are generally learning about staying safe, they are learning basic road safety skills while out with the childminder and the childminder reminds them to tidy toys on the floor throughout the day preventing tripping hazards. She conducts a risk assessment of her premises before children arrive and no physical hazards were identified. Fire safety precautions and

safety measures are in place to ensure the premises is safe. However, at times children lack appropriate supervision and this places them at risk.

The childminder demonstrates a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. She was aware of the different categories of abuse and their signs and symptoms, how she would record, when it is appropriate to discuss her concerns with parents and how to report her concerns. In the event of allegations made against a member of her household, her assistant or herself the childminder, clearly demonstrates how she would respond, which is in line with regulations. Additionally the childminder ensures she keeps herself up-to-date in current thinking by attending short courses and keeps a copy of guidelines for childminders issued by her local authority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children currently lack self esteem and confidence, this is because those who have been attending for some time are adjusting to new play mates and others are settling in. This is impacting on how the whole group respond to each other. Although the childminder is enthusiastic, the current group of children are challenging and at times she is unable to ensure their emotional needs are being met. During play there are periods of calmness and children are able to engage in well planned activities. All take part in creative activities playing parallel with each other and enjoying the mixture of colours when experimenting with paint. Babies enjoy the texture of paint between their fingers and with help all have an end product to take home. Opportunities to play freely allows them to explore the extensive range of play resources available. The squabbles over toys often interrupts play. However, the childminder helps them share and take turns and on some occasions they manage this quite well, enjoying building models from large bricks and engaging in games such as eye spy. The childminder incorporates children's home language into the setting, ensuring that they build vocabulary in both languages. Music, singing and story time, play an important part in listening and building skills in speaking and allowing them alternatives in expressing their thoughts and feelings.

The childminder records what children have been doing throughout the day, through recorded observations she is able to see children's progress and plan activities which extend their learning. Access to journals demonstrate to parents through written word, photographs and art work, the progress children are making. The childminder's assistant plays a supporting role in the care and well-being of children including supporting activities and play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are building a sense of self and learning about other lifestyles, cultures, disabilities and gender issues. They come from a variety of cultural backgrounds and this naturally helps them learn about how other's live. First languages spoken by them are acknowledged and affirmed and this helps them feel comfortable and build relationships. They celebrate special events such as birthdays and different cultural festivals in line with the cultures of children attending. Such as, Eid, Chinese New Year, Christmas and Easter. A variety of books, toys and play resources, help them to explore, question and consider stereotypical ideas, build empathy and recognise both differences and similarities of others.

The childminder has experience of working with children with learning difficulties, special needs and disabilities. She expresses a positive attitude to offering a stimulating and encouraging

environment to all children cared for. The childminder welcomes working with both parents and other professional bodies when supporting individual children and expresses her intention to make all reasonable adjustments to care arrangements to enable them to meet their full potential.

Young children appear unsettled after several weeks away from the childminder. One child is still in the process of settling and they are generally disgruntled. There are some signs of competitiveness for attention from the childminder and they are learning basic skills in how to relate to one another. Language is limited and they become frustrated quickly and sometimes squabble between themselves over favourite toys. The childminder mostly responds in a positive way, by offering them comfort when distressed. Sharing her attention and helping them to play together harmoniously. Some strategies are short sighted and do not take account of the emotional impact on children. When they are tired their ability to respond becomes limited and the lack of appropriate language can sometimes effect their feelings of security.

Children benefit because partnerships with parents are sound and relationships are positive. On initial contact both parties work hard to ensure that separation is sensitively handled and children settle. The sharing of information on individual children helps the childminder to cater her service to their needs. A contractual business agreement signed by both parties ensures there are clear boundaries. The childminder offers parents information about her service so that they can make informed choices about their child's care. This includes information on how to make a complaint which is in line with changes in legislation. Time is set aside each evening to discuss children's day and parents share journals on children which provides them with information on how well their child is doing. Written testimonials from parents demonstrate their happiness with the service.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by the childminder who has completed a basic course in childcare and maintains her knowledge by attending short courses provided by her local authority. She ensures that each member of her household and her assistant has been vetted by the Criminal Records Bureau. The division of roles between the assistant and the childminder, helps her to organise her service. Children are learning about how to keep healthy and generally how to stay safe. When settled they enjoy themselves while at the childminder's house, their achievements are acknowledged and affirmed. They are beginning to learn social skills such as how to manage their own behaviour and are finding out about others who are different to themselves which will help them contribute to their own community.

The childminder's record-keeping underpins her service. She demonstrates an appropriate understanding of privacy and confidentiality issues and provides a secure place to store confidential records.

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 agreed to offer children a range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti discriminatory practice. This has now been met. Children are now offered opportunities to help them to explore, question and consider stereotypical ideas, build empathy and recognise both differences and similarities of others.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- ensure activities are inclusive and provide opportunities for all children to develop self esteem
- ensure children are supervised at all times
- develop strategies for managing behaviour which takes account of children's emotional wellbeing

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