

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	137883
Inspection date	19 December 2007
Inspector	Judith Mary Scott
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 since October 1996. She works alongside her mother who is also a registered childminder within the mother's home. The co-childminder lives with her husband in a house in Raynes Park, London which is situated within walking distance of local transport links, a library, schools, a park and shops. All areas of the home are used for childminding with the exception of the downstairs office. The bedrooms on the first floor are used for children's rest. There is a fully enclosed garden but this is not suitable for children's play however the childminder takes children out daily.

The family have a dog, plus a tortoise that lives in a tank indoors.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of two children when working alone and a maximum of five children when working with another registered childminder. The childminders are currently caring for five children between them on a part time basis. The childminders are specialist childminders for the London Borough of Merton. Both childminders have the CACHE Level Three Certificate in Childminding Practice.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in welcoming and clean surroundings that offer a warm and friendly environment for them and their families. They experience good physical and emotional care and they are given plenty of affection, reassurance and attention. Children benefit from a structured but flexible routine and sleep in line with their requirements and parents' wishes. They are happy, comfortable and settled and they communicate with developing and early speech, smiles and pleasure sounds. Children experience plenty of positive interaction. They enjoy lots of cuddles and close contact with the childminder who consistently meets their needs.

Children's meals, drinks and snacks are provided by the childminders who are enrolled on the food register. The childminder has a good knowledge of nutrition and plans menus with the co-childminder with sample menus available to parents. They take turns to prepare and cook. Food supplied is healthy, homemade and varied and meets the children's dietary needs. Water is available at all times. Children also have milk and diluted juice and parents provide bottles when necessary. Children are introduced to new foods and meal times are regarded as occasions to promote good table manners, plus eating and social skills. Young children are encouraged to feed themselves and are given an extra spoon. Children's healthy eating is endorsed by the childminders in conjunction with parents through discussion, example, cooking activities and role play.

Children's health is well protected by the childminder's knowledge of health and safety, first aid, pet safety and general good hygiene practice. Young children are supervised when using the toilet and learn the importance of good personal care and independence through discussion and daily routines. They wash their hands regularly, before eating, after using the toilet and messy play and are learning to blow their nose and cover their mouth if they cough. Children use paper towels and have individual linen. The childminder supports children with toilet training and appropriate nappy changing arrangements are in place.

Children benefit from lots of physical activity and exercise to help them develop control of their bodies. As the garden is currently unsuitable for children's play, they are taken out regularly to an enclosed residents' playground and local parks. Children benefit from this with plenty of space for active play and the use of large equipment. They enjoy fresh air and opportunities to kick balls, walk, run, jump and climb with the childminder's support and encouragement. They also enjoy dancing, action rhymes and music indoors.

The children's individual needs are met and information is shared effectively with parents by the childminder maintaining records regarding accidents, incidents and medication. Various written parental consents are kept for each individual child, plus written policies regarding sick children, health, hygiene and mealtimes are available to parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from an organised and well arranged environment. They are safe and secure in these surroundings and can move freely around the sitting room, accessing toys and activities provided by the childminder easily. The childminder has taken effective measures to reduce potential hazards and is aware of the significance of good risk assessment. For example, children

practice the written evacuation procedure with the childminder, she regularly checks for damaged or unsafe play provision and equipment and also cleans and sterilises toys.

Children are well supervised and made aware of the importance of using toys and play equipment safely through explanation and discussion with the childminder. For example, children are gently reminded not to throw toys. They busy themselves helping the childminder put away the toys before lunch. They collect things from the floor and put them back into the large toy chest. Children are encouraged to build their confidence and extend their skills through play with the childminder's support such as going up the slide or jumping off apparatus.

Children are given clear boundaries and the childminder ensures they are safe on outings. Appropriate systems are in place and she supervises the children closely and takes a mobile and the relevant details. Various safety restraints such as wrist straps and fluorescent bands are used. She ensures they stay together and hold hands or on to the buggy. Children are made aware of the importance of road safety. They are asked to wait by the kerb, stop, look and listen and wait for the green signal. Children are allowed to walk, run and play within the childminder's sight in enclosed areas. Suitable seats and boosters are used in the car.

Children have access to a varied range of childcare equipment. There is a good variety of toys, books and play materials that are stored and presented effectively. Children can choose activities from the selection themselves. This includes creative materials, puzzles, soft toys, imaginary and role play, books, construction, musical instruments, sensory and tactile activities and inter-active toys. The childminder rotates supplies and monitors these to ensure they are suitable for children's ages and stages of development.

Children's welfare is paramount. They are safe and protected as the childminder has a sound understanding of child protection issues and procedures. She has child protection guidelines available for reference and is aware of her lines of communication, however, there is no confidential incident recording system in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy being with the childminder and interact warmly and affectionately. They are settled and happy and are offered recognition, acceptance and comfort. They relate well to adults and other children, this contributes to their sense of belonging. Children are friendly and curious and communicate with confidence. They are offered a range of varied activities that meet their needs with access to good, age appropriate play provision and equipment.

