

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	401745
Inspection date	20 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 2001. She lives with her partner and her two sons aged 14 and four years in a three bedroomed house in Blackheath in the London borough of Greenwich. The premises is close to local shops, parks and schools. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

There are no pets. Overnight care is not provided.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years, of whom two may be under five years. She is currently caring for two children under eight, aged four and five years. She also looks after an over eight-year-old. All children are cared for on a part time basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and has completed a Developing Childminding Practice (DCP) qualification.

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. She protects children from the risk of illness by informing parents that she does not look after children when they are unwell. Children are learning how to keep themselves healthy because the childminder encourages good personal care; for example, she encourages and reminds children to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet and reminds them to cover their mouths when they cough. The provision of individual towels that are changed daily further helps to prevent the spread of infection and helps children to stay healthy. They are learning to take responsibility for their own personal care and are gaining in independence because the childminder provides step-ups and liquid soap in the bathroom so that they can access the facilities for themselves. She also encourages them to look after their teeth through regular teeth cleaning routines.

The childminder has effective systems in place for the recording of medication and accidents. These include obtaining prior written parental permission if administering medication and keeping a written medication record. She has an up-to-date first aid qualification. These measures help to ensure that children are protected in the event of an accident or emergency. Accidents are appropriately recorded and records include a parental signature.

Children benefit from a range of physical play activities that effectively promote their physical health and development because the childminder ensures that they get lots of fresh air and exercise and are able to practise and develop their physical skills. Activities include regular outdoor play in the well-organised child-friendly garden where children enjoy using a range of equipment including a slide, bikes, trampoline and swings. The childminder also organises regular trips to toddler groups, one o'clock clubs, local parks and playgrounds and the toy library.

The childminder is aware of the importance of providing children with a healthy balanced diet, for example, ensuring that meals and snacks include fresh fruit and vegetables. She records all necessary information relating to children's individual dietary requirements, for example, allergies, specific preferences and religious and cultural considerations. The childminder provides written menus and displays these on the kitchen wall. Menus differ depending on the time of year, for example, there are winter and summer menus and this helps to ensure that children's nutritional needs are appropriately met. Children benefit from healthy snacks which usually consist of fresh fruit. Their health and wellbeing is also well promoted because the childminder understands the importance of providing them with regular drinks; for example, they have access to drinks throughout the day, as they play and at meal and snack times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from a very safe, warm and welcoming environment where they can play, rest and eat comfortably. The environment is extremely child friendly and is enhanced through the creative and imaginative use of displays of photographs of children enjoying various activities and outings, children's art work and colourful charts and posters. The childminder effectively maintains safety in her home by ensuring that all safety precautions are in place and detailing how she does this in her written health and safety policy. Children benefit from the childminder's

understanding of the importance of carrying out regular risk assessments to ensure that any potential risks to their safety are identified and minimised. Risk assessments are written and include all areas of the house and garden. Safe arrangements are also in place for outings. Appropriate supervision is in place, for example, when children use the upstairs bathroom. As a result, children are able to move around the setting safely and confidently. Fire safety is promoted well, for example, there are smoke alarms and a fire blanket and the childminder practises fire drills with the children. Consequently, they are learning how to keep themselves safe if there is a fire.

The childminder provides an excellent range of very good quality resources that includes toys, books and activities across all areas of children's play and development. Therefore, children benefit from a very varied range of interesting and stimulating activities. The organisation of resources is excellent, for example, they are stored in labelled containers. Many resources are easily accessible to the children and this means that they are able to make independent choices. The childminder is fully aware of her responsibility to carry out regular safety checks on all equipment and this helps to ensure children's ongoing safety.

The childminder demonstrates a very clear understanding of her child protection responsibilities and of the action to take if she has any concerns about a child in her care; for example, she is aware of the areas of abuse and of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. She understands that she must inform Children's Services and Ofsted if she is worried that a child may be being abused. She has copies of all up-to-date written information, for example, local safeguarding children board procedures, contact numbers and referral forms. The childminder ensures that she is well equipped to protect children from abuse and neglect by attending training to update and extend her knowledge and understanding in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy a balanced day because the childminder plans a varied and interesting daily routine. This includes time for play, meals, and outings. An extremely homely, relaxed atmosphere means that children are flourishing and are happy and settled. Resources are excellent and age-appropriate. They are stored accessibly and are extremely well organised. As a result, children are learning to make independent choices. They benefit greatly from a stimulating range of activities across all areas of play, development and learning. The childminder provides activities arising from children's needs and interests; for example, in order to encourage them to learn to share and take turns, she plays some simple table games with them. She reminds them that they need to play together nicely and that they must share and take turns. Children confidently explain to the inspector how the game works and whose turn it is next and that they must wait until it is their turn.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of the play needs of young children. She puts this into practice by ensuring that activities are challenging and age appropriate. She sensitively and skilfully uses appropriate methods of extending individual children's enjoyment and is aware when it is time to move on to another activity if children lose interest or become bored. As a result, children benefit from an extensive range of activities that stimulate them, capture their interest and encourage their development and learning. Children enjoy lots of positive purposeful interactions as the childminder enthusiastically joins in activities with them and asks them questions to extend their vocabulary; for example, as they talk about a floor puzzle that they are doing together about space, she introduces new words such as astronaut, planets and solar system. Consequently, children's language development is progressing well. The childminder

