

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY270777
Inspection date	12 March 2008
Inspector	Mauvene Burke
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 2004. She lives with her four adult children in a house which is in close proximity to local shops and parks, and is situated in the Herne Hill area in the London borough of Lambeth. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five years old, two of which attend on a full time basis and two who attend part time.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well by the good standards of hygiene within the home. Children are being actively encouraged to learn about the importance of good personal hygiene and

know why they need to wash their hands. For example when asked why they have to wash their hands before eating, children respond by saying that "it is to get rid of any germs". Children are mostly protected from cross-infection because they have individual blankets, flannels and hand-towels, however, the childminder does not always ensure that the nappy changing mat is wiped in-between nappy changes. This to some degree, puts children at risk of cross-infection.

Children are protected from unnecessary illness as they do not attend if they are unwell, the childminder has a clear policy relating to sick and infectious children which is shared with parents at the start of their child's placement. Parents give prior consent for the childminder to administer medication, which ensures children receive the correct dosage according to their needs.

Healthy eating is actively promoted to ensure that children learn about healthy lifestyles. Children have been involved in activities which increases their awareness of the benefits of healthy eating. For example, through cutting and sticking fruits and vegetables on their paper plate and having stories read to them regarding healthy food. The childminder is flexible in the arrangements for providing food and is happy to provide freshly cooked meals which include plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. Children gain independence as they help themselves to fresh drinking water from the water fountain. Children's individual diets are noted and catered for.

Children's daily routines are respected; the childminder understands the importance of providing sufficient time for children to rest and sleep and fits daily activities around the children's sleep times. Children have good opportunities to engage in physical activities when they attend the One O' clock club and the various toddler groups daily, at the same time, they are receiving fresh air on a daily basis.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. The childminder has created a child friendly environment with appropriate resources and posters invitingly displayed which adds to the welcoming atmosphere. However, rooms are not always maintained at an adequate temperature. Children are cared for on the ground floor of the childminder's home which consists of a very spacious lounge and a large kitchen/dining room. Space within the childminder's home is very well organised, and meets children's needs effectively. Age appropriate toys are easily accessible to the children which enables them to make their own choices. Children have ample room to play, a quiet place to rest and sleep, and a comfortable, safe place to enjoy their meals.

Children's safety is given priority; they are well supervised and appropriate equipment is used to maintain children's safety within the home. This allows them to explore their environment in safety without restrictions which supports their increasing level of confidence and independence, for example, children can move from the kitchen area to the living room area alone and engage in activities of their own choice.

Steps have been taken to ensure that hazards to children are reduced and appropriate safety equipment is in place. The childminder gives priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe and to maintaining children's safety outside the home. For example, children learn from a young age the basic rules of road safety. There is a fire blanket, and she

has devised a fire evacuation plan. However, an emergency escape plan has not been practised with the children to ensure they can be evacuated quickly from the premises, if necessary.

The childminder has a good understanding of how to safeguard children. She knows how to proceed if she has concerns about a child in her care. This is supported by her written policy which is shared with parents before children are placed in her care. This raises parents awareness of the childminder's responsibility and role in caring for children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy, settled and very content in this setting which provides them with a sense of belonging. The childminder dedicates her time to joining in with their play ensuring that they are well occupied at all times. They are praised at all times for their understanding and achievements and excellent interaction was observed throughout the inspection. Children are highly motivated and very interested in the purposeful and worthwhile activities which the childminder provides on a daily basis and which equips children with consistently high levels of challenge appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, very young children are learning about different types of vegetables and fruits and are asked to select their favourites through a cutting and sticking activity. They are introduced to vegetables such as Okra, sweet potatoes and yams. The childminder reinforces their learning by asking them if they remember what they learned the day before.

Children's language skills are developed through the effective questioning techniques used by the childminder. Children are highly valued and the childminder listens and responds to what they have to say. Children's language and mathematical thinking is developed through an extensive range of activities including songs, rhymes, counting everyday objects and story books, as well as a variety of games. For example the childminder uses visual aids to symbolize the characters portrayed in nursery rhymes such as "Nick Knack Paddy Whack"; children are given a toy dog and a bone which they use appropriately and they jump over the candle stick when participating in the rhyme "Jack be Thimble". Children are learning to sing and speak in French which helps make a child who has English as a second language feel respected and valued. A wide range of resources provides interesting opportunities for imaginative play, such as dressing-up clothes, dolls and home corner accessories where children make meals and provide drinks for everyone.

