

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY276413
Inspection date	27 February 2008
Inspector	Amanda Gill
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 has been registered since December 2003. She lives with her husband and two children aged eight and thirteen months old in a three-bedroom house, situated in a residential area of Elm Park, Essex. The childminder works with a co-minder who is her mother. The majority of the minding takes place at the co-minder's/mother's home. The premises are within walking distance of a district line tube station, local schools, shops, parks, bus routes and community resources. All areas of the property are used for childminding; there is a fully enclosed large garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children aged under eight years at any one time, when working with co-minder can care for a maximum of eleven children together under eight years. There are twelve children on roll at present, all of which are cared for on a full time, or a part-time basis. The childminder visits the local library and the park on a regular basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA). The family have two pet guinea pigs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in a very clean and well maintained home. The childminder follows excellent cleaning routines daily which are completed when the children are not there. The children have an excellent understanding of how to maintain their own good health to a high standard and are encouraged by the childminder to meet their personal care needs independently. For example, they fully understand that they must wash their hands before eating, after stroking or feeding the guinea pigs and when coming in from the garden. They confidently tell the inspector that they have finished playing in the garden and 'I am going to wash my hands now' and know why this is necessary. Effective nappy changing practices are in place and all nappies are placed in the disposal unit in the garden, which means that the potential risk of cross infection has been minimised. Children's welfare is very well promoted because the daily routine is based around the needs of the children, for example, to ensure the younger children have an afternoon sleep if they need one.

Children are offered a very good range of food and drinks and the childminder ensures children are provided with healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. Menu's are devised by the children and meals and snacks include vegetables, fruit, range of cereals, toast, pasta, chicken, soup, toad in the hole and older children enjoy helping to make pizzas and fruit salads which they eat afterwards. Mealtimes are enjoyable, social occasions used by the childminder to encourage the children to appreciate the goodness of the food provided.

Children's medical needs are effectively met. The childminder has a good knowledge of first aid, she has a comprehensive first aid kit in the kitchen and a separate one for taking on outings. There are appropriate systems in place to record accidents and medication administered. The childminder has devised policies and procedures for the administration of medication, for medical emergencies and for dealing with unwell children. These have been discussed and agreed with parents and because the childminder has developed clear procedures to follow in the event that a child needs hospital treatment, their health is well promoted.

The children greatly benefit from a balanced routine which offers them time to rest and relax according to their own individual needs. Children enjoy indoor and outdoor physical experiences and learn how their bodies work, when they ride cars around the garden or build with soft shapes in the lounge area. Gardening activities, such as growing leeks, onions, potatoes and carrots and watering Wellington planters, further develop their knowledge of how things grow and what we need to stay healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well secure and well maintained environment. The childminder provides an environment that is warm, friendly and homely. Children are at ease and well settled. Children are able to freely access the toys and resources available. Resources on offer are in good repair and the childminder regularly washes the toys to ensure that they are hygienic. They are stimulating, fun and provide sufficient challenge. The childminder rotates toys once a week to maintain the children's interest.

The childminder has a comprehensive knowledge of health and safety and ensures she carries out a visual risk assessment of home to ensure it is free from potential hazards before children arrive each day. This means that the children are able to move around safely, freely and independently. Children learn about road safety and emergency evacuation procedures as part of their daily routines. Effective fire safety precautions are implemented. This includes having maintained smoke alarms on both levels of the home, an accessible fire blanket in the kitchen and a clear fire evacuation procedure that is practised every month with the children.

Children use a wide range of safe and developmentally suitable resources which are very well organised and easily accessible to encourage their independence. The childminder reinforces safe practices to the children, for example, she uses appropriate language to explain using a knife safely when the children spread jam onto their slices of toast for a snack. She encourages children to clear up after themselves so that they are not at risk of tripping or hurting themselves. The children's safety is prioritised and the childminder is vigilant in her supervision at all times.

The childminder safeguards and promotes children's welfare well and has all the required procedures and documents in place. The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and knows what procedures to take if she is concerned about a child's welfare. These are discussed with parents prior to minding to ensure that they are kept well informed. She has completed a safeguarding children course and as a result she is confident in her ability to deal with any child protection concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children have developed extremely close, trusting relationships with the childminder and her family. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the importance of play in children's development and provides a well planned range of activities supported by excellent resources. Children's vocabulary and language is enriched by the childminder's interaction, through use of books, puzzles and games. For example, children enjoy repeating the sounds of the animals when playing a guessing game on the rug in the lounge, shouting "I found it meow".

