

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	159643
Inspection date	12 December 2007
Inspector	Sarer Marcia Tarling
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 outstanding. 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 August 2001. She lives with her husband and three children aged eleven, eight and two years. They live in a house situated in Slade Green, which is within walking distance of public transport, local schools, shops, parks and community resources. The whole of the property is suitable for childminding, the bathroom is situated on the first floor and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have some pet hamsters.

The childminder is a member of the Bexley Childminding Network and works closely with the local authority. The childminder is registered to care for up to five children under eight and currently has four children under eight on roll. The childminder also provides care for children over the age of eight and currently has two children on roll.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from many opportunities to be in the fresh air and exercise as the childminder encourages them to take part in a wide variety of indoor, and outdoor, physical activities which contribute to their good health. For example, they enjoy racing on the scooters and bicycles and playing hoop and ball games in the garden. Children have the opportunity to explore a wide range of equipment at local parks, a gym and soft play centre, this encourages them to develop their co-ordination and physical skills. The daily routine ensures there is a good balance of active and quiet times. As a result, children are developing a very positive attitude towards exercise. Children are able to rest comfortably when they are tired, fresh linen is provided and babies individual sleep patterns are followed.

Children are cared for in a well organised, clean and child friendly home. The childminder has highly effective cleaning routines in place. For example, the kitchen, bathroom and eating areas are kept meticulously clean and the childminder vacuums regularly. As a result children can comfortably relax and play on the floor as the carpets are clean. All play resources and nursery furniture are closely monitored for their suitability and cleanliness.

The childminder takes positive steps to protect children's health and prevent the spread of infection. For example, the stringent nappy changing routines protect children from cross infection. The changing mat is wiped before and after each use and the childminder wears disposable gloves. She ensures children have privacy whilst they are cleaned thoroughly and soiled nappies disposed of hygienically. Children are reminded to cover their mouth whilst coughing or sneezing and to throw their dirty tissues in the bin. Older children are able to be independent in their personal care as the childminder provides a child-size toilet seat and step stool so they can easily reach to wash their hands. To help prevent cross infection each child has their own flannel and towel kept on a clearly labelled rail. There is a policy in place which asks parents to provide appropriate clothing and sun cream, in order that children may be comfortable and be protected in all weather conditions.

The childminder ensures her paediatric first aid certificate is up-to-date and that the first aid boxes in the home and for outings are well stocked. The childminder has a policy for sick children which requests that parents keep their children at home if they are contagious. However, should a child become unwell, or have an accident when with the childminder, they benefit from her warm and caring approach. In addition, she ensures children have good continuity of care by keeping clear and detailed accident and medication records which are routinely shared with parents. These practices ensure that children's health is protected.

Children's individual dietary needs are well met and any special diets and/or cultural needs catered for as the childminder ensures she fully discusses specific needs with parents and keeps accurate records. Babies benefit as the childminder works closely with parents to ensure individual feeding routines are followed. Babies are cuddled whilst being bottle fed which helps them to feel secure. If parents provide bottles and/or food the childminder stores it correctly and heats it up safely. During the day children are offered water, or very diluted sugar free juice, to drink. Older children delight in writing out the daily menu and ticking off each others' orders. Children relish the opportunity to choose from the range of fresh fruit on offer at snack time and especially enjoy strawberries, melon and blackberries. Children enjoy a simple nutritious lunch and after school have a hot, well balanced meal, which includes a selection of dishes from

around the world. For example, shepherds pie, chicken, rice and vegetables, traditional roasts, fish and pasta dishes with a sauce and grated cheese. Mealtimes are a chatty sociable occasion as the childminder uses the opportunity to find out how the children's day has gone and talks to them about the benefits of a healthy diet. The childminder has fulfilled her obligation to register as a food business with the local Environmental Health Department and ensures all food is stored, prepared and cooked in line with recommended guidelines. As a result of this children benefit as the childminder has highly effective procedures and practices which meet their physical, health and nutritional needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The conservatory is an extremely welcoming and well presented play room. An excellent range of carefully chosen, good quality toys and resources are available. All play resources are displayed on low shelving or stored in clear, labelled, low level boxes. As a result all children can easily see and independently select their own toys and activities. Children are able to freely explore and play in a secure and safe environment. The childminder is extremely vigilant as she conducts a daily safety check which ensures any potential hazards are removed or minimised. For example, safety gates prevent unsupervised access to the kitchen and stairs, electric sockets are covered, any potentially hazardous items in the bathroom and kitchen have been made inaccessible and the garden is secure. The childminder is careful to ensure that children only play with high quality toys which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, toy boxes can be set out in the living room or conservatory/playroom to ensure babies do not get hold of small parts. The play areas are uncluttered and very well organised which helps children to be able to move around safely and to show an awareness of the needs of others. For example, child height coat hooks enable children to hang up their belongings when they get in from school and prevent someone tripping in the hallway.

The childminder has recently updated her awareness of fire safety by attending a course. She ensures a fire blanket is in position and all smoke detectors are in working order. The childminder regularly discusses different types of emergency situations with the children and a child friendly fire safety poster is displayed in the hallway. The childminder has carefully considered her emergency evacuation procedure and regularly practises this with the children. Accurate records are maintained which help the childminder monitor and ensure that all children have an opportunity to practise the procedure.

Children are learning the importance of simple rules to help keep them safe. For example, during outings young children wear safety wrist straps, or reins, and know to hold the childminder's hand. The childminder talks to the children about the dangers of wandering off and talking to strangers. Children practise their road safety skills on the school run and on journeys in the car, children know they must always sit in a car safety seat and wear their seatbelt. The childminder has a policy which clarifies her responsibilities in the situation where a secondary school age child travels home by bus. Children know they must ask permission to use the computer and the childminder ensures she closely supervises the use of the internet.