Children benefit from an extensive range of outdoor play activities, both in the garden and in the wider community, including local parks, local toddler groups as well as specific day trips. For example, children have visited the Planetarium, the Wildlife garden and the Maritime museum where they learn about the planets, mini-beasts and marine life.

Extremely warm relationships exist between the childminder and the children who are clearly recognised as individuals. Children are comforted by the minder and squeeze her tightly and bury their heads into her neck when having a cuddle with her. The childminder is skilled at adapting activities to suit the needs of all the children and recognises when children have had enough of a particular activity, quickly engaging them into something else or allowing them to make their own choice.

The childminder is very enthusiastic about her work and is successful in offering children a wide range of stimulating activities which purposefully engage them. She plans activities with the Birth to three matters framework in mind.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children have equal opportunities to access activities and resources that meet their individual needs; this helps maximise their learning and potential. Children are beginning to learn about the wider world through visits out in the local community. The childminder also arranged for the London Fire Brigade to come to her home where children were allowed to climb onto the fire engine and have a talk about the work the fire brigade does in the community. Children are learning about differences and preferences through simple discussions and stories. For example, it is explained to children that some people eat meat whilst others do not because of their religion and that these people are called vegetarians. Children are able to relate this to what they like and what their friend does not, but that this is okay.

The childminder is a good role model; she treats children with respect and manages children's behaviour in a calm and positive way, children are thus learning right from wrong. All children in the home behave very well and know what is expected of them as a result of familiar routines and consistent expectations and explanations from the childminder. Children are learning to share and take turns as they wait patiently for their turn to take a fruit or to choose a song. The childminder has not cared for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, however, she has a comprehensive policy which is shared with parents describing how she would support and ensure children are included in her setting.

An effective partnership between the childminder and parents ensures children's care is consistent. Children's individual needs are discussed with the parents before the placement begins. The childminder keeps parents informed of their child's care needs and activities through daily informal discussions. She respects parents' views and wishes in meeting the needs of their children. Financial and care arrangements are agreed and confirmed through the use of written contracts. Parents are given information about their right to complain and how they can do this. Letters from parents, past and present, describe their feelings about the childminder and the care she offers. Statements such as the childminder "bringing stability into our lives" and "the performance of care is absolutely priceless" are some of the descriptions used to describe the childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are relaxed and at ease in the childminder's home, which is organised effectively to meet their individual needs. She provides an excellent range of meaningful activities which contributes to all areas of children's learning. The childminder provides good care in a homely, loving environment; this is a particular strength of this setting. She works closely with parents and provides lots of individual, caring support to children.

The childminder's vetting procedures ensure that all adults living in her home are suitable to be in the proximity of children. The childminder maintains a very good standard of hygiene and safety within her home, but nappy changing procedures do not always protect children from cross-infection. All areas of the premises used for childminding that are currently accessible to children are safe, the childminder has yet to practise her emergency evacuation procedure with the children and ensure that the rooms used for childminding are maintained at an appropriate temperature.

The childminder has a secure understanding of the National Standards for childminding and her responsibility to comply with these to provide good quality childcare. She ensures that her knowledge in childcare is kept up-to-date by attending a range of courses such as the Birth to three, Safeguarding Children and the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to provide play material that reflects disability. The childminder now has a range of resources such as small world people, books, a calendar and puzzles which positively reflects disability. Discussion also takes place with children to raise their awareness of needs and any questions are answered sensitively and at the child's level of understanding. Therefore, their understanding of disability is enhanced through the childminders positive approach.

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 complaint 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):

- reduce the risk of cross-infection by making sure that the nappy changing mat is hygienically cleaned between nappy changes
- ensure that rooms used by the children are maintained at an adequate temperature
- practise the emergency escape plan with 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