Children are offered fantastic opportunities to learn from the extensive range of activities and play resources available. Children make excellent progress when they spend time with the childminder. She ensures that activities planned are of interest to the individual children attending. Children have complete access to the ground floor of the home which has space for children to relax or engage in activities from an excellent selection of toys and resources. There is a large range of dolls, Lego, cars, building bricks, and books for children to play with, as well as puzzles, shape sorters, board games and lots of art and craft materials. There is a large secure garden with an excellent range of play resources that includes cars, bikes, wooden play house and kitchen, bats, balls, ropes and an additional play room at the end of the garden also used for storage during the winter months. All children enjoy purposeful and exciting outings such as local parks and woods, Lego land and most recently a trip to the local Ice-Skating rink. Children talk with enthusiasm about their trip being able to make it round the rink on skates.

Activities are spontaneous, including new ideas the childminder has seen elsewhere, for example children love lying on the carpet after school in the dark, shining a torch on the ceiling, using the foam alphabet to spell out their names and other words. She incorporates homework time in her plans, in agreement with parents, and provides resources that are both fun and educational.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children benefit from spending time at the childminder's home because they are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes. This is achieved through the positive and professional partnerships that the childminder has established with them. Children's individual needs are met as there is an effective verbal communication system in place. The childminder has a well written complaints procedure in place that all parents are made aware of, however, there is currently no confidential system in place to record these. Time is spent at the end of each day for the childminder to speak with parents to let them know their child's daily routines, for example, what they have eaten, drinks taken, nappy changes, sleep patterns and activities. Parents value the service provided by the childminder and have access to a range of effective policies and procedures so that they have a good understanding of the childminder's work.

The childminder has experience of caring for children with a disability and/or learning difficulty and there are good systems in place to support all children in her care. The childminder demonstrates a positive and realistic attitude to meeting the needs of all children. Children's needs are well met because the childminder has obtained very good information from parents about each child's individual needs and backgrounds.

Children's individuality is respected because the childminder seeks information from parents about their needs and preferences, for example with regard to health, culture or diet. Children begin to recognise and respect diversity as they use resources such as dolls reflecting different skin tones, or celebrating different festivals such as Chinese New Year, where the children made bookmarks with their Chinese horoscopes and had fun eating rice and noodles with chop sticks. The childminder has limited resources that represent positive images of individuals with a disability she currently borrows resources from toy library but plans to increase her own resources over time. The childminder uses inclusive practise and an appropriate Equal Opportunities policy to teach children about caring for one another and not discriminating against others.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a very motivated and committed childminder in a warm, welcoming, well-organised and child-friendly environment. The organisation of the day allows children to participate in both planned and free play activities. The childminder attends regular training to update her knowledge and improve her skills, such as, Makaton, behaviour management, creative development and advanced food hygiene and plans to continue to attend more training in the future. This ensures she is able to provide appropriate care for the children she looks after. Children are well supervised by the childminder who ensures only suitable people have contact with them. This contributes to keeping them safe. The wide range and quality of activities and opportunities both indoors and outdoors are suitable for all children. The setting is homely and very well organised to support children in their play and appropriate storage ensures children of all ages become independent.

All required documentation is in place to safeguard and support children's welfare and is stored securely and made available for inspection. All relevant information is shared with parents, thus maintaining good relationships. The childminder is aware that records must be maintained if complaints are received. The childminder efficiently uses the policies and procedures to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. She shares them regularly with parents to keep them well informed about their child's activities and the service she provides.

Children's welfare and care needs are well met as the childminder has a very good understanding of the needs of the children in her care. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At her last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that emergency contact details are available for all children cared for, ensure that the daily attendance register records children's time of arrival and departure and to provide a first aid box with contents which are checked frequently and replaced as necessary.

The childminder keeps all emergency contact details in each child's individual record file and an additional copy is kept with the emergency first aid travel kit in case of an emergency when on outings. The childminder has implemented a registration system that includes accurate arrival and departure times of all children in her care and has a fully stocked first aid box kept in the kitchen and was checked at inspection.

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.

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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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- consider implementing a confidential system for recording complaints
- continue to increase the range of activities and resources that reflect positive images of disability

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