The childminder has a very secure knowledge of the procedures she must follow in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures should she have a concern about the welfare of a child in her care. She demonstrates an excellent awareness of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and/or neglect. In order to ensure that she is aware of current best practise and local procedures she attends training provided by the local authority. The childminder's emergency procedures ensure children are only ever left with people who have been vetted

and are suitable and all visitors are asked to sign a record book. The childminder has a collection policy and asks for a pre-arranged secure password before letting someone unfamiliar collect a child. As a result children are safeguarded and protected from potential harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children have formed very close and caring relationships with the childminder and each other. She skilfully uses her knowledge of the Birth to three matters and Foundation Stage frameworks to support children. An effective settling in procedure ensures she takes time to talk and listen carefully to the children in order that she can plan activities which present them with appropriate challenge. As a result the childminder is kind and sensitive to their individual needs. This helps increase their sense of trust and helps them to develop a strong sense of self. Routines are based around the needs of the children with an excellent balance between child and adult-led activities.

School age children are well supported as when they are collected from school they are encouraged to complete any homework and to practise their spellings and times tables. Older children are able to keep abreast of current issues by reading the children's newspaper 'First News'. They like helping to prepare the evening meal and playing board games together such as, 'Junior Monopoly' and 'Guess Who?'. Children are extremely creative as they have daily opportunities to take part in craft activities. Recently children have been busy making decorations for Christmas such as, making crackers, decorating baubles, designing and colouring boxes. All children have their own drawer where they can keep any art work or their belongings safe. Older children like to create pictures with 'Hama Beads' and feel a real sense of achievement as the childminder routinely praises their efforts.

Children love their time in the garden, building dens with sheets, pushing dolls in prams, having picnics and in the play house. As well as visiting music groups and local places of interest, such as Greenwich park and the Cutty Sark, the children have enjoyed exciting journeys on a train to visit the Aquarium and taken a trip on the London Eye. As a result children are confident, sociable and friendly.

Young children readily select books from the extensive range and the childminder encourages them to take an active part in the story. She asks them questions about the book and they carefully study the pictures to find the answers. Whilst children build with Lego the childminder talks about the design, colours and helps them with their counting skills. Children greatly enjoy their time with the childminder as she routinely joins in with their play and encourages them to use their imaginations as they build up the train track, play with the pirate ship, animal hospital and 'Sylvanian Family' characters. Babies explore the wide range of stacking pots, shape sorters and electronic activity centres. They laugh excitedly as they carefully place balls in a toy and wait for them to 'pop out' at them. Young children feel safe and secure as they enjoy cuddles with the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has high expectations of children's behaviour and her patient manner sets children a good example. Children are extremely well behaved. They are polite, friendly and well mannered and are able to play together well. Young children are learning how to share and take turns and all children are clear of the house rules which help keep them safe. The

childminder has attended a behaviour management course and uses highly effective methods to promote good behaviour. For example, children play a social skills board game which teaches them about empathy, morals and emotions and she makes good use of reward charts. A poster about bullying is displayed and the childminder ensures she discusses this topic with older children in order that they can protect themselves.

Children learn to value and respect each other because the childminder values each child as an individual. Children gain a balanced picture of the world as they play with a wide range of books and toys which reflect the wider community. The childminder uses 'A Trip Around The World' calendar which details interesting facts about different countries, its culture and religion, flags, recipes and some key words. This has encouraged the children to take part in activities such as African mask making, decorating a Russian egg and making stained glass windows. Children have the opportunity to play with good quality resources which depict positive images of disability such as, the 'Happy Land Hospital', puzzles, books and they particularly enjoy joining in with the signing programme 'Mr Tumble'.

There are excellent arrangements in place to ensure effective partnerships with parents. For example, the childminder has written agreements and consent forms detailing all arrangements and records are routinely shared with parents. The childminder displays relevant information for parents on a notice board in the hallway. In addition, time is spent each day talking to parents about children's individual needs and their day with her. The use of contact books further enhances this partnership and helps to ensure children have good continuity of care. Comments from parents are extremely positive and glowing in their praise. In particular they commend the childminder's fantastic influence and say she is extremely communicative and competent. Another parent praises the happy atmosphere, fun activities and says they have total confidence in her abilities.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides care. She has a highly professional approach and is a member of the National Childminding Association, attends childminding conferences and undertakes additional training on a regular basis. This extends her knowledge and underpins her work as a childminder. For example, the Diploma in Home Based Childcare Level Three, the Early Years Foundation Stage, policy writing and Autism ensures she has a sound knowledge and understanding of the different ages and stages of child development and helps her to plan activities and to ensure children's needs are well met. The childminder is a Network Childminder who works closely with her local authority to support children and their families.

The childminder organises her time well. She plans and prepares meals and activities in advance, in order that she may spend time playing with the children. The home and garden are set out to maximise opportunities for children and as a consequence children are developing their independence and own interests. The well organised routines help children feel confident and settled as they are cared for in a safe, stimulating and loving environment.

The childminder demonstrates an excellent understanding of the requirements of the National Standards and all regulatory documentation for the safe and efficient management of the childminding setting is in place and maintained to a high standard. The childminder complies with her certificate of registration as adult to child ratios are adhered to and the attendance register consolidates this. The registration certificate is also displayed, in line with regulations.

Record keeping is very well organised and is easily accessible whilst maintaining confidentiality in all areas as each child has a separate confidential file. The clear and informative policies and procedures provide valuable information for parents and effectively supports children's health, safety and well-being. These are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they are in line with current legislation, regulations and guidance. For example, the complaints procedure and safeguarding children policy.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection the childminder has ensured all low-level glass in internal doors is safe or inaccessible.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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