

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY236809
Inspection date	26 March 2008
Inspector	Tom Radcliffe
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 2003. She lives with her husband and teenage son in Highbury in the London borough of Islington. Part 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 five children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five during the day. The childminder attends childminder support groups. The family has a pet dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play and explore in a well organised, clean and hygienic environment. They have access to spacious and clean accommodation which they explore freely with minimal risk to their well-being as there is a reduced risk of the spread of infection. The childminder has effective written procedures in place to ensure that accidents are minimised and dealt with properly and that medication is administered safely. Children's good health and well-being is also enhanced

as the childminder has written permission from parents to obtain any necessary emergency treatment or advice and by excluding infectious children. Children are very well cared for if they sustain a minor injury as the childminder holds an up to date first aid qualification and has proper first aid equipment available. The childminder's daily routines also promote the children's good health; for example, children are encouraged to wash their hands and use disposable tissues and the childminder uses effective practice when changing nappies and cleaning surfaces.

Children are given healthy and nutritious snacks while in the setting which properly reflects the amount of time that they spend in the childminder's home. The childminder has a flexible approach to meeting the dietary needs of individual children as she provides all meals in some cases while in others parents provide the main meal of the day. Children are developing good eating habits; for example they have snacks of fresh fruit, bread sticks and rice cakes and main meals of fresh vegetables and chicken. The childminder is qualified in food handling and ensures that all food is stored, served and handled hygienically. Children have access to fresh drinking water throughout the day and with their meals or snacks. The childminder ensures that she acts upon any information that she receives from parents about specific dietary needs; for example, needs related to allergies.

Children's physical development is good, they have access to a range of purposeful activities that are age and developmentally appropriate. Indoors children are able to develop their coordination, fine motor skills and overall confidence as they paint, use printing techniques, use a range of mark making equipment and regularly play with puzzles and jigsaws. At the present time the childminder has limited outdoor space available but it is used for water and messy play activities. In order to ensure that children have regular opportunities to take exercise the childminder makes good use of local facilities; for example, local parks and drop in centres. Children can mix with other children on these walks into the community and access additional play equipment and experiences. This contributes very positively to children's health and well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in very secure and safe accommodation. They have access to a well equipped and attractive activity room which gives them sufficient floor space to move freely in. Children are able to independently access resources and activities as they are stored at a low level. The main play areas are kept uncluttered as other resources are stored to promote children's safety. Children are able to take rest or be active as they require it. The childminder ensures the safety of the children at all times by maintaining good levels of supervision, this ensures that their care needs are met and potential hazards are minimised. Resting children are monitored, children having snacks in the kitchen are supervised and all play activities are carefully managed. In addition to this the childminder uses very effective risk assessments to ensure the safety of the children; for example, safety gates restrict children's access to certain areas, electrical socket covers are in use and all windows are securely locked. Children in the setting are kept safe in the event of an emergency as the childminder has an evacuation plan in place and adequate fire detection and control equipment available. The children are developing a sense of safety in the home as they play with resources and undertake activities. In addition their regular visits within the community gives children an understanding of how to walk and use roads safely.

Children have access to a very good range of play equipment which supports their learning in all areas as it is age and developmentally appropriate. The childminder ensures that all resources are maintained in good working order and that they are clean and hygienic. In addition the childminder ensures that resources are provided to meet the developing needs of children and that activities engage children at all times. As a result children are able to freely play with equipment that enhances their physical development, widen their understanding of their environment and learn more about speaking and language.

The childminder has a very good understanding of how to safeguard children, she can recognise signs and symptoms and knows how to effectively proceed if she were to have concerns about a child's welfare. This promotes and safeguards children's welfare within the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle very quickly and confidently into the childminder's home; they access resources independently and quickly become engaged in what they do. Children are happy and comfortable in the setting and are very well supported by the childminder who has an excellent working relationship with them. The childminder is very skilful as she guides children as they play and she supports their language development through questioning and using many opportunities to extend their vocabulary. She makes timely intervention as children play to achieve a balance between free play and an adult lead. Her attention to children's development is excellent; she has a very good understanding of the needs of individual children and works very effectively to meet them. Children take part in a good range of activities that ensures their ongoing development; for example, children enjoy painting and printing, they enthusiastically use books and role play equipment, they show an interest in puzzles and jigsaws and experiment with colour, numbers and the names of animals and objects. Children thrive in the setting, they are engaged in purposeful activity, they face sufficient challenge and they are becoming increasingly confident, articulate and independent.

The childminder enhances this excellent provision by ensuring that children have access to a wide range of additional opportunities within the community where they can mix with other children and use additional play equipment and have new experiences. This includes the use of local parks and farms, drop in centres, libraries and nature walks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has effective systems in place to ensure that she has knowledge of all information relating to individual children's needs. Children develop well as the childminder accommodates all needs within the setting; for example, their dietary needs, medical details, interests and background. The childminder respects each child as an individual and has a good relationship with them, the children interact positively to the guidance and support that the childminder gives them. Children are developing an awareness of the community around them through their regular visits and through the use of resources that reflect positive images of diversity. The childminder has a good understanding of working with children with special needs, she would provide a supportive and inclusive environment and work with parents, if these needs were to arise in the future.

The childminder uses very effective behaviour management techniques. Central to this is her good relationship with children and that she ensures that children are engaged in a good variety

of interesting activity. She uses appropriate language as she talks to children and consistently sets clear boundaries to ensure that children share, take turns and cooperate with her and each other. Children respond very well to the childminder and their play environment and develop well with an ever growing understanding of right and wrong.

Children's development and well-being is promoted by the links between the childminder and parents. All policies and procedures are in place that inform parents about the childminder's provision and organisation. Parents value the work of the childminder as their children are happy and are showing signs of good development and progress. The childminder ensures that parents have full verbal feedback about how the children spend their time when in the setting and sends home examples of work and provides parents with an interesting certificate when children leave the childminder's care. However parents do not have access to any written development records that would enable them to have a greater understanding of children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are very happy and fulfilled within the setting. They have access to spacious and well resourced accommodation where they undertake challenging and interesting activities that engage them and allow for significant progress and development. The childminder shows great skill when working with children and a very good understanding of the varying needs of individual children. The childminder undertakes regular training and development to ensure that her skills and knowledge base are kept up to date. She meets all the National Standards as children participate in a clear routine which is planned to meet individual needs through; for example, play and visits to groups within the community.

Children are very safe and secure within the childminder's home as all adults undergo suitability checks and her procedures and routines promote children's safety at all times. Children have a growing understanding of how to be healthy and how to keep themselves safe. The childminder maintains very good relationships with parents and exchanges good quality information in a variety of forms. Parents do not however have access to written development records from which they could gain a greater understanding of children's progress. The childminder has ensured that all necessary documentation is in place. This impacts positively on the safety and well-being of children. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection made the recommendation that the childminder should introduce more appropriate learning activities for some children. Since that time the childminder has ensured that the older children in particular have access to suitable planned play and learning activities and that these are supported with developmentally appropriate resources.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- continue to evolve written development records to inform parents about children's progress.

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