

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	102131
Inspection date	05 February 2008
Inspector	Hilary Preece
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 1992. She lives with her two adult children in a three-storey maisonette situated in a modern housing complex in the Kentish Town area of London. The childminding mainly takes place on the first floor and children have access to a communal garden and children's play area. The maisonette is close to local shops, open spaces and public transport.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding five children under five on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends local groups for children on a regular basis. She holds the Camden and Westminster Quality Assurance award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and medical needs are met because the childminder has some well-established policies and practices. Children who are unwell do not attend the setting so the risk of infections spreading to other children is minimised. Their individual health and dietary needs are clearly discussed and agreed with parents so that appropriate care is given. Record systems to support children's health are well managed. Children receive appropriate treatment if they are sick or hurt because the childminder maintains a valid first aid certificate and has access to first aid supplies at home and on outings.

Children learn about safe hygiene because there are consistent routines for washing their hands after using the toilet and wiping their faces when dirty. Nappy changing areas are disinfected after use and individual bedding and hand towels are provided to reduce the risk of cross-contamination between children.

Children eat a generally well-balanced range of snacks and meals. They are introduced to healthy fresh fruits and encouraged to try new foods, as well as eating the more traditional children's meals with which they are familiar. Children have access to drinking water or their preferred choice of drink throughout the day so they do not go thirsty. Children benefit from daily exercise and fresh air. They walk to the park, explore climbing apparatus and use physical play equipment at the groups they attend. Opportunities are provided for children to rest or sleep peacefully when they are tired.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed to the setting and kept safe and secure. Careful consideration has been given to make sure children are quickly evacuated in the event of an emergency in the home. Children have sufficient play space and safe access to bathroom and rest facilities. Children help themselves to a good range of toys and resources that are well maintained and appropriate for their stage of development. They use child-sized furniture that helps them take part in activities safely and comfortably. Children have access to an extended range of equipment and resources when attending groups and play centres for children in the community. They become aware of how to use equipment and play safely because the childminder points out dangers to them.

Children are kept safe on outings because of some effective procedures. For example, children wear the same T-shirt so they can be easily identified in a group and a wrist band with the childminder's and parents' contact details to help them be reunited quickly in the event they get separated. They learn about road safety and the childminder carries out checks on public areas to ensure they are safe for children.

Children are safeguarded because the childminder has a good understanding of child protection. She updates her knowledge through attending training workshops, has access to the necessary information and follows a clear procedure in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Further measures, such as using an effective password system, ensure that children are safely collected by authorised persons only.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well into the familiar routines. Their individual needs are recognised and met well by the childminder, which makes the children feel happy and secure. They make positive relationships with the childminder, responding well to her warmth and attention. They also learn to mix with other children at local groups in the community that they attend regularly. This helps develop their social skills and confidence. Children learn right from wrong because the childminder sets clear expectations for their behaviour and encourages children to say 'sorry' if things go wrong. This helps children learn the consequences of their actions.

Children's learning and development is monitored and promoted effectively. The childminder is developing a system for making observations of children and planning their next steps of learning. This helps children make progress. Children are provided with meaningful experiences provided by a good balance of free play in the home and a variety of outings in the local community. Children make choices about what to play with, which helps them become independent and develop their own ideas. Children are absorbed in what they do because they are interested in the toys and activities on offer. For example, they are keen to create a picture with glue, tissue and cards and proudly tell the childminder what their picture is called. Their achievements are praised by the childminder and shared with their parents, which helps develop children's self-esteem.

Children's language and communication skills are supported effectively by the childminder. She encourages their conversation and understanding through asking lots of questions and has started to introduce some Makaton signing into her practice to help children who find it difficult to communicate with language. Children are encouraged to enjoy books and attend regular story and rhyme sessions at the library. Children enjoy exploring with their senses by experimenting with paint, glue, bubbles and water. Overall activities and opportunities promote all aspects of children's development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued as individuals and fully included in the setting. They are treated with equal concern and an ethos of respect and kindness is promoted through the 'Ten Golden Rules' that the childminder has in use. Children are encouraged to use mirrors to recognise who they are and feel good about themselves. Effective procedures ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported and routines adapted so they can take an equally active role in the setting. Children benefit from a good range of activities and resources that help them value diversity. For example, they become aware of differences through using books, puzzles and toys that positively reflect a range of people and backgrounds, and they attend celebrations of festivals in the community. This gives them first-hand experience and helps them recognise the differing lifestyles and needs of others.

Children's individual needs are met because the childminder works closely with parents and carers to make sure their wishes are respected. All aspects of care are discussed and agreed initially and parents receive a detailed pack of information. This helps build strong relationships and promotes the shared care of the children. Parents are kept well informed about their children's daily care. The childminder makes sure they know what sort of day they have had and shares the children's achievements with them. Daily journals are kept as a record of progress that parents are invited to see if they wish.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a high regard for children's well-being. She is committed to developing her practice through regular training and the achievement of a quality assurance award. She is proactive in introducing new ideas to benefit the children, such as learning sign language to help children communicate more easily. She makes sure that routines, outings and activities are planned ahead so that she has plenty of time to support children in their care, learning and play. Good use is made of resources in the local community to enhance the experiences provided for children and to add variety to their day.

Children benefit from the childminder's well-organised approach to managing her business. She keeps efficient records and documents that accurately reflect her practice. She has systems in place to make sure records are stored confidentially and reviewed as necessary. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable. There were no areas for improvement from the previous inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 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

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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):

- check the contents of the first aid box have not expired and are safe to use.

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