

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 402689
Inspection date 20 February 2008
Inspector Paula Jane Hayhow / Susan Ennis

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 2001. She lives with her husband and three children aged 15, nine and a year old in the London Borough of Islington. The ground floor of the childminder's flat is used for childminding together with a bedroom upstairs used for sleeping young children. There is a park available for outdoor play. The local schools and shops are within walking distance.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding two children aged over five years who attend on a part-time basis. The childminder can attend the local toddler group with children of an appropriate age. She is part of the Islington South Childminding Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a comfortable, clean home. They are learning about the importance of personal hygiene through daily routines such as washing their hands before eating, after

being to the bathroom and putting their hands over their mouths when coughing. They clearly understand the rationale why they need to protect themselves from germs and infections and have reminder posters in the bathroom area as an extra prompt. The childminder cleans the premises regularly using antibacterial sprays for work surfaces, provides paper towels for drying hands to prevent cross-contamination and uses separate chopping boards when preparing meals and snacks thus preventing the spread of infection. Children are well nourished and their health is promoted due to the childminder's good knowledge and understanding of healthy eating. They are offered nutritious and wholesome meals and snacks which the childminder prepares using a balanced range of fresh ingredients limiting the use of salt, sugar and fat. Children are given the opportunity to learn about healthy foods and how to peel, cut and prepare the fruit for themselves thus promoting their independence. The childminder discusses individual dietary requirements with parents and keeps an accurate record of these so that the needs of all children can be met.

Children participate in a wide range of physical activities, contributing to their good health. The childminder ensures that there are daily opportunities for outdoor activities, such as walks to and from school, playing in the park on the slide, climbing frame, swings or running and kicking games such as football. On inclement days the children play indoors and have opportunities to dance and sing, moving around the home confidently. They enjoy making and designing paper aeroplanes and can throw these with some precision, seeing how far these can travel through the air. These activities help children develop control of their bodies and improve their physical and manipulative skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a stimulating, welcoming and child-orientated environment. The childminder ensures that the play room is set up with different activities and that resources are safe and stimulating for the age and developmental stage of the children attending. Children are able to independently select activities from a range of good quality toys and equipment and the childminder checks these regularly to ensure that broken items are either mended or discarded. The children's welfare is further promoted because the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and would know what to do should she have a concern. She has devised a policy document to refer to and has recently attended additional training.

Children are cared for in a secure and generally safe environment. Risks of accidental injury are minimised because the childminder is vigilant and has thought about her work in order to reduce potential hazards, for example, she carries out regular risk assessments to identify any concerns. The children carry out evacuation drills and know what action to take in the event of a fire. The childminder teaches the children about road safety and this is practised on their daily walks. The older children have a clear understanding of stranger danger and know the muster point at school pick up time. However, the children safety could be affected by having access to the kettle and there are only two smoke detectors fitted in the three storey home. This could prevent a quick response in the event of a fire.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and their independence is developed as they make choices about toys, books and activities. They confidently choose their own play materials from a plentiful stock

which is set out for easy reaching and offers both interest and challenge. They have a good relationship with the childminder who joins in with their play and shows that she enjoys being with them. She is particularly good at responding to the children's responses, questions and interests. For example, she uses her knowledge and understanding of each child attending to bring all areas of learning into their play and routines and to make this fun such as gaining an understanding of number through counting and making cakes together. She ensures that each child can measure out and mix the ingredients together and observe the changes that take place when chocolate is melted thus giving the children an appreciation of volume and capacity. Children are naturally inquisitive and enjoy experiences such as exploring the world about them on planned outings to the zoo, aquarium and museums or local walks to the park to look for bugs and collect leaves to make prints and pictures.

Children's progress is good because the childminder is skilled, knowledgeable and creative in her work. She has a clear understanding of relevant guidance such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework which she can use when caring for younger children. She uses her knowledge gained from further training courses to provide good quality care and promote children's learning and development in all areas ensuring that they spend their time positively. The childminder plans activities to cover all areas of play, ensuring that the children have access to a varied, stimulating range of activities which includes imaginative play, weekly visits to the library, construction and craft activities such as making pictures with glitter and paint. The children adeptly use paintbrushes, sticking tape and can make frames for their pictures with glitter. They write their names correctly on the page for easy recognition. They receive ready praise and encouragement from the childminder for all their efforts thus boosting their self-esteem and pride in their work.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. The childminder appreciates the importance of providing a range of activities and resources to promote positive images of our society and increase children's understanding of this. The children learn about their local community on routine outings to local parks, the shops or weekly visits to the library to choose books. Children are encouraged to respect and appreciate other cultures and ways of life through discussion and craft work such as making cards for Diwali, Christmas and Duraa Purza. Although there are no children currently attending the setting who have any learning difficulties and/or disabilities the childminder has thought how she will provide care which includes them in the life of the home through discussing their needs with parents and making sure that she can accommodate these.

The childminder has a good relationship with the parents, keeping them well informed of their child's progress through detailed daily dialogue, diaries if requested and an informative portfolio containing the childminder's working practice, qualifications and activities. The children's behaviour is good. They are well mannered and show care for each other and the childminder, playing together and learning about sharing and turn-taking through board games and the sharing out of resources such as paints and glitter. This is further reinforced by the childminder's good understanding of the importance of setting consistent and appropriate boundaries for all children and discussing this with parents at placement time thus ensuring that there is consistency of care. All children feel valued by the childminder as she encourages them to feel good about themselves through praise and appreciation of kind action such as the older children helping younger children to make aeroplanes so they can join in with the flying game or packing away the toys at the end of the session.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. The childminder organises most aspects of her work well, helping the children to feel comfortable, relaxed and at home. They are confident and can therefore initiate their own play and learning as the childminder has organised the play rooms to ensure that resources are easily accessible and children know where to find their favourite activity. The individual needs of the children are generally met by the childminder through her procedures to ensure that she has all relevant information on the children. She regularly discusses this with the parents. However, children's well-being could be affected as information such as the doctor's contact details are missing from the information sheets and the certificate of registration is not displayed for parents to view. Permissions and a written agreement with parents as to the care of their child are not routinely sought and this could possibly lead to misunderstandings between parents and the childminder thus jeopardising their relationship.

The children's emotional and physical development are well promoted through the childminder's attention to detail in planning and organisation of her daily work, which ensures that children are offered a wide range of stimulating activities and opportunities, and that all are able to participate. This is further promoted by the childminder's strong commitment to training and the regular reviewing of her policies and practices. The childminder belongs to the local Childminding Network and this enables her to access current information, new ways of working thus increasing her knowledge of supporting the children in her care. All persons living on her premises have been checked for their suitability and the childminder is vigilant in ensuring that she supervises the children at all times.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder was asked at the previous inspection to develop knowledge and understanding of the range of activities and play opportunities for children's overall development aged five years to eight years.

The childminder has carried out relevant training courses and acquired games, toys, books and craft equipment for this age group. These measures further improve the children's learning and welfare.

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):

- ensure that hazards to children on the premises are minimised with reference to kettle and make sure that a smoke detector, which conforms to British Standard, is provided on every level of the house and maintained in working order
- ensure that sufficient details relating to the children's care is in place such as doctors telephone numbers, agreements with parents as to the care of their child, written permission from parents for seeking emergency advice or treatment and comply with conditions of registration; this refers to displaying the certificate of registration.

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