

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 405122 |
| Inspection date | 07 January 2008 |
| Inspector | Maggie Thorp |
| 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 August 2001. She lives with her husband and their two sons aged seven and two years in a maisonette in the Alexandra Park area of the London borough of Haringey. The whole of the first floor with the exception of the front room is used for childminding purposes. The enclosed garden is available for outdoor play in dry weather and the childminder takes children to the local park close to her home.

The childminder may care for a maximum of four children under eight and currently has five children on roll who attend for a variety of days and times. She takes and collects children to and from school. The family have no pets. The childminder is a member of the National Child Minding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are protected from infection and cared for in extremely clean, healthy surroundings. All the areas children use are maintained to a high standard and particular care is given to the

cleanliness of the kitchen and bathroom. Children are helped to learn to keep healthy themselves as she helps them wash their hands after using the bathroom and before eating from a young age. However, children do not have the use of individual towels to further promote good hygiene.

Children's care if they have accidents or need medicines is well provided for by the childminder. Her first aid bag is fully stocked and she has ensured her first aid qualification is up to date. The childminder keeps records of accidents and medicines she administers but the childminder has not obtained consent from parents for their children to receive medical treatment in an emergency.

Children's individual care needs are met well. They have a cosy quiet place to take naps and the childminder liaises with parents to ensure they work together on such things as potty training. Children eat well. The childminder provides children with the food parents bring for them. Drinks are available at meal times and throughout the day. Children enjoy the social occasion meal times provide as they sit around the table together. However, toddlers' independence at meals times is not always encouraged as the childminder does not give them their own dish and spoon so that they can try to feed themselves.

Children have sufficient opportunity for exercise, to run and climb. The childminder frequently takes children to the park which is very close to her home. Children are also able to play in the childminder's garden, where there is a climbing frame children use, but only in dry weather as it gets rather muddy. When children are old enough they are encouraged to walk when taking and collecting older school children, going to the shops or visiting local toddler groups. However, children can ride for part of the way if tired as the childminder takes a double buggy. Indoors children move freely and enjoy making dens and using the wheeled toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play and are cared for in a well maintained bright environment. They use just the first floor of this two floor maisonette and play mainly in the playroom which is warm and light and has a low but safe window so children enjoy looking out. They also play in the hall and do art activities around the kitchen table. The childminder's home is generally well laid out for childminding. Children can access the bathroom independently and there is a separate room for rests so children can sleep undisturbed.

Children have a wide range of play and care resources. However, the organisation of playthings is not always effective in helping younger children to sustain and develop their play. The resources for children's care are well provided. Children sit on comfortable seating at the correct height for each child's size at the table. They have suitable rest beds for naps and a double buggy for outings. All these are in good condition.

Generally children play safely in the kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and playroom. Low cupboards containing cleaning materials have safety catches, electrical wires and sockets are inaccessible to children and there are gates on the main staircase to keep children safe. Smoke alarms are on each floor and there are two routes downstairs that the childminder and children can use in the event of a fire. However, the stairs are cluttered and so only partially clear as fire exits. In addition, on occasions the door to the steep stairs to the garden is not kept locked and so this hazard is accessible to children.

Children are safeguarded by the childminder's clear understanding of the signs of possible abuse. However, they are not protected by her lack of clarity about who to contact if she has concerns about a child or if an allegation is made about an incident in her home. This is because she has not obtained the appropriate guidance to ensure she is well informed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have fun and receive encouragement and support from the childminder who ensures she makes plenty of time for play. Younger children enjoy using the many wheeled toys around the playroom. They grow more physically able as the childminder helps them join rail tracks and play with cars, trains and construction toys. Children get out the play food and the childminder helps them learn the names of the different foods and encourages their pretend play. Children can access books easily and the childminder often reads to children and sings actions songs to them thus fostering children's language skills.

However, the childminder does not always foster children's independence and concentration. Young children are asked to tidy away one type of toy before other toys are taken out and attractive toys are stored in children's sight but not within reach so they find it hard to settle to play. Opportunities for messy play with natural materials, such as, sand and water are limited. These factors reduce young children's ability to tip, to fill and to transport toys as is developmentally appropriate for their age. In addition, it reduces opportunities for children to explore and experiment.

Older children enjoy the opportunities they have to take part in art and craft activities and to develop their creativity. Children paint, draw and glue at the kitchen table. They create models with pipe cleaners and beads and make calendars as presents for their parents when they come back from school. The childminder helps younger children take part in these activities too.

Older children enjoy imaginative play. They choose from the storage tubs of play materials in the playroom and play imaginative games with dressing up clothes, pretend food and dolls. They use cardboard boxes, furniture and materials to make dens. Children are developing their dexterity as they use art materials, construction toys and puzzles. Older children learn to co-operate and take turns as they play with the wide selection of boxed games that the childminder has. Younger children enjoy mixing with other children at toddler groups and visiting friends.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and happy in the care of the childminder. They have opportunities to explore their own and others cultures. They make Hanukkah and Christmas presents for their parents. They learn about different people from the books the childminder provides and discussion with the childminder. They are learning that both boys and girls can have fun with all toys as girls and boys dress up, and play with cars, trains and dolls.

Children are generally well behaved and enjoy helping the childminder. This is encouraged by the praise the childminder frequently gives children. The childminder has some good systems for managing disputes over toys for example, by having more than one of popular toys. However, the playroom is not well organised to minimise the times when children are likely to get cross and upset. Certain unsuitable toys are not put out of sight. This causes difficulties when one

child is unable to play with something because it is unsuitable for another child or when a child sees toys that he is frightened of.

Children benefit from the partnership between parents and the childminder. Parents are able to stay and slowly settle their children at the childminder's home. The childminder records details of children's needs and routines to ensure she provides appropriately for each child. Parents are chatted to daily about what their children have done, and about how well they and eaten and slept. Recently the childminder gave parents little photograph albums of their children. However, not all the appropriate written consent is obtained from parents to ensure their wishes are respected.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for and are happy and settled. They have good relationships with the childminder. Children's health is generally well supported but there are weaknesses in the safety measures that are in place to protect children. The organisation of play for older children fosters their independence. However, the resources for younger children are less well organised.

The childminder keeps good records of children's needs and contact information but there are weaknesses in other aspects of her documentation. This includes keeping a record of the times children attend, obtaining the appropriate written consent from parents and having information to hand about who to contact if she has concerns about the well-being of a child.

The childminder ensures her first aid qualification is kept up to date by attending regular training but has yet to make good use of the information, training and advice the local authority provide to ensure that she is aware of new developments in child care and regulations and is thus continually developing her provision for children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection children's well-being has been protected by the childminder following the recommendation made to ensure that her first aid kit is fully stocked. However, the recommendation to develop her knowledge of child protection procedures has only been partly addressed. Although the childminder is more confident in recognising possible child abuse, children are not fully safeguarded as she has not obtained the appropriate guidance or local contact information and so is unclear what to do about any concerns she may have.

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):

- obtain written consent from parents for their children to receive medical treatment in an emergency and to go on outings
- ensure the children are safe on stairways and all fire exits are clear
- obtain the local guidance on how to proceed if there are concerns about a child and ensure this is well understood and obtain the local contact numbers to report any concerns
- encourage young children's interest in exploring natural play materials and organise play materials to promote children's independence and concentration
- record the actual times children are present

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