

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 404365
Inspection date 20 February 2008
Inspector Suzanne Joyce Stedman

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 1995. She lives with her husband and daughter aged 15 in North Stifford, Essex. The whole of the childminder's bungalow is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding seven aged from one to five years. The childminder's husband who is also a registered childminder collects children from two local schools. The family have a snake, a hamster, a guinea pig and four rabbits.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a very clean and hygienic home environment where they are protected from infection because the childminder follows good hygiene routines. Children learn effectively about their own personal hygiene as they discuss health and hygiene issues with the childminder. Children know to clean their hands when they have been playing in the garden or with the pets.

Children are protected from cross-infection because the childminder has good procedures and documentation in place. For example, an exclusion period is included in parental contracts to ensure that when children are sick they are kept at home so other children do not become infected.

The childminder works well with parents who like to provide their children's packed lunches, they work together ensuring that the children have a good balanced diet. Drinks are provided throughout the session. Children also enjoy cooking while at the childminders.

Children learn that exercise is fun, good for them and helps them keep fit when they regularly go on walks in the local area and visit Grays Beach, Southend Sea Life Centre, March farm and Monkey Bizz. This promotes a healthy attitude to exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle and encourages them to adopt this lifestyle for their future good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

All children are made to feel welcome in the childminder's home. This fosters the children's sense of security and helps them separate from their parents and carers happily because they feel secure in the welcoming environment and the childminder's and her co-minders care. Children have opportunities to engage in a range of activities because there is good space available to them for different sorts of play. For example, the older children sit at the table in the living room busily drawing and colouring in while younger children enjoy playing with the play dough in the kitchen. There is a good range of play materials however limited resources showing people's differences and similarities.

Children's safety is promoted well because the childminder is meticulous in ensuring her home stays safe for the children. For example, she records that she regularly tests the smoke alarms to ensure they are in working order and has devised an emergency escape plan. Children are, therefore, able to develop their natural curiosity and explore the home freely and in safety. Children are also protected when out of the home because the childminder carefully considers potential hazards. They learn effectively about the actions they have to take to keep themselves safe as they grow in independence. The older children learn how to walk holding hands and to look both ways before crossing the road with the childminder.

Children are protected because the childminder has a good understanding of her role in safeguarding all children. She has a copy of the latest child protection booklet and has attended training. The childminder maintains regular, informal communication with parents which develop strong partnerships between all those involved in keeping children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from the superb and meaningful interaction of their caring childminder. Children receive excellent support because the childminder plans a broad range of experiences to promote their all-round development. The childminder knows the children well and makes useful observations of what they can do, to help her plan stimulating activities to help them achieve their next steps and fulfil their potential.

Children's language development is promoted extremely well and at every opportunity. This is because the childminder tunes in to the children's development very effectively. Children enjoy everyday routines as the childminder chats with them encouraging them to vocalise and to link words with actions.

Children's playfulness is promoted at every opportunity as the childminder plays along side them with the dolls house and play dough where they enjoy squeezing, pulling and shaping the dough. They dance spontaneously to the favourite tunes of the background music in the setting.

Children have excellent opportunities to explore and investigate messy play through a range of activities both in and out of the home. For example, they enjoy digging, sieving and building wet and dry sand in the garden.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children have good relationships with the childminder because they have been cared for by her since they were babies and she knows them well. Children have a very strong sense of belonging because they are made to feel valued as part of an extended family.

All children are treated as individuals and with respect by the childminder, which promotes their sense of self-worth effectively. Children are provided with equality of opportunity in their everyday routines. For example, boys and girls play with a range of play materials that promote their understanding of positive gender roles.

Children are encouraged to greet each other and say goodbye to their parents which helps them develop secure and trusting relationships. Children learn good social skills to enable them to build strong and warm relationships with the childminder and the other children. They learn how to share and take turns and the older children learn how to help care for the younger children and pets. Children's good behaviour is promoted through lots of positive language and encouragement. Subsequently, children are well-behaved, polite and helpful.

The children benefit from seeing the positive relationships between the childminder and their parents and carers. The childminder actively promotes an open two-way communication with all parents and carers to ensure that she can offer consistent and good quality care and provide for 'additional needs' if required.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from an exceptionally well-organised routine and stimulating programme of activities. Children are very happy, comfortable and settled in a warm and caring environment where their individual needs are well met. The children spend their time purposefully and all activities are planned to maximise their play, learning and development opportunities and take into account each child's individual needs.

Excellent and comprehensively written policies and procedures are in place which is individual to the setting. They address the National Standards and have a positive impact on children's safety and well-being. All documentation, which is regularly reviewed and updated, is shared with parents to keep them well informed about the service.

Children benefit from the care of a childminder who is highly motivated. She liaises with other childminders to discuss current childminding issues and provide a support system which, through experience, has been found to work well.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to devise and practise an emergency escape plan. This plan is in place the children and childminder regularly practise fire drills which are recorded. Therefore, children are aware of what to do in the case of an emergency and can leave to home quickly and safely.

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):

- consider providing activities and resources to help children appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences.

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