

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 138081
Inspection date 17 January 2008
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 1997. She lives with her husband and two children aged 13 and 11 years. They live in a four bed roomed house in Wimbledon Park, London close to transport links, local shops, parks and schools. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. This includes a sitting room that is used for rest and quiet activities and a kitchen/diner/play room for meals and play activities. Younger children are supervised when using the bathroom and toilet facilities on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The family keep goldfish.

The childminder is registered to care for four children at any one time. She is currently caring for a child aged two years, a child aged three years who attends nursery in the afternoons, a child aged four who attends nursery in the mornings and a child aged 16 months, all on a part time basis. In addition she cares for siblings aged five and eight years after school and occasional school holidays.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and friendly home that is warm and clean. They experience good physical and emotional care, with lots of affection, attention and reassurance. Their needs are met consistently with plenty of positive interaction with the childminder who soothes and comforts them when necessary. Children benefit from a structured but flexible routine and they sleep in line with their own requirements and parents' wishes.

Children's meals and snacks are provided by the childminder. Food supplied is balanced, healthy and varied. This includes two home made main meals, both at lunch time and for after school children, and meets their dietary needs. Children enjoy picnics in the summer with sandwiches, salad and dips. Parents supply ready made bottles where necessary and water is available at all times. Sample menus are available and the childminder has mealtime and healthy eating policies. The latter is promoted in conjunction with parents through discussion, example, role play and cold cooking activities. For instance, children like to make their own sandwiches and wraps and select their own fillings. Children and the childminder sit together at mealtimes and learn to eat independently. These occasions are regarded as an opportunity for discussion and children are also often introduced to new tastes and textures such as fresh pineapple.

Children's health is well protected by the childminder's knowledge of health and safety, first aid and general good hygiene practice. Young children are supervised when using the bathroom and learn the importance of personal care and independence through discussion and daily routines. Appropriate nappy changing arrangements are in place. Children's toilet training is supported by the childminder together with parents. Potties, trainer seats and steps are used to assist this process. Children wash their hands regularly, before and after eating, after using the toilet and messy play. They have individual flannels which are washed daily. The childminder encourages the use of tissues for runny noses and teaches children to cover their mouth when they cough.

Children benefit from plenty of opportunities to be physically active and help them develop control of their bodies. The garden is not used a great deal for outdoor play apart from some growing activities such as planting and looking after herbs in the summer. Children have regular trips to parks, groups and soft play centres where they benefit from fresh air and exercise. They have opportunities to walk, jump, climb, run around with the childminder's support and encouragement to develop their physical skills. Children like to play in the sand pit and use the fixed equipment. They take balls to kick and throw and kites to fly. Children also enjoy dancing, singing, action rhymes and music, both indoors and at music and movement sessions. Their particular favourite is 'sleepy starfish' with relaxing and breathing exercises.

The children's individual needs are met and information shared effectively with parents by the childminder maintaining records regarding accidents, incidents and medication. A full list of written parental consents is kept for each individual child. However, only verbal permission has been obtained from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and one emergency contact number is outstanding.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from an organised and well arranged home. Children are safe and secure in this environment and they can move freely around the ground floor, easily accessing toys and activities provided by the childminder. The childminder has taken suitable measures to reduce potential hazards and she is aware of the importance of good risk assessment. For example, safety gates are in place and hazardous items and medication are stored out of reach or in a locked low level unit. However, the existing stair carpet is worn and presents a tripping hazard. A written emergency evacuation procedure is in place that is practised with the children. Children are encouraged to respect toys and equipment and use them safely. They are supervised and made aware of this through demonstration and explanation with the childminder. Regular tidy ups take place to prevent accidents. Children build their confidence and extend their skills through play with the childminder's encouragement. For instance, she offers support and assistance when children use the climbing nets and bars in the park and makes sure they are safe and enjoy their achievements.

Children's safety on outings, both on foot and in the car, is ensured by the childminder who gives them clear boundaries. Appropriate systems are in place. She takes a mobile and the children's details and they are supervised closely. Suitable car seats and safety restraints are used and children are entertained by music or conversation. Children hold hands or onto the buggy and an emphasis is placed on staying together. They are asked to stop, look and listen to make them aware of road safety. Children have opportunities to walk and run around freely in controlled, enclosed spaces in sight of the childminder.

Children have access to a broad range of childcare equipment. There is a good varied selection of toys, books and play materials that are stored and presented effectively in boxes and drawers. This includes a variety of creative materials, puzzles, imaginary and role play, books, construction, dolls, musical instruments, games and inter-active toys. Supplies are rotated regularly and children can choose toys and activities freely. The childminder monitors and ensures these are suitable for their ages and stages of development.

Children's welfare is paramount and they are safe and protected as the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and procedures. She has had training and appropriate documentation is in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are generally happy and settled and their needs are met well. Children receive recognition and comfort. They interact positively with the childminder and communicate with early developing speech. They participate in a range of varied activities with access to good, age appropriate play provision and equipment.

