

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 401730
Inspection date 27 November 2007
Inspector Teresa Evelina Lucas

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 was registered in 2000. She lives with her husband and three children aged 16, 14 and 11 in Blackheath in the London borough of Greenwich. The premises are close to local schools, shops and parks. The living and dining room is used for childminding. The extension is also used for storing toys and equipment. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

There are no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time, of whom three may be under five years. She is currently minding a two-year-old, three four-year-olds, a five-year-old and a seven-year-old. All the children attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder ensures that good hygiene procedures are in place in her home. Procedures include hygienic nappy changing and disposal, as well as rigorous hand-washing. Children are learning how to keep themselves healthy because the childminder encourages good personal care. For example, she reminds them to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet and explains why it is important to get rid of germs. These measures help to prevent the spread of infection. The childminder protects children from the risk of illness by requesting that parents do not bring their children if they are unwell.

Effective systems are in place for the recording of accidents and medication. This includes obtaining prior written parental permission and keeping a written record of any medication administered. Prior written parental consent for seeking emergency medical advice/treatment is in place and the childminder has all necessary emergency contact details. In addition, she ensures that her first aid qualification is up-to-date. As a result, the childminder is able to take appropriate action if there is an accident or emergency.

Children's physical health and development is promoted through regular outdoor play in the garden, where they are able to enjoy exercise in the fresh air and can use a range of small play equipment to develop and practise their physical skills. Children also benefit from regular walks because the childminder considers walking to be a good form of exercise. For example, they usually walk home from nursery.

The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of healthy eating and the importance of providing children with balanced, nutritious meals in order to promote their health and well-being. For example, she ensures that meals and snacks include fruit and vegetables. She has drawn up a list of meals that she provides which includes casseroles, shepherd's pie and pasta and shares this with parents. In addition, the childminder provides healthy snacks such as hummus and breadsticks, fruit and fromage frais. Consequently, children benefit because they are learning about which foods are good for them and will help them to stay healthy. For example, during the inspection the children enjoyed a lunch of fish fingers with peas and carrots. The childminder takes account of parents' wishes, respects all cultural and religious dietary requirements and seeks information about any allergies. Children are offered regular drinks throughout the day and this helps them to stay healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment which has been made child-friendly and comfortable and is enhanced by the use of colourful charts and lovely displays of children's work. Consequently, children feel at home in their surroundings. Children benefit from opportunities to make independent choices because they have easy access to a good range of age-appropriate toys and activities, including a very good selection of books. The range of resources available helps to ensure that they experience a balanced range of activities that promote their development and learning in all areas. All toys and equipment are in a good, clean condition and the childminder regularly carries out checks on their condition. This helps to ensure the children's ongoing safety.

The childminder provides a safe environment where risks have been identified and minimised through regular risk assessments. Good safety precautions are in place, for example, socket covers, window locks and safety gates. Children's safety is also promoted because the childminder ensures that children are appropriately supervised, for example, when they go upstairs to the toilet or play in the garden. As a result of the good attention paid to their safety, the children are able to move around the premises confidently and safely. Children are beginning to learn about keeping themselves safe when they go out because the childminder talks to them about road safety. Effective fire precautions, including verbal fire evacuation procedures, are in place. For example, the childminder has smoke alarms on each floor and there is a fire blanket on the kitchen wall. Consequently, children's safety in the event of a fire is promoted.

The childminder safeguards and promotes children's welfare because she demonstrates a sound understanding of her responsibilities and of the action to take if she has any concerns that a child may be suffering abuse or neglect. For example, she knows that she must inform Children's Services and Ofsted of such concerns. The childminder ensures that she has all the relevant up-to-date information available such as contact numbers and referral forms. She also informs parents about her duty to refer concerns and asks them to sign a child protection declaration. These measures help to ensure that she is able to take appropriate action to protect the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle extremely well in the cosy, relaxed atmosphere that the childminder creates for them. They feel at home and are happy because she is very friendly and welcoming towards them. Children are making very good progress because the childminder is skilled at encouraging their development in all areas of play and learning. Children benefit from the regular one to one attention the childminder gives them, her understanding of their individual play needs and interests and her ability to engage them in meaningful play. The childminder spends most of her time playing with the children and encouraging them to join in various activities. For example, they relish sharing books and listening to stories together. The childminder's enthusiasm and obvious love of books encourages the children to see books and stories as a source of great pleasure and enjoyment. As a result, they are developing positive attitudes towards books and reading. Children's vocabulary is growing because the childminder talks and listens to them and asks them questions that make them think, as well as introducing them to new words. Children benefit from excellent opportunities to express themselves creatively and use their imaginations through a variety of art and craft activities and through role play. They are becoming independent because they have extremely good opportunities to make choices and decisions.

