

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY292739
Inspection date 17 March 2008
Inspector Sjertsje Ebbers

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 outstanding. 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 2004. She lives with her husband and three children in a flat in Westminster within walking distance of Edgware Road tube station, public transport and community resources. The whole flat is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed communal area available for outside play. There are no pets on the premises. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three children under eight at any one time.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop excellent attitudes to adopting a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy the highly nutritious home-made meals that incorporate dishes from all over the world. Top priority is given to ensuring their different dietary and religious needs are fully catered for and therefore the provision of meals is discussed at length with parents when children start. The interesting menus are displayed in a friendly manner on the wall to keep parents fully informed. During

the inspection children help themselves to a plate full of different fruits, such as raspberries, satsuma, banana and blueberries. The childminder also introduces children to new tastes, such as loganberries. When a young child picks up a sour raspberry, little attention is given to his unease, and not much later he eats and enjoys the rest of the raspberries. Because of the childminder's skilful and sensitive approach, children are not easily faced by new or different tastes so they learn to develop a wide palate for healthy foods. Drinks are available regularly throughout the day to ensure children's fluid levels are maintained.

Exceptional regard is given to promote children's health and the childminder is a qualified nurse. She shows great commitment to act in their best interest and to take prompt action when children are unwell or have an accident. The childminder keeps parents fully informed of her observations with regard to their child's health and provides useful advice where she can. A record of accidents is kept and entries are accurately recorded and shared with the parents on the day. To keep herself up-to-date with the latest best practice on how to promote children's health and hygiene, the childminder attends short training courses and reviews policies and procedures for children's illnesses and for the administration of medication. She has attended training on food safety and uses this good knowledge in her daily childminding practice. For example, to prevent cross-contamination she uses different coloured chopping boards for different food groups. She sets an excellent example for children; she keeps her home very clean and regularly washes her hands. Young children begin to develop an understanding of hygiene and what they should not touch because the childminder acts promptly, for example when a child touches the bin. Older children learn to understand why good hand washing is important, through positive and effective reinforcement.

The childminder demonstrates a secure knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. The emotional wellbeing of younger children is successfully promoted through the childminder's close and warm relationship she has with them. Children are praised for their efforts and achievements, and continuous interaction promotes their self esteem. The childminder closely monitors how they grow and develop. Children highly benefit from the daily opportunities they have for physical play and exercise in all weathers. Regular exercise includes walks to schools and playgroups and outings such as Hyde Park. Parent and toddler groups provide additional opportunities for children to participate in physical play, such as dance, and social interaction. Children's home routines are followed to provide consistency and to ensure children's physical and emotional needs are effectively met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is paramount. The childminder provides children with an excellent balance between freedom and safe limits. The home is fully risk assessed and high-level safety measures within the home safeguard children very well. For example, adults' identification and authorisation are checked on entry to the home and a written record of visitors is maintained. The childminder is extremely alert and watches children at all times. Her considerable knowledge of the children's characters and their interests allows the childminder to be very pro-active and take preventative measures to keep them safe. For example, as soon as meal times are over, furniture is moved to discourage a younger child with little sense of danger from unsafe climbing. On outings children are clearly visible with fluorescent jackets which allow the childminder to locate them easily. All children wear wristbands with the her phone number. The childminder uses reins and a buggy to keep them close and teaches the more independent children to hold on to the buggy. Older children are well protected because they are learning when, how and who to ask for help and have visited the police station as part of a learning experience. Fire

drills are practiced with the children nearly every week so they are developing a very quick and routine response to an emergency at the childminder's home. A visit to the fire station has further enhanced the childminder's and children's awareness of good fire safety.

The childminder's home is cosy and very welcoming to children and parents. Children feel self-assured, supported and very safe because the childminder provides consistent routines and boundaries and they are comforted when they need it. They can play with a wealth of high-quality equipment which is systematically organised to make the best use of the space and to maximise their play and learning opportunities. The childminder has carefully considered the suitability of children's toys with reference to their safety, age and ability. This ensures that children can play safely with highly stimulating and age-appropriate resources. Toys are kept in excellent condition because the childminder checks them for faults and cleans them with the children.

