

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	160061
Inspection date	25 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 has been registered since 1994.

She is registered to provide care for five children under eight years; of these, not more than three may be under five years, and of these, not more than one may be under one year. At present the childminder cares for three children, under five years.

She lives with her husband and two children aged 16 and 18 yrs old. Their house is situated in a residential area close to local amenities including shops, a station, parks and a library. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a large outdoor area for play to the side of the property. The childminder takes and collects children from the local schools, visits local toddler groups and the park.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning to lead healthy lifestyles. They have lots of opportunities to build healthy muscles because they have access to a covered outside play area where they play with ride along trikes and see saws. Frequent walks to take and collect children from schools and visits to the park offer additional exercise. The play room offers ample space to move around safely and children's play is often active. They are learning about personal hygiene and use a combination of wet wipes and hand washing experiences. Very young babies are still in nappies, while older toddlers are learning important skills in independence and while they still need support in the toilets they are growing in confidence. The childminder ensures that her cleaning routines provide a clean and well organised environment for children to play in. Toys and play resources are washed weekly.

In the event that children become sick or have an accident, the childminder acts appropriately to ensure their comfort and parents are kept informed. There is an emergency procedure in place should children need to have immediate medical attention. Although the childminder's first aid certificate has expired, she is due to attend a refresher course within the next few weeks.

Children are offered drinks throughout the day, which helps them to stay hydrated. Although the childminder does not provide food for children she demonstrates a competent knowledge and understanding of nutrition and a balanced diet. She is confident enough to share any concerns with parents regarding children's diets and offers parents advice on healthy eating. Although the childminder collects information on children's special dietary needs, this has not been recorded and therefore children's health is not sufficiently protected.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a large play space which has been well organised to ensure that they have maximum space to move around. There are comfortable places to sit and rest or they can choose to be more active. Although the floor is wooden the childminder has provided children with rugs so that when playing at floor level they are comfortable. They have access to the whole of the ground floor, the main play room is lit by natural light from the patio windows and this is enhanced with overhead lighting. Windows can be opened to allow ventilation. The premises are centrally heated which can be regulated to ensure that the environment is conducive to playing and learning. The toilet is situated on the ground floor and this allows easy access for those children who are learning new skills. The garden is accessed through the kitchen. Children have a sectioned area of the garden. This part has been covered and allows them an outside area all year round. In addition they have supervised access to the rest of the garden where they can enjoy feeding the fish at the fish pond.

Children have access to a wide variety of age appropriate and good quality toys, nursery furniture and safety equipment to encourage independence and safe play. They are learning about how to keep themselves safe through verbal reminders and posters and know not to go near the cooker or hot cups of drinks. They are learning basic road skills such as holding hands. Although the premises are risk assessed recent decorating work has meant that smoke alarms have been removed and not re-installed, this compromises children's safety. However, the childminder

ensures that all hazardous materials have been stored securely and uses safety equipment to prevent access to some parts of the house.

The childminder demonstrates a sound understanding of child protection issues. Although she is familiar with the different categories of abuse, she lacked confidence in how to recognise signs and symptoms, how to report her concerns and what happens when allegations are made against members of her household. Consequently children are not sufficiently safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are building confidence and self esteem because they are familiar with the childminder's home, and children's individual routines are taken account of. They know where to find toys and play equipment which they help themselves to and are becoming more independent in self help skills. There is language all around them, conversations are on going and they are becoming increasingly confident in expressing feelings and thoughts verbally. They are beginning to concentrate on tasks for short periods of time and enjoy activities such as peg puzzles and shape sorters and are learning their colours, about shapes and numbers. This helps them build pre-school mathematical skills. Children's creative development is encouraged, they have opportunities to explore colour through painting activities, they enjoy dressing up and playing with role play equipment and equally enjoy the small world equipment. Children's social development is encouraged through attendance to community groups. A plan of the daily routine is available which provides parents with information about how the day is structured to ensure that children are offered free play and more formal play, quiet and more active times.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning about themselves and also about others' lifestyles, cultures and religions. This is because they come from a variety of different cultural back grounds and they have access to community groups which provides them with valuable experiences of others who are different to themselves. The childminder demonstrates a competent understanding on equality issues and ensures that all have equal access to play opportunities regardless of their sex or ability with the exception of inappropriate play equipment for younger children. They have been provided with a wide variety of interesting and well planned play equipment which help them to explore and question issues which arise and interest them. This helps them build awareness of others as individuals who have thoughts and feelings.

Although the childminder does not currently care for any children with special needs or identified disabilities, she demonstrated a competent understanding of the issues involved. She is committed to working with parents and other professionals in order to ensure that children's individual needs are met and that no child will be disadvantaged in any way. The childminder takes account of impact issues on existing children and the accessibility of her premises. However, the use of planned pre visits help her to assess before committing to a care arrangement. She makes all reasonable adjustments to care arrangements to ensure they meet their full potential.

Children are learning to manage their own behaviour and this influences the behaviour of others. Play is a positive experience for them because they receive high levels of adult attention and this keeps them occupied and engaged. They play harmoniously, sharing and taking turns with popular pieces of equipment. Triggers such as tiredness and hunger are picked up quickly

and the childminder responds appropriately. They hear positive language because the childminder praises them for their achievements and when they have been helpful. When they display inappropriate behaviour the childminder responds in a sensitive way, taking account of children's age and ability to understand. Her strategies include talking and explaining to them why their behaviour is wrong. As a result children were very well behaved.

Children benefit when partnerships with parents and the childminder are secure and both parties enable children to develop trusting relationships with the childminder and deal with separation issues sensitively. Parents provide the childminder with all the regulated information she needs in order to meet children's individual needs. A business contract ensures that both parties understand and appreciate each others' roles. The childminder ensures that parents receive information on her service. Part of this is to ensure that parents have information on how to make a complaint. Although there is a policy, information is currently limited. However, the childminder demonstrates some understanding on how to respond to a complaint made by a parent.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by the childminder who shows a caring attitude towards them and this helps them feel happy and secure. She has completed a basic course in childcare and ensures that both herself and her husband have been vetted by the Criminal Records Bureau. However, there is insecure evidence that the two other inhabitants of the house have completed vetting procedures and this means that children's safety is not consistently safeguarded. The general organisation of her service ensures children are learning about how to keep healthy and stay safe. They enjoy themselves while at the childminder's house, their achievements are acknowledged and affirmed. They are successfully learning 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 develop her knowledge and understanding of special needs. This has now been met. In the event of the childminder working with children with a special need or disability, she is able to meet their needs. In addition she agreed to ensure that a selection of toys are available and accessible to the children. This has now been met. This ensures that children are interested and engaged in play.

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 that records contain information on children's individual needs including religious and cultural issues
- ensure that all members of the household over the age of 16 years, have been vetted
- ensure that the premises are appropriately risk assessed and act on hazards identified
- develop knowledge and understanding of how to safeguard children
- provide a complaints procedure in line with changes in regulation October 2005

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