

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY235263
Inspection date	30 October 2007
Inspector	Catherine Greenwood

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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2002. She lives with her husband and two children aged four years and one year in a residential area close to Sheerwater, Woking. Children have access to a conservatory/playroom, kitchen, sitting room and downstairs toilet. One of the bedrooms on the first floor is used for sleeping purposes only. There is an enclosed secure garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding three children, two of whom are aged 15 months and one is aged five years. The childminder collects children from local schools. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and has recently completed a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3 in childcare.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder gives parents the choice regarding food provision. She currently provides meals for older children which are well balanced and healthy. Younger children show great excitement as they are given fresh fruit for a snack. However, food provision has not been reviewed with all parents and adapted to meet children's individual developmental needs. Consequently, children's health regarding food provision is not given top priority.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate. Children are protected from the risk of cross infection because the childminder follows good hygiene practice. Details of medication administration are recorded appropriately, however, parents have not been asked to sign entries at the end of each day. This puts children's health at risk.

Young children show interest in using the garden. For example, they find a toy key and show the childminder they want to unlock the door from the conservatory. The childminder makes good use of the garden during the summer and in good weather during the winter. This enables children to develop gross motor skills as they use the see saw, mini slide and trampoline. However, use of the garden is restricted due to the childminder's concerns about younger children getting muddy and older children only attending for a short time after school. In addition, there are insufficient opportunities for children to run safely and freely in large open spaces.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children's safety is put at risk, particularly if they are sleeping upstairs, because the smoke alarms on each level of the home are not working, and the childminder does not test them. Safety gates used in the hallway keep children secure and prevent them accessing the front door. An additional gate used in the open plan kitchen keeps children safe if the childminder is cooking. However, cleaning substances are stored on the floor next to both toilets and in one of the low level cupboards in the bathroom. This is an additional risk to children's safety, particularly when older children are present. Play equipment is well maintained and checked regularly by the childminder to ensure it is age appropriate and safe for children to use.

Children's welfare is not fully safeguarded because although the childminder has some knowledge of child protection procedures, she does have a secure understanding of her responsibility regarding communication with parents if children have an existing injury or there is a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy playing with the imaginary resources in the conservatory, such as the play cooker and pretend food. The resources are age appropriate and well organised in boxes. However, they are mostly made of plastic and do not provide children with the opportunity to develop their senses through exploring different textures. The childminder says that older children enjoy drawing, using play dough and painting at the kitchen table.

The childminder sits on the floor with younger children and interacts in their play. For example, they look at books together and the childminder talks about the pictures. This means that children hear and learn new words.

During the summer, the childminder takes children on outings to parks. However, she does go on many outings during the rest of the year or take children to toddler groups. This means that children's experiences are restricted to within the home and they do not have the opportunity to explore their environment throughout the year and socialise with others. In addition, the childminder has no knowledge of the Birth to three matters guidance.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder responds to children's individual needs, for example, by giving them a bottle and a hug when they are unsettled. She has a good knowledge of children's individual routines and incorporates these within her day, for example, younger children currently sleep at different times. However, the childminder has not discussed and reviewed children's sleep times with parents which means they are sometimes tired and unhappy.

Children are usually well behaved. When there are occasional incidents, for example younger children pushing each other, the childminder uses tone of voice to help them understand right from wrong. Older children understand the consequences of their behaviour because they are reminded of the house rules, such as not jumping on furniture.

The childminder gets on well with parents and says she can tell them anything about their children. She says that parents are usually in a hurry and they sometimes come into her home when collecting the children. The childminder keeps a diary which parents take home each day. This includes basic information about the children's day. Comprehensive written policies and procedures are shared with parents. However, the childminder has not sought written parental consent for outings and for children to travel in her car. In addition, there is no system in place to record any complaints.

Resources that reflect positive images, such as dolls are made easily accessible to the children, which means they develop an awareness of differences. The childminder supports this by helping children to learn a few simple words in Spanish, which is her first language. The childminder is not currently looking after children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The environment is well organised so that children can play in the conservatory and kitchen. After school, when older children are present, the childminder also makes use of the sitting room. This means children have more space to move around freely.

The childminder has had all checks completed to ensure she is suitable to work with children. She supervises the children at all times. However, she has not informed Ofsted of people over the age of sixteen years who are currently living in the house and taking care of her own younger child so the necessary checks can be completed. This is a breach of the regulations. In addition, the childminder has not completed some of the recommendations from the last inspection which means children's safety is at risk.

Documentation is well organised, although some details have not been recorded. The childminder does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure that the garden is secure, review information provided for parents, ensure smoke alarms are regularly tested, and improve child protection knowledge. The childminder has replaced the garden fencing, and created written policies and procedures which are shared with parents when new children start. Although she has improved her knowledge of child protection, the childminder does not have a comprehensive understanding of the information she needs to obtain from parents if children have an existing injury. Smoke alarms on both levels of the childminder's home are not working and have not been tested. This means that although parents now receive good written information about the childminder's practice, children's safety has only partially been improved.

Complaints since the last inspection

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. 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.

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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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure Ofsted are informed about changes to household members over the age of sixteen years and that all necessary checks are completed
- improve child protection knowledge
- ensure smoke alarms are maintained in working order and make cleaning substances inaccessible

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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