Children are flourishing in a loving environment because the childminder knows them well and clearly enjoys their company. Excellent interactions between the children and the childminder as they play and chat together ensure that children are beginning to develop effective communication skills and to grow in confidence and self-esteem. Children enjoy affectionate relationships with the childminder who values and respects them as individuals and is sensitive to their needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are supported sensitively while at the setting because the childminder treats them as individuals and seeks appropriate information to enable her to meet their needs. As a result, children are becoming confident and developing good self-esteem. They are beginning to learn about others in the community because the childminder provides activities and resources that teach them about other cultures and religions. Children have equal access to all provision. Consequently, they are learning to develop non-stereotypical views about gender. The childminder has a positive proactive approach to disability issues and caring for children with a learning difficulty and/or disability and has some experience of doing so. She aims to provide an inclusive service where all children are welcome.

The childminder promotes good behaviour through setting some clear realistic house rules. The children are actively involved in drawing these up. House rules include washing hands after the toilet and before eating, saying please and thank you, eating and drinking at the table, sharing toys and not snatching them from another child and being kind to each other. This benefits the children because it helps them to understand right from wrong and, consequently, to become self-disciplined. Children are also learning to behave well because the childminder is a good role model for them. For example, she treats them with respect and is very calm and patient at all times. The childminder uses regular praise and this helps to reinforce children's good behaviour.

Effective links with parents are maintained through the sharing of information about the childminder's setting through written and verbal policies. Regular discussions with parents help to ensure that they are well informed about the service provided. This promotes a consistent approach to children's care. Children benefit because any care issues can be addressed at an early stage. The childminder ensures that all written parental consents are sought and written contracts are drawn up. Some use is made of contact books and this provides parents with good information about their child's day. For example, their activities and their progress and achievements. Children benefit from this as it maintains a consistent approach to all aspects of their care and this helps to ensure that they feel settled and secure. Parents have provided some positive feedback about the service the childminder provides in the form of thank you cards and written references.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, the provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

The setting is homely, welcoming and child friendly. As a result, the children are happy and settled. Resources are accessible to the children and they are able to select many of their own activities. Space is sufficient and well-organised. Consequently, children are able to move freely and confidently around the setting.

Documentation is well-organised and this ensures that the childminder manages her paperwork effectively. Records, written information about the setting and some written policies are accessible to parents and this helps to keep them informed about all aspects of children's care. Documentation is accurate, well-maintained and stored confidentially. Good systems are in place for the recording of attendance, medication and accidents and all necessary written parental permissions are in place. The childminder has an up-to-date written complaints policy

and this helps to ensure that parents have accurate information about the procedure to follow if they have a complaint. However, although the childminder is aware of the need to keep a complaints log, as required under the National Standards, there is currently no clear system in place for recording complaints. In addition, although the childminder informs parents that she will record any significant incidents relating to behaviour and the use of physical intervention the current system is not appropriate. This is because the forms used do not seek the relevant information.

Improvements since the last inspection

Three recommendations, relating to documentation, were made following the last inspection.

As a result, the childminder now uses appropriate forms to obtain written parental permission before administering medication to children. Therefore, procedures for the administration have improved and this helps to promote children's health and safety.

The childminder has devised and implements a system for recording significant incidents relating to behaviour and the use of physical intervention and gives parents written information about this. However, the forms used are not appropriate as they do not seek the necessary information. Consequently, a further recommendation has been made.

Parents are given clear and up-to-date information about the procedure to follow in the event of a complaint. However, although the childminder understands that she must keep a written log of complaints, there is currently no clear system in place. Therefore, a further recommendation has been made.

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.

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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 there is a clear system in place for recording complaints

- ensure that the forms used to record any significant incidents relating to behaviour and the use of physical intervention are appropriate, for example, that they seek all the relevant information.

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