

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	504431
Inspection date	08 November 2007
Inspector	Deborah Ann Benn

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 1994. She lives with her husband and two adult children, one of whom is away during term time at university. They live in a house Chadwell Heath in the London borough of Barking and Dagenham. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding six children under five during day and six children over five before and after school (of whom three are over eight years). All children are cared for on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends local carer and toddler groups. The family has a pet cat.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the high standard of cleanliness and hygiene throughout the home. The childminder has put helpful and efficient systems in place to limit cross infection. Children have individual flannels and use paper towels when washing their hands. The nappy changing mat is cleaned between uses and the childminder washes her own hands regularly. Children's medical needs and all accidents and the administration of medication and first aid are well recorded. Parents countersign entries to confirm agreement and communication. This supports consistency of care for the children. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and takes responsibility for keeping her knowledge up to date.

Children have substantial and nutritious food, and meals and snacks provided by parents are appropriately stored and fully reheated as necessary. Children enjoy a wide variety of fruit and access fresh water and fruit juices to drink throughout the day. The childminder provides a range of brightly coloured cups and beakers so that children are able to easily identify which is theirs and further limit the risk of cross infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The attractive and well maintained premises are warm and comfortable providing children with a relaxing and secure homely environment. Children have ample space to eat, rest and play and are able to move safely between the areas used. The childminder ensures that all low level glass is protected and cupboards secured so that risks are minimised. Safety gates are available and used appropriately when very young children become mobile to prevent them accessing the stairs without supervision. Children are kept safe on outings, they have appropriate car seats and restraints and the childminder ensures that her car insurance includes business use. The childminder uses buggies and reins to keep children secure as well as speaking with them about dangers and the need to be vigilant when crossing roads and has clear expectations of behaviour. Children learn about keeping themselves safe, the childminder has formulated a fire escape plan and practised this with the children. However, this is not recorded and therefore there is no secure system to make sure this takes place regularly and that all children are familiar with it. The childminder converses naturally with the children giving patient explanations which help children understand how to keep each other safe, for example talking with children about why the baby cannot yet play with playdough and the need to keep small pieces out of her reach to prevent her putting them in her mouth.

Children have access to a range of good quality, age appropriate toys on a daily basis. Additional toys are well organised and suitably stored. Equipment is rotated to keep children's interest and meet the individual needs of the children attending. The childminder also makes very good use of the local toy library to complement her own resources. The arrangement of play resources in the lounge means that children confidently help themselves to books and toys to develop and extend their play.

Children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded. The childminder is very aware of her roles and responsibilities regarding protecting children from abuse and has necessary guidance and contact numbers readily available. She is pro-active in ensuring that members of the household are suitably vetted and that children are never left unsupervised.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident in the childminder's care, they interact easily with her and her family. The pleasure each gains from being together is obvious. The childminder engages well with the children, her knowledge of their level of understanding and stage of development as well as their preferences, is used effectively to plan and provide activities. Children enjoy frequent opportunity for creative art activities both in and outside of the home and show delight as they use different textures and natural items to make their own picture. They respond to music, listening to different songs and sounds being played and are encouraged to dance and use instruments as well as their voices to join in. Children's language is very well supported, children laugh as they play with word sounds and are challenged to find rhymes. The childminder patiently interprets very young children's sounds and values their contribution encouraging them to respond. Children are taken on regular outings and good use is made of local resources to provide them with an interesting and stimulating week. For example, they go to toddler groups, the library, parks and swimming. During the school holidays children enjoy long picnics spending whole days exploring forests and farms. The childminder is committed to ensuring that children have a happy and fulfilled day.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where their individuality is acknowledged and celebrated. The childminder provides an atmosphere of positive affirmation which reflects the clear written statement in the information provided for parents. The childminder uses a multi-faith calendar to prepare for activities and celebrations which are helpful to the children attending. Children learn about the wider world as they take part in activities, such as making decorations for Diwali. Children also have daily access to positive images of different cultures, faiths and abilities within play resources and books. For example, children access musical instruments and toy animals from Africa freely and play with a variety of dolls.

The childminder sensitively recognises that children need different approaches and levels of support, she is very aware of the children in her care and knows them well. Even when children have no language, her relationship with the children is such that she is able to interpret their body language and sounds to recognise their moods and respond accordingly. Children with learning difficulties/disabilities are well supported in their decision making and making sense of their world through the use of pictures and symbols where necessary as well as unambiguous language.

Children's behaviour is very good, they respond readily to the gentle and yet clear approach of the childminder. Children are able to understand the expectations based on respect and safety and need few reminders. The use of specific praise by the childminder builds children's self esteem and helps them understand the difference between right and wrong. Good planning and the accessibility of age appropriate toys and resources, keep children well occupied and lessen the likelihood of them becoming bored.

Parents are made welcome in the home and strong relationships have been developed, the childminder works closely in partnership with parents and they are very happy with the care provided. Daily conversations supported by frequent photographs, help to keep parents fully informed of their child's day. The professional relationship is underpinned by the use of contracts and agreements which are regularly reviewed and parents have access to policies and statements

which clearly state the ethos of the provision, although these do not include how to contact Ofsted as the regulator.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder organises her home and her week well to meet the varied needs of the children she cares for. Good planning means she is well prepared for children's arrival and due to that is able to skilfully balance her time and attention, for example ensuring that an activity is in place for the toddler when feeding the baby. The childminder ensures adults in the household have Criminal Record Bureau checks carried out and supervises children at all times. An appropriate format for recording any complaints is in place and the childminder is aware of her responsibility to make this available to parents on request. Information about children, including contact details is appropriately documented, clearly organised and stored with an awareness of confidentiality. The certificate of registration is displayed and parents' attention drawn to it at the beginning of the placement, to ensure that they are aware of the conditions in place. The daily register clearly shows the times of children's attendance and the childminder carries parents' contact numbers with her on outings in case of an emergency.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

An action and some recommendations were made at the last inspection carried out in 2004, these have been appropriately addressed resulting in a safer environment for children. The childminder has ensured that Criminal Record Checks have been taken up on her daughters when they turned 16 years old, confirming that they are suitable to be with the children. The first floor 'ranch style' balustrade has been replaced with spindles lessening the risk of children of children being able to climb over or through them. Fire precautions have been improved by the fire blanket being wall mounted making it more readily accessible and the first aid box is replenished regularly to ensure it is always available for use.

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):

- provide parents with the contact number details of Ofsted as the regulator
- make record of when fire drills take place

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