Children are effectively protected from harm and neglect because the childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. She is extremely clear and confident about her responsibility to protect children, and has recently attended training. She has developed a written child protection policy that is shared with parents from the outset. This ensures that the information is provided to parents that clearly inform them of her role and responsibility. The frequent, informal communication that takes place with parents allow for very strong partnerships between all those involved in keeping safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

All areas of children's development are significantly enhanced by the exceptional quality of the childminder's interactions. Children of all ages are fully integrated into all activities, as the childminder has carefully planned her environment, using 'Birth to three matters' and the 'Foundation Stage' effectively. This means that children operate independently at their own level, with added support from the childminder. For example, children gain self-help skills from a young age because the childminder allows them cut their own banana with a wooden knife. Children are listened to and their communication skills are well promoted as the childminder positively responds to their gestures, sounds and questions. The childminder is very skilled in encouraging young children to express themselves. The children clearly understand what is being said and respond in their own way trying to communicate with her and each other. The childminder and children also use sign language with each other which helps them to express themselves in different ways. Children thoroughly enjoy listening to stories and get involved by turning the pages of books. They learn about the meaning of words through the childminder's expressive reading and her constant friendly and animated dialogue with the children. The childminder takes children on regular trips to the library which further helps them to form an enthusiasm for books and reading.

Children are becoming keen learners because the childminder makes optimum use of everyday play opportunities for them to acquire new skills and knowledge. For example, children are encouraged to count the steps as they go upstairs. The childminder organises her time exceptionally well to ensure children benefit from a substantial amount of one-to-one interaction. Children are fully included in her own organisational tasks, which provide meaningful and versatile learning experiences. For example, children get involved with baking, which helps them to learn about measures, and also help sorting socks so they learn about the different colours and sizes. The regular outings to the city farm provides children with a vast amount of valuable experiences about nature and living creatures and they have grown their own plants

and vegetables. Children also have excellent opportunities to frequently engage with their peers and form positive social relationships. These include visits to toddler groups and play parks where the childminder joins in with their play. She has a very good understanding when to support them and when to let children explore on their own or amongst themselves. As a result children are always engaged in purposeful play and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's awareness of the local community is fostered extremely well as they visit local places of interest such as community halls and Regent Park. Their understanding of the wider world is explored through exciting activities and stories reflecting positive images of cultures and disabilities. These include excellent books about different religions in which stereo-typical images are challenged and are explained at their own level. Children's remarks and questions about different people and their choices are fully discussed to ensure that children begin to understand and value diversity. Their own cultures and religions are respected and parents are fully included in whether to celebrate certain festivals such as Eid. Equal access to activities is highly promoted and the childminder has a very positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example, she can cater for children with hearing difficulties because of her knowledge of Makaton.

Children show high-levels of self esteem and a strong sense of belonging as the childminder places great emphasis on listening to them which allows them to feel valued. Children make themselves at home, confidently making choices about their play. The childminder skilfully manages behaviour and is very consistent in her approach. She sets clear routines and boundaries and respects their maturity so children know and understand what is acceptable. Older children respect the house rules because they have helped making up a list which includes good manners. Their social skills, such as the sharing of toys, are well promoted. The childminder encourages children to take responsibility for their own actions and helps children to develop empathy. Throughout the inspection children receive praise, cuddles and smiles for their good behaviour.

Children highly benefit from the friendly and very professional relationships between the childminder and parents. The childminder has set up very effective systems to work closely together and to ensure children's individual needs are met. For example, parents receive a daily written report with much detail about the children's care and learning. Children also have individual books with pictures which show their enjoyment and the progress they are making whilst in her care. Lots of information is shared with parents about the children's routines which ensures children settle well. They are extremely well informed about the childminder's business, by an abundance of posters and detailed policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder has developed a comprehensive range of her own thorough policies and procedures. They reflect her excellent practice and her expert knowledge of the expectations set in the National standards. All policies are shared with parents from the outset and parents sign them to acknowledge they have read and understood the information. All documentation is clear and regularly reviewed to ensure the information is up-to-date. Children's confidentiality is highly valued and respected and their records are stored securely and only shared with parents.

Children benefit greatly from the childminder's expert practice and her clear commitment to continued training to update her skills in many areas of child care. She holds qualifications in childcare and has attended a substantial amount of recent training events. The childminder is a member of the local childminding network, and she provides other local childminders with advice. Her strong methods of reflective practice mean that her strengths and areas for development are clearly identified, so that the standard of care and education continues to be very high. The childminder provides an excellent balance of play opportunities for children in a well organised environment. She uses the available space successfully to provide children with areas for outdoor and indoor play, sleep and quiet activities.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

No recommendations were given at the last inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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