

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	140318
Inspection date	31 March 2008
Inspector	Maggie Thorp

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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1993. She lives, with her two school aged foster children, in a two bedroom maisonette in Wood Green in the London borough of Haringey. The areas of the premises available to minded children consist of the living room, kitchen/diner, toilet and bathroom. Children also play in the childminder's garden.

The childminder may care for a maximum of six children under eight at any one time and currently she has four children on roll under eight, which include two that are over five and two that are under five years. Children over eight also attend. Occasionally the childminder works with her daughter who assists her. The childminder is available to take and collect children from Nightingale primary school.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. The family do not have any pets

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is protected by the childminder's sound practice in regard to preventing the spread of infection. Her home is sufficiently clean, children have separate bedding for naps, and they use paper towels and have separate flannels in the bathroom. In addition, they are learning how to keep themselves healthy. Children stand on a stool and enjoy washing their own hands before meals. They are learning to use the bathroom independently and to wear appropriate shoes for outdoor play. Sometimes they sing a song together about all the things they can do to keep themselves clean.

Safeguards are in place to meet children's needs when they need medicine, first aid, have accidents or feel ill. The childminder has maintained an up to date first aid qualification and has a first aid box to hand. She records any medicines administered or accidents and asks parents to sign these records to ensure they are well informed. The contract parents are given explains how children with infections may not attend.

Children eat well and enjoy healthy snacks of fresh fruit. The childminder makes a note of children's dietary needs and has researched what diets are acceptable for different cultures and faiths. Children sit together around low tables for lunch which is provided by the children's parents. Drinks are offered at snack and lunch times and when children ask. However, drinking water is not placed within children's reach throughout the day to enable children to drink whenever they are thirsty.

Children are gaining new physical skills as they play with the wide selection of puzzles, construction toys and art resources. They take part in lively songs and games to music in the childminder's living room. However, they have few regular opportunities for exercise and to run and climb and use wheeled toys outside, except in the summer months. They infrequently use the childminder's garden and local parks. This does not help children refine and develop these skills and to enjoy outdoor play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are not sufficiently well protected from hazards to ensure their safety. The garden is not safe. There is broken play equipment that children can access and hurt themselves when using. A wall is falling down and is unsafe for children to play around. The garden is not secure, children can get into a neighbour's garden where there are hazards such as a motor bike propped up which could fall on children. The gaps in the garden fence also mean that the childminder cannot control who enters the garden and has access to children.

There are weaknesses in the childminder's knowledge and understanding of the local guidance regarding safeguarding children and how to recognise and follow up possible signs of abuse. This means children are not fully protected.

Indoors children play safely. Low cupboards have opening restrictors, electrical wires are tucked away and adequate fire safety precautions are in place. When out in the street children are taught road safety. However, the childminder has not thoroughly checked whether the car seats she uses are appropriate for the size of the different children that travel in her car.

Children have ample space for play indoors in the spacious lounge. In addition, they enjoy using the kitchen for messy activities like painting, sand and water play and for meals. The childminder has a very wide range of play materials for the different aged children she cares for. Sofas and rest mats provide younger children with comfortable places to sleep and children that are not resting can play in a separate room so others can sleep undisturbed. Children go upstairs to use the bathroom and toilet and younger children are well supervised as they use these facilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the many play opportunities the childminder provides. They use the pretend play resources with much enthusiasm. The play kitchen has lots of additional resources that stimulate children's imagination. They cook meals for adults and each other and discuss what each person wants and what drinks to make for them. The utensils are realistic and pretend food aids children in their play. Children also have lots of dressing up clothes, hats and shoes. They act as characters from familiar stories like Snow White, dress in African and Asian outfits or become police officers.

Children engage in some interesting planned activities to foster their creativity. They use paint in a variety of ways for printing, finger painting and making foot prints. The childminder lets children mix sand with paint and make textured pictures. In addition, children explore lots of natural materials and enjoy the rich sensory experiences these provide. They pour dry sand from one container to another and feel it trickle through their fingers. Then they add water and discover how differently the sand feels and acts. They squeeze, roll and cut up dough and incorporate this into their imaginative play.

Play materials are stored in low level drawers around the edge of the two rooms they use. Children can access these easily. However, sometimes children get frustrated and can not develop their play because they cannot engage in free flow play between the two adjacent rooms. This is because children are only allowed to use one room at a time and only two or three types of play are allowed out at once. If one child wants to use the pretend play in the living room, the children have tidy up then all move into the other room.

Children are learning to express themselves well. They chat throughout the day with the childminder and each other. They learn new words and expressions as the childminder describes what they are doing and what they are going to do. Children enjoy listening to stories. They bring the childminder books and she reads to them and encourages them to ask questions and discuss what is happening in stories. When children all talk at the same time she helps them take turns and to listen to each other's ideas.

Older children have a wide selection of games and books suitable for their age. In addition during school holidays children are taken on interesting outings for example, to the zoo.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

The systems the childminder has in place to build a partnership with parents are not fully effective in ensuring that parents' wishes are known and respected. Parents are informed about the activities and practice of the childminder verbally but all the appropriate written consent is not obtained from parents for example, for children to travel in the childminder's car. On the

occasions the childminder's assistant is left in sole charge of children parents are asked to give verbal but not their written consent. This is a condition of the childminder's registration.

Children are content and settled in the care of the childminder. The childminder knows them and their families well. Children are learning to value their own and each other's backgrounds through the wide range of toys and books they play with. In addition, children sometimes visit a local nursery with the childminder and take part in cultural celebrations.

Children generally relate well to the childminder and each other. She has realistic expectations of children's behaviour for their age and such issues as difficulties very young children have in sharing are managed well. They are helped to take turns, and they are not expected to share valued possessions they have brought from home unless they want to. Children who are not behaving well are given simple explanations of why an action is not safe or kind. If this behaviour persists children are asked to sit apart from the other children for a brief period. Children are given lots of praise for good behaviour and are helped to learn simple good manners for example, by gentle reminders to say please and thank you.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

There are weaknesses in the childminder's record keeping that result in regulations not being kept and therefore in children's well being not being fully protected. A record of children's attendance is not maintained. This is a regulation. The names of those caring for children are not recorded. This is a regulation. Moreover, the conditions of the childminder's registration are not fully adhered to in relation to obtaining parents' written consent.

Children have good relationships with the childminder who provides a healthy environment with lots of stimulating play materials for them to enjoy. However, she is not sufficiently alert to potential hazards to ensure children are kept safe, especially outdoors. In addition, her knowledge and understanding of the signs of and procedures to follow regarding child protection does not fully safeguard children. The childminder does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the childminder's last inspection the recommendation made to maintain written records of children's attendance and accident records, including parents' signatures on accident records, has not been effectively followed to fully ensure children's well being. Accidents have been recorded and parents have signed these records but the attendance register has not kept up to date. This is a regulation.

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

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The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- assess the risks to children in relation to the garden and travel by car and take action to minimise these
- ensure that all records relating to childminding activities are readily accessible and available for inspection at all times
- ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- keep accurate records of children's attendance and those caring for them, including the hours they are present

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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