

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY248242
Inspection date	25 February 2008
Inspector	Christine Stimson
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 March 2003. She lives with her husband and two children, aged eight and five, in a house in Thames Ditton, Surrey. All areas of the property can be used for childminding, but children play in the downstairs part of the house where there are toilet facilities. One child sleeps in a travel cot in an upstairs bedroom. There is fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time. She is currently minding three children on a part-time basis and one child before school each day. The childminder regularly attends local playgroups, parks and a childminding support group. She is a member of the local childminder's network and has a Level 3 qualification in children's development and learning.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted by the childminder, who ensures children wash their hands before eating and after messy play. Good hygiene is practised as a matter of routine and children have their own individual towels to wipe their hands and faces; this helps prevent the risk of cross infection. Children enjoy home-cooked food whilst in the childminder's care and are given a variety of nutritious meals and snacks, as well as regular drinks of water throughout the day.

The childminder is committed to providing prompt attention to children if accidents occur and is assisted in this task by having an up-to-date first aid qualification and a well stocked first aid box. The childminder has devised a sick child policy that is shared with parents and this clearly shows the childminder will not care for children who are sick, ill or infectious. This supports the health of the other children in her care. However, the childminder does not make it clear in her policy what she would do if a child was suddenly taken ill.

Children enjoy physical play whilst being cared for. They frequently visit the park where they run off energy, play with balls to develop their skills of kicking, throwing and rolling and access age-appropriate playground apparatus. During their frequent trips to toddler groups and other play centres, children use sit-and-ride cars and tricycles, and develop their climbing and balancing skills on soft play materials.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have a playroom dedicated to their needs where they can access a wide range of good quality toys and equipment. Most resources are kept at child height so children can self-select items of their choice. Puzzles, board games, art and craft materials, and some construction items that have smaller pieces are stored on shelves and are used under supervision. The childminder encourages children to help her tidy away toys before they have their snack and they are enthusiastic helpers. This encourages children to use toys and equipment safely and to respect the resources.

The childminder ensures her home is clean, well maintained and suitable for children's needs. Although the children mainly play in the playroom to the side of the house, they have quiet play activities in the childminder's main lounge and one of the younger children sleeps in a travel cot in an upstairs bedroom.

The childminder has taken steps to minimise risks to children. For example, all accessible sockets are fitted with plugs or covers and children wear reins or are strapped into buggies when out and about. However, the glass cabinet in the lounge poses a risk to children's safety.

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and knows how to proceed if there are concerns. She keeps a copy of the local safeguarding children board guidelines on site for referral and records any existing injuries children arrive with. This supports children's well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Warm and loving relationships between the childminder and the children are evident as they enjoy lots of hugs and interaction. Children naturally turn to the childminder to assist in their play and she obliges. The childminder dedicates all her time to the children's needs and makes sure they go out for regular walks to get fresh air and exercise. Within the home the childminder provides challenging and stimulating activities, using play materials suitable for the children's age and stage of development.

Children enjoy playing games with the childminder, who sits on the floor with them singing and reading stories, to the children's delight. For example, a game of row, row, row the boat has children rocking back and forth and ends with spontaneous applause from all the children to show their joy. The childminder encourages children to do lots of arts and crafts and displays some of their work on the walls of the playroom. This shows children their work is valued by the childminder, which boosts their self-esteem.

The childminder encourages children to develop independence by asking them to do small chores for her and giving them time to complete them. These may include picking up toys, fetching nappies for her, and finding their coats before going out. Praise is given when they achieve things and this helps children to develop their confidence. Children's language skills are developing well as the childminder, at the request of parents, speaks Spanish to one child and English to the others. Consequently, one of the other children has a clear understanding of what is being said in Spanish and often responds in this language without any prompting. Parents are kept informed of the activities their children have participated in through the exchange of a daily diary for each child.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop an awareness of the local community and wider society as the childminder takes them to various toddler groups, play centres, parks and other venues to meet a variety of children and people, some of whom come from different cultures. Within the childminder's home there are resources that reflect diversity such as ethnic dolls, books written in different languages and books showing images of people from other countries. On the wall there are posters making children aware of people with disabilities. The childminder has borrowed dolls and animal figures from her local networking group that represent a person wearing glasses and a guide dog. This helps children to develop an understanding of diversity.

The childminder promotes kind, polite and respectful behaviour by acting as a good role model to the children. Unwanted behaviour is deterred by distraction or by the childminder reasoning with children. If inappropriate behaviour continues children are removed from the situation and given time just outside the playroom to reflect on their actions, with the childminder close by to talk things through. All children are valued and respected and although the childminder has no experience of caring for children with learning or physical disabilities, she endeavours to meet the needs of all children in her care.

A good partnership with parents contributes to children's well-being. The childminder shares information informally with parents at the end of each day and keeps a daily diary for each child giving parents information about food intake, how personal needs were met and activities children have participated in. This ensures continuity of care for children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder ensures children benefit from an organised environment and a structured routine. She embraces training opportunities and is always striving to improve care and learning for children, by using the knowledge learnt from the courses in her practice. The childminder provides a warm home environment where children can play and express themselves, safe in the knowledge they are well supported. The childminder has taken steps to ensure her home is safe for children to play in, but attention needs to be given to the glass cabinet in the lounge.

Regulatory documentation and relevant records are held in a confidential manner by the childminder. She has an arrangement with two other registered childminders to care for her children in an emergency situation. The children are familiar with these minders, as they meet up regularly to play. Parents have been made aware of this arrangement and have given written consent to show their approval. However, parents have not been given the opportunity to meet the other childminders in person.

A daily routine affords children opportunities for active and quiet play. The childminder has devised a number of policies and procedures to support her practice, which inform parents of the arrangements for the care of their children. These are well written, but the sick child policy needs revising. The childminder has an organised approach to childcare which helps to ensure a good standard of care. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one recommendation was made to improve care for children. Since then good progress has been made and children's safety is further supported as the childminder has attended training to improve her knowledge of child protection issues. She keeps a copy of the local safeguarding children board guidelines in her records to refer to.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection in 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):

- develop the sick child policy to include procedures to follow if a child is taken ill whilst in your care
- make sure the low level glass in the lounge does not pose a risk to children

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