

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	159550
Inspection date	20 March 2008
Inspector	Fiona Sapler
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, an adult son and another son, aged seven years, in Upminster in the London borough of Havering. The kitchen diner and downstairs cloakroom are mainly used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding one child under five all day, one child under five part time, and three children over five before and after school. She also provides care for over eights.

The childminder walks to local schools and nurseries to take and collect children and attends local groups. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is a Network Childminder. She has completed the Developing Childminding Practice and the Extending Childminding Practice courses and has participated in the Quality First quality assurance scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Even young children are beginning to understand how to maintain a good level of hygiene that contributes to their own well-being. The childminder talks to them about the importance of washing their hands before they eat, and of wiping the high chair table down after they have played or eaten. Procedures are implemented within the daily routine to ensure the risks of cross infection are minimised. This includes paper towels in the bathroom and an appropriate routine when changing nappies. A comprehensive sickness policy is shared with parents to ensure children do not attend if unwell or contagious, and parents provide written permission for the childminder to seek medical treatment in the event of an emergency. Accidents and the administration of medication are recorded accurately to protect the children's welfare.

The childminder works in partnership with parents regarding the provision of food as some parents prefer to provide all their children's meals and snacks. This, and the childminder's attention to the children's medical and cultural requirements, means that children's diet is healthy and nutritious and their individual dietary needs are met well. The childminder encourages the children to eat fruit for a snack to help them recognise what food is good for them and to drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration.

Children play outside regularly. A decked area and an Astroturf lawn means that the garden is available for the children to play in all weathers and good use is made of the nearby parks, to enable the children to benefit from fresh air and exercise all year round. Bikes and large equipment in the park, garden and at groups, help the children develop a broad range of physical skills. The childminder also takes the children to a swimming group to help them develop confidence in the water.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play safely in a bright and airy room with direct access to the garden, and inspiring posters displayed on the wall. This helps to create a child friendly and welcoming environment. A well organised bookcase and accessible storage promote the children's independence as they choose from a wide range of stimulating and age appropriate resources. Children are able to use the downstairs toilet with ease because the childminder has provided equipment such as a step, toilet seat and a soap dispenser.

Potential hazards, both inside and outside the home, have been addressed to ensure the children's safety. For example, the gate in the garden is closed at all times, plastic corners are fitted to tables, cupboards have child proof catches and fluorescent jackets are used when children go to the park. Children learn how to leave the home quickly and safely in case of an emergency because fire drills are practised regularly. The childminder incorporates the story of 'Francis the Firefly' to make these practices a meaningful experience for younger children. Registers accurately record the children's times of attendance, meaning sufficient records are in place in the event of requiring historical information.

The children's welfare is protected because of the childminder's very sound knowledge of the procedures to safeguard children in the event of child protection concerns. She has devised a policy that includes a procedure to follow if allegations are made against the childminder. A

flow chart helps to secure the childminder's knowledge of the actions to take if she is worried about a child in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children feel secure and comfortable in the childminder's home because of her warm personality and positive interactions. Children are learning as they play because the childminder introduces colours, numbers and shapes when the children are sorting lolly sticks, colouring masks or counting the raisins in their bowl. She helps to extend the children's vocabulary through expressive conversations and good questioning. The children are becoming more independent as the childminder encourages them to put on their own slippers and choose which snack they would like to eat from the choices available.

Children are being creative when they make cakes, paint and listen to music. They learn about the world around them when they watch a bird building a nest and regularly check to see the progress of the eggs that have been laid. They carve a pumpkin for Halloween and make a pumpkin soup afterwards.

The childminder takes the children to groups throughout the week where they have the opportunity to express their creativity and imaginations through themed activities and messy play. Other sessions such as sing and sign, introduce the children to specific skills to promote their development and understanding. The childminder regularly links up with other local childminder's providing the children with greater social and play opportunities. Activities such as visiting the beach, farm and zoo are planned during school holidays, to be fun and informative.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are learning about diversity because the childminder has a positive attitude to equality. She ensures that resources reflect different cultures and backgrounds, and encourages older children to research different festivals, planning activities to complement this. For example, younger children were enjoying making duck and rabbit masks for Easter. Children make divas at Diwali and learn about the different animals at the Chinese New Year. Activities at the childminder's group extend the children's understanding when they make Mandarin hats and eat with chopsticks. The childminder learns about the children's own backgrounds and cultures, helping them to feel valued and special. She demonstrates effective ways of identifying and managing any concerns she may have about the children's development and shows a willingness to adapt the environment and develop routines to enable all children to benefit from the provision.

Even young children are learning acceptable boundaries and house rules. They know that they must tidy up when they finish playing and say 'yes, please' and 'thank you' appropriately. They are encouraged by the childminder's enthusiastic clapping and cheering to recognise an achievement. Older children are helped to negotiate and discuss their disagreements, and the childminder works with parents to manage behaviour consistently.

The childminder works in good partnership with parents to provide continuity. She gives them daily written information about the care routines of younger children including their nap times, feeding records and any significant information that helps parents become fully involved in their child's time at the childminder's. Parents receive copies of a range of policies and

procedures so they understand how the setting is run. Their wishes are known because they provide consent for travel, outings and sun cream, and name authorised individuals to collect their children. The childminder shares a complaints procedure with parents and they are provided with forms to make a complaint if they wish. However, the childminder is not fully aware of how she follows this up according to mandatory requirements, thus reducing the effectiveness of the complaints process.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by an enthusiastic and caring childminder, committed to providing good quality childcare. She has undertaken relevant training courses to improve her knowledge and understanding of childcare issues including those relating to children's safety and developmental observations. Only suitable people have contact with the children contributing to their ongoing safety. Activities and routines are well organised to support the children's play and learning. The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards and the accompanying guidance which, along with the implementation of the policies and procedures, are used to successfully promote the outcomes for all the children who attend. Parents are generally well informed of the service provided. Registration forms and documentation such as the attendance registers, protect the children's welfare. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection recommendations were set relating to the availability of emergency contact numbers when on outings and the procedure for using vetted persons in an emergency. The childminder has taken steps to protect the children's welfare by ensuring she takes children's contact details with her when she goes out and has an arrangement with two other childminder's to provide emergency cover if necessary.

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):

- further develop knowledge and understanding of the complaints regulation

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