also encourages them to count and to sort and match using colours; for example, during a game of 'pick out sticks' she explains that they have to put all the sticks in the right coloured holes first. At the end of the game she encourages them to add up their scores and they talk about who has the most.

The childminder makes extremely good use of the garden which is very well equipped and well laid out. Consequently, children benefit from lots of exciting outdoor activities, including imaginative play in the playhouse, playing with sand in the sandpit and a range of physical play activities. They also enjoy planting and watering various plants, flowers and vegetables. They are learning about nature as they watch the birds and squirrels eating from the bird feeders that the childminder has hung in the trees or as they help to make compost for digging into the garden. The routine also includes regular outings. For example, the childminder showed the inspector some photographs of the children enjoying the various interactive activities they had taken part in at the Bethnal Green museum of childhood.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has good arrangements in place for identifying and recording children's individual needs; for example, she discusses all aspects of children's needs with parents at the start of a minding arrangement and records these appropriately. She promotes effective partnerships with parents by encouraging regular discussions about their children's care and by having written contracts with them. Relationships with parents are good and parents have provided some very positive feedback about the quality of care the childminder provides; for example, parents comment on her professionalism and good organisation, the range of activities and outings and state that the childminder treats their child like part of her family.

The childminder demonstrates a sound understanding of equal opportunities issues and understands that all children must be treated equally according to their individual needs. She is aware of the importance of providing children with some positive images of diversity through activities and resources so that they can learn to value and respect others in the community; for example, she uses the internet to obtain information about festivals and celebrations and has obtained a calendar that details festivals and celebrations from a variety of cultures throughout the year. She also ensures that children's cultural and religious needs are fully addressed, for example, she provides halal meat, if required. Children benefit from equal access to all resources and activities, regardless of their gender. The childminder shows a commitment to inclusion and has a positive approach to caring for children with a learning difficulty and/or disability.

The childminder has a written behaviour management policy that she shares and discusses with parents, in order to develop a consistent approach by using similar strategies. This helps children to begin to learn right from wrong. She emphasises the importance of positive reinforcement when managing children's behaviour, for example, the use of frequent praise and encouragement such as the use of a reward chart. Children are learning to have good manners and to treat others with respect and consideration because the childminder is a good role model for them. She sets some simple house rules that include sharing, being polite, having good manners and helping to tidy toys away. The childminder encourages the children to share, take turns and play co-operatively. She is skilled at helping children to resolve conflicts, for example, by using reasoning and explanation and encouraging them to understand each other's feelings. As a result, children generally behave well.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

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

The setting is very warm, welcoming and extremely child friendly. The childminder provides a varied daily routine that includes time for rest, indoor and outdoor play, meals and outings. Resources are accessibly stored and very well organised. They provide very good opportunities for children to take part in an interesting, balanced range of activities across all areas of their play, learning and development. Children benefit from regular opportunities to make independent choices and to enjoy activities that reflect their own interests.

The childminder demonstrates a sound knowledge and understanding of most of the records that must be kept in order to provide appropriate care. Documentation is well maintained and stored safely, accessibly and confidentially. Attendance is accurately recorded and the attendance record includes children's hours of attendance. Accident and medication records are appropriately kept. Records are effectively shared with parents and most necessary permissions are sought from parents, in writing. However, not all written parental permissions are in place for all of the children currently being cared for. In addition, there is no system in place to record any significant events relating to behaviour and the use of physical intervention.

Improvements since the last inspection

There was one recommendation made following the last inspection. This related to increasing the knowledge of child development for children aged under three years.

Although the childminder is not currently caring for any under children in this age group, she has obtained a copy of the Birth to three matters framework and made herself familiar with its key elements. She has also covered this area while working towards her DCP (Diploma in Childminding Practice). In addition, her provision now includes resources for younger children.

Consequently, the childminder is confident that she can meet the developmental needs of children under the age of three years, if required to do so.

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 good. 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 there is a system in place to record any significant events relating to behaviour and the use of physical intervention
- make sure that all necessary prior written parental consents are in place for all of the children being cared for.

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