

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	160206
Inspection date	09 January 2008
Inspector	Toni Hanson
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 was registered in 2001. She lives with her husband and 13 year old son. The family live in a house in Upminster, Essex, which is within walking distance of local schools, shops, parks, bus routes and a main line train station. The ground floor family room is the main area used for childminding. Minded children do not have access to the garden. The family has a dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children aged under eight years at any one time. She is currently minding five children aged two to 10 years. All attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and takes minded children to a local pre-school group. She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean, childminding home. Areas where they sleep, eat and play are hygienically maintained, for example, the flooring in the family room is vacuumed and mopped each day. The childminder's first aid certificate expired in February 2006. Although she partly completed a relevant training course last year, she has not maintained a current first aid certificate as required. This puts children at risk as the childminder does not have an up to date knowledge of first aid procedures. Children are learning about the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They wash their hands with soap before eating meals. Paper towels are provided for hand drying to reduce the risk of cross infection. Nappies are hygienically disposed of in a purpose bought nappy disposal unit.

Children are provided with a healthy, balanced diet that contains nutritious options such as wholemeal toast with jam for breakfast, tuna, sweet corn and carrot sticks for lunch and muesli bars and fresh fruit for snacks. Children have access to drinks throughout the day to ensure they do not get dehydrated. They enjoy a satisfactory range of indoor and outdoor activities, which contribute to their physical good health. The children walk to and from school, visit the park regularly to enjoy using the play apparatus provided there and walk to the local duck pond to feed the ducks. In the childminder's home children enthusiastically dance to music and sing. The childminder knows the youngest children well, recognises the early signs of tiredness in babies and children and uses this to plan and support appropriate periods of sleep, rest and activity.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure, safe environment. Space within the childminder's home is well organised. Children have sufficient room to play, a quiet place to rest and a comfortable area to enjoy their meals. They move safely, freely and independently around the family room, which is the main area used for childminding. The childminder's daily safety checks of the family room and her good supervision of children, help ensure they are protected from harm. The childminder takes appropriate safety measures, for example she tests her smoke alarms each month to make sure they remain in full working order. Children have access to a wide range of safe and suitable furniture, toys and equipment. These are age appropriate and in good condition.

Children are kept safe on outings. The youngest children are appropriately secured in a push chair. The childminder is developing children's knowledge of road safety by talking to them about the safest places to cross the road and encouraging them to stop, look and listen. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place to protect children and make sure that concerns about a child's welfare would be dealt with appropriately. All adults living in the childminder's home have complied with the required suitability checks.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy the broad range of enjoyable play experiences the childminder plans and provides. In the bright, welcoming family room they have easy access to toys, books and activities that promote their all round development.

Young children's early communication skills are developing well. They babble and chatter to the childminder, making good attempts to form recognisable words. The childminder listens to children carefully, responding to what they show they are interested in and want to do. She provides young children with imaginative resources which supports their imaginative learning well. Young children push the dolls buggy around the room, taking their 'babies' for walks. They 'wash' plastic potatoes in the toy sink and make cups of tea for the childminder using the tea set. They are learning to use crayons and pencils to mark make and draw on paper. The childminder talks to the youngest children about the patterns and marks they make, which shows them that she values what they do. Children enjoy books and stories. They visit the library regularly to choose books. The childminder reads stories to children after lunch, so they can relax and have a quiet rest.

Older children are highly imaginative, acting out real and imagined events through role play. They organise and reorganise the dolls house, deciding where the play family are going to eat, sleep and watch television. Children dress up, laughing at the clippedy clod sounds their glamorous sparkly, fluffy dressing up shoes make on the tiles and they parade up and down, part of their 'shoe shop' game. The doctors set enables them to care for their 'sick' dolls. Children use the stethoscope to listen to their dolls chest and a plastic otoscope to look in their ears, then they apply pretend 'ointment' to make the dolls 'all better'. Children enjoy drawing, creating detailed, colourful pictures of people, grass and trees. They write their own names on their art work, holding the pencils correctly and writing correctly formed letters. Fortnightly cooking activities help children learn to follow recipes and taste the birthday cakes and gingerbread men they bake. The childminder creates a happy, stimulating environment for children and they enjoy learning and developing new skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well; for example, the childminder follows very young children's routines established at home, to provide continuity of care for them. Their routines are adapted and changed in consultation with parents, according to children's changing needs as they grow and develop. Children confidently make themselves at home and are settled and secure in the childminder's care. They choose the toys and equipment they need and decide when they would like a drink or snack. Children's behaviour is managed positively. The childminder is gentle and caring, ensures children have plenty of enjoyable activities to choose from so they remain stimulated and uses praise effectively to encourage children to behave well. As a result, children's behaviour is very good and they happily share toys and play co-operatively with others. Older children show care and concern for the younger children, giving them cuddles and playing gently with them.

Children explore their local community as they visit the library and park and walk to and from school. They enjoy outings to places of interest during school holidays, such as the cinema, bowling centre and sea side. Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about the wider world. They have access to a suitable range of play resources designed to increase their

awareness of diversity, including small world people, puzzles and books. Children have regular opportunities to develop their understanding of other cultures and lifestyles through planned activities; for example, they eat noodles for lunch at Chinese New Year and borrow books from the library to learn about Diwali, the Hindu festival of light.

An effective partnership between the childminder and parents ensures children's care meets their individual needs well. The childminder makes parents welcome in her home, shares information and discusses children's progress with parents each day. She organises regular social events, such as Christmas meals and birthday parties for the children. Contracts are used effectively to agree and confirm financial and care arrangements. Parents say they value the flexible and reliable childminding service she provides and the 'home from home' environment she creates for children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are confident and feel at home in the welcoming, clean and safe childminding environment. Most of the required childminding documentation necessary to protect children's welfare is maintained appropriately. The childminder's paperwork is reasonably well organised and she can find most of the records she needs easily. However, she has omitted to keep a record of a minor injury a child received whilst in her care. This means that children may be at risk from failure to identify and prevent patterns of accidents. Although an accurate record of younger children's daily attendance is recorded, the register does not detail the hours older children are in school. Consequently, these children may not be fully protected in the event of the need to check historical information. The childminder has not maintained a current first aid training certificate.

The childminder has a good understanding of child development and children benefit from the warm, consistent, gentle care she provides. They have access to a wide range of interesting and enjoyable play experiences and have frequent opportunities to use their imaginations and be creative. The childminder is a positive role model, manages children's behaviour positively and therefore children behave very well. She provides a reliable, flexible childminder service and works closely with parents to provide continuity of care for children. As a result, children are happy, relaxed and confident in her care. Children's nutritional needs are met well. 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 extend her first aid training, to meet with the required 12 hours minimum course length. This recommendation has not been met and her knowledge of first aid procedures remains an area for improvement.

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 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):

- complete a first aid course which includes training in first aid for infants and young children. Ensure this training is updated as necessary and a current first aid certificate is maintained
- maintain an accurate record of all accidents and injuries
- make sure that the daily record of children's attendance includes all children's arrival and departure times.

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