

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141178
Inspection date	29 November 2007
Inspector	Jane Davenport
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 1998. She lives with her husband in a ground floor flat, which is situated in the Highams Park area of the London borough of Waltham Forest. The whole of the premises is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to provide care for four children under eight years, and is currently minding three children on a full and part time basis. She walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder has a pet dog. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning about good hygiene practices through everyday routines such as washing their hands after using the toilet and after being in the garden. They receive gentle reminders to remember to use soap and to rinse and dry their hands properly. The childminder ensures

her home is clean and hygienic, with effective arrangements in place with regard to her pet; for example, children cannot access the dog's feeding utensils and the garden area is checked rigorously before children are allowed out, thus minimising any potential health hazards.

Parents provide meals and snacks for their children, and the childminder follows their instructions regarding the storage and preparation of these. She speaks to parents and children about healthy options and gathers all relevant information regarding diet and medical history to ensure that children's dietary and medical needs are met.

Children's physical development is well supported with long walks and visits to local parks and soft play provision, where they have the opportunity to enjoy large apparatus such as swings, slides and the ball pool.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in a child-friendly, well-organised environment which allows them to move around and play safely, where there are good systems in place for their safe arrival and departure. Regular risk assessments are carried out and children benefit from a good range of safety measures, such as functioning smoke alarms and safety catches to kitchen cupboards and drawers. Children are aware of their boundaries and are encouraged to keep themselves safe; for example, they receive gentle reminders not to run indoors, not to throw things and to be careful of the fireplace. The childminder is vigilant when promoting children's safety and instigates conversations with them on the subject; for example, when playing with the play iron and ironing board, they discuss the dangers of touching a real iron and a child states 'They can burn you; you have to be very careful'.

Children have easy and safe access to toys and resources that are stimulating and suitable for their stages of development, including natural materials. Equipment and resources are clean and in good condition and there are effective procedures in place to ensure that they pose no risk to children. The childminder was able to describe how she would evacuate her premises with the children in the event of an emergency, but the procedure is not currently consolidated in writing and has not been practised with the children.

The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of child protection issues and knows how to proceed if she has concerns about a child in her care. This supports children's well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very well settled at the childminder's home; they enjoy a warm, caring interaction with the childminder and also relate well to one another. Children's language and imagination is very well developed and they express their ideas in a variety of ways. For example, they play imaginatively with the people and cars included with the train set, and draw upon their own experiences, as they discuss the level crossing just down the road and how the barriers come down when a train is coming and then go back up again to let the cars across. They also enjoy playing in the play tunnel and tent, hiding from one another, pretending to go to sleep and then waking up with a loud 'Boo'!

The childminder actively encourages the children to be independent and to solve problems for themselves; for example, she encourages older children to be patient with younger ones, who

may take longer to complete a task, and lets children solve the problem of the missing piece of train track themselves by searching for it under the sofa and in its box. This, together with the praise she gives them, heightens their sense of achievement when it is found.

Children enjoy music and singing and looking at books, either on their own or with the childminder. Early writing skills are developing well during drawing and writing activities and left-handed children receive appropriate support to learn to write their name the right way round.

Regular visits to Tumble in the Jungle, the library, the farm and the local lake give children the opportunity to mix with other children and adults, which enhances their social and emotional development; they also provide them with different experiences, such as promoting their physical development as they walk the dog, and learning about the environment as they notice the seasonal changes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected and treated as individuals, and the childminder meets their differing needs well. She is very in-tune with the children's individual needs and divides her time equally and fairly so that all children receive the attention they require. Children learn about diverse cultures through a range of anti-discriminatory resources such as dolls and books, and through celebrating some of the different religious and cultural festivals. However, positive images in terms of gender and disability are more limited.

The childminder is positive and sensitive about working with children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and has had experience of this in the past. She works closely with parents to ensure that their child's needs are met and that they are fully included.

Children's behaviour is very good; this is because the childminder is firm, fair and consistent, and children know their boundaries. She gives clear explanations for required behaviour and discusses right and wrong with the children at a level that they are able to understand. Children are encouraged to share, take turns and to help tidy up; for example, by helping to put away the train and track before getting something else out to play with. They receive lots of warm praise for helping and working together.

Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to working in partnership with parents. This ensures that children's individual needs are well catered for, and enables parents to play an active role in the care of their child. Information about the childminder's policies and procedures, which are currently being developed, is shared with parents, who receive daily feedback on their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. The home provides a secure base for children, which enables them to make informal choices about their play and express their individual needs; they move around with confidence and are able to explore their environment safely.

Record keeping is good. Registers are up-to-date and contain children's hours of attendance. Children benefit from the policies and procedures that are in place, which generally promote their welfare, safety and well-being. The childminder keeps detailed information on children, which enables her to cater for their individual needs well and deal promptly with situations such as contacting parents should there be an emergency. All documentation is kept securely, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained. Children and parents benefit from the childminder's commitment to updating her knowledge through attending relevant training and researching childcare topics on the internet.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, a recommendation was set to notify Ofsted of any changes. The childminder is now fully aware of which changes need to be reported to Ofsted and makes sure that they are notified when appropriate; this has had a positive effect on her organisation.

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.

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):

- devise a written emergency evacuation procedure and practise this with minded children
- extend the range of toys and resources to include positive images of gender and 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