Children experience a flexible but structured childminding routine. They have regular trips to a childminders' drop-in, local groups, soft play centres, music sessions, parks, shops and visiting friends. They benefit from this with opportunities to interact with other children and develop their speech and social skills. Children experience different sights and sounds and explore a variety of play provision and equipment. They learn to share and make choices. They enjoy music and movement sessions. Children experiment with musical instruments and a variety of sounds and like to move their bodies in lots of ways to different rhythms. Children investigate

the natural world of insects, animals and nature. They like to take picnics to the park, feed the ducks and collect leaves, conkers and pine cones. These are used in craft activities when they bring them back to the childminder's home.

Children participate in a variety of play activities on a weekly basis that contribute to their enjoyment and enable them to learn through play, many of which are child led. Children enjoy creative activities linked to topics. This is currently 'Fairytale' and is being done in conjunction with the local primary school and the pantomime season. Children borrow specific stories from the library once a week. They like to look at books together with the childminder and handle them appropriately and with care. They identify characters and respond to questions. Children all contribute individually and make a collage for the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' which involves painting, cutting, sticking and mark making. Children experience activities that meet their needs and enable them to explore their environment. They show concentration and perseverance with eye and hand co-ordination when fitting together puzzle pieces and using programmable toys. They engage in imaginary and role play with dressing up clothes, dolls, puppets and home corner toys. Children have opportunities to explore and use their senses to experiment and express themselves whilst being cared for by the childminder and attending various groups. They experiment with different textures and substances such as paint, dough, corn flour, bubbles, sand, water and printing. Older children like to relax, eat and watch television after school. They enjoy craft activities, role play and board games.

Children are encouraged to talk and express themselves by the childminder with plenty of discussion to extend their imagination and share their ideas. This also involves use of new vocabulary, plus positional and descriptive language. Colours, shapes, sounds, letters and numbers are introduced in a variety of ways using posters, rhymes, repetition and songs. Children use idea cards that encourage letter formation and pencil control. They enjoy matching, recognition, sound and writing games.

Children's independence, confidence and ability to make choices is promoted by the childminder. For example, they pour their own drinks, make choices about toys and books and learn to put on their coats and shoes. Children experience a warm, consistent standard of care from the childminder who has a good awareness of their needs and development. The childminder utilises the Birth to three matters framework and is developing observations and written activity planning. She intends to attend training to promote young children's learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from appropriate settling in arrangements that are adapted to suit different families' specific requirements. This involves introductory sessions and joint visits to groups used by the childminder. Children's routines and needs are discussed with parents so the childminder can get to know them well. She respects parents' wishes and offers support and reassurance. Children are valued as individuals and the childminder communicates with parents regularly regarding their care and progress. Her observations and photos are available to parents. Children gain from the positive partnerships that the childminder has developed with parents who indicate they are very pleased with the quality of care that is provided.

Children are set clear limits of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, plus expectations, in the form of house rules. For example, respecting other people, eating and drinking at the table, being nice to one another. They are encouraged to share, take turns and play together co-operatively. Children benefit from the childminder's appropriate, consistent behaviour

management strategies such as anticipation, distraction, redirection, talking, explaining and supervised time out to calm down if necessary. Praise, positive language and reward sticker charts are found effective and used to promote desired behaviour.

Children have access to the full range of activities offered. The importance of positive images, attitudes and role models is understood and children benefit from a selection of resources that promote a positive view of the wider community and increase their understanding of diversity. Children also experience different festival celebrations such as Divali, Chinese New Year and Christmas at groups and have opportunities to hear a range of music and taste different food from around the world. Children are treated as individuals and with equal concern. They are encouraged to respect and value others and the environment. The childminder displays positive attitudes towards children with learning difficulties and disabilities and aims to be proactive and inclusive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and child friendly environment. They play, eat and rest comfortably as the childminder has arranged space and resources within the home to meet their needs and encourage their confidence and independence. Daily verbal information is exchanged regarding children's food and drink intake, sleep patterns, nappy changing, activities, outings and general well being. This is done in writing for children under one year in the form of a home diary which can be continued if parents wish. Children benefit from a flexible childminding routine that includes indoor and outdoor play activities, outings, the school run, meals, naps and quiet times and takes into account their individual ages and needs.

The childminder keeps the required records that contribute to children's health, safety and well being. She is aware of the complaints regulation process, however, there is no complaints record system in place. The childminder displays positive attitudes towards attending future training and amending 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

Standards for children's health and safety have improved as the childminder now maintains smoke alarms throughout the home and a copy of her first aid certificate is available. Record keeping has also improved and written agreements with parents are maintained with relevant details, plus children's full details on the attendance register. However, permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment is still verbal only and this is to be addressed immediately.

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 the stairs are made safe
- ensure that suitable systems are in place for recording complaints, in line with regulatory requirements and written permission is obtained from all parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment

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