Children experience a flexible childminding routine. This includes free and structured play activities, outings, meals, naps and quiet times and takes into account children's individual ages and needs. They have regular trips out that include the nursery run, visiting friends and outings to local groups, parks and the common. These provide chances for children to socialise, use a variety of large equipment with more space to develop their physical skills and experience sand and water play. The childminder says they also like to take bats and balls and a new parachute game. Children explore the natural world of insects, animals and nature. They enjoy feeding the ducks, having picnics and collecting things that interest them such as leaves and conkers. Children also have trips further afield to farms, zoos and the seaside providing further opportunities to experience different sights and sounds in the outside world. Children also go to the library for story time and learn to sit, listen and concentrate.

Children play with suitable and age appropriate toys and are interested and involved. They confidently select toys from available supplies. Children explore their environment and make connections through their senses and movement. They have fun with sensory and tactile stimulation, interacting with activity centres that flash lights and make noises. They explore toy animals that have different textures and sounds and experiment with musical instruments and electronic books. Children enjoy play and reward toys, for example, pushing different shape knobs in a variety of ways to make animals pop up. They demonstrate good eye and hand co-ordination pulling construction pieces apart to make a popping noise. They show concentration and perseverance posting pieces correctly into a shape sorter and smile broadly when praised for their efforts. Children show interest in how things work and are familiar with programmable toys such as telephones and a money till. Children are fascinated with an alarm clock, saying "tick, tock" and looking around to point out other clocks and watches. Children participate in early imaginary and role play with cars and play people and make pretend drinks.

Children participate in a good variety of stimulating play activities that contribute to their enjoyment and learning on a weekly basis. This includes creative play such as painting, sticking, bubbles, drawing, colouring, dough and some cooking activities. They experience free play, mark making, books and stories, construction, puzzles, imaginary and role play, matching and recognition games, stories and music. Children are introduced to numbers, letters, colours, shapes and sounds using a variety of ways during everyday play. They are encouraged to develop their speech and communication skills by the childminder by talking, listening, singing, rhymes and repetition. Children join in with enthusiasm to "Twinkle, twinkle" and "You are my sunshine", repeating the refrains. The childminder uses plenty of discussion and actions with open questions to extend children's imagination and introduction of new words.

Children receive support to develop their independence, confidence and ability to make choices, for example, choosing toys and putting on their coats and shoes. Children experience a warm, consistent standard of care from the childminder who has a good understanding of their needs. She is aware of children's stages of development and what she can do to encourage their progress. The childminder is aware of the Birth to three matters framework and intends to attend training to promote young children's learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children experience flexible settling in arrangements that are tailored to suit individual families' requirements with introductory sessions. Children's personal needs and routines are identified through discussion with parents who are offered support and reassurance. The childminder gets to know children well and communicates with parents regularly regarding their care and progress. Effective written documentation is in place and parents exchange phone numbers and give each other verbal references. They are very happy with the quality of care provided and to express their appreciation they took both childminders out for a Christmas meal. Children are valued as individuals and benefit from the positive partnerships that the childminder has developed with parents. The childminders are giving a Christmas party for all their current and previously minded children.

Children are given realistic boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, plus clear expectations in the form of house rules, for example, good manners, being nice to one another, playing co-operatively. Children are encouraged to learn to share, take turns and help to tidy up. They behave very well and respond to the childminder's requests and guidance. Children benefit from the childminder's appropriate, consistent behaviour management strategies carried

out in conjunction with parents. Desired behaviour is promoted by talking, explaining, use of anticipation and distraction and supervised time out if necessary. Praise and positive language are found effective.

Children are treated as individuals and with equal concern. They are encouraged to behave with respect and kindness towards others. They have access to the full range of activities offered which includes a selection of some resources that promote a positive view of the wider community and increase their understanding of diversity. This does not include disability. Children are introduced to a variety of food and music and celebrate different festivals. The childminder displays positive attitudes towards children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminders work well together as a team. Children experience a range of varied activities that meet their needs and space and resources are well utilised to encourage their confidence and independence. Children benefit from a flexible childminding routine that caters for their individual ages and requirements. They are well supported so they can enjoy and achieve in a child friendly home with good, age appropriate play provision and equipment.

The childminder keeps the required records that contribute to children's health, safety and well being. The attendance register is completed accurately on a daily basis. However, there is no complaints record log and no confidential incident record system in place. The childminder shares information regularly with parents to keep them well informed about the care that is provided. This includes children's nappy changes, food and drink intake, general well being, sleep patterns, activities and their achievements. Parents also have access to written policies and procedures. The childminder displays positive attitudes towards training and implementing additional documentation to promote further good practice. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Three recommendations were made at the last inspection which have been addressed by the childminders. Standards for children's health and safety have improved as the childminders have

ensured accident/incident/medication records are maintained in more detail with both parents' and childminders' signatures and the first aid box contents are kept well stocked. They have obtained child protection guidelines information and improved the detail of written agreements with all parents.

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):

- ensure that suitable systems are in place for recording complaints, in line with regulatory requirements and implement a confidential incident record
- increase the range of resources that promote a positive view of the wider community and increases children's understanding of diversity

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