

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY355520
Inspection date	17 June 2008
Inspector	Barbara Ann Greenley
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 2007. She lives with her husband and child aged 15 months in the town of Braintree, Essex, near to local amenities. The whole premises is used for childminding and there is a garden for outside play. The childminder has one cat as a pet.

The childminder is registered to care for three children at any one time and is currently caring for three children, who all attend on a part-time basis. The childminder supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. She lives within walking distance of local schools, playgroups, toddler groups, library and park. 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 welcomed into a clean and well-maintained home. Children are protected by the routine the childminder has devised for responding to illness and accidents. Parents are aware

of the procedures in place and have given consent to seek additional medical advice should it become necessary. A first aid box is available and medication is kept out of reach of children.

Children are learning about personal hygiene routines from the information given to them by the childminder. This routine is supported by a well-written procedure that is shared with parents. Children use individual hand wipes before eating or after messy play. All information regarding allergies and immunisations are kept on the children details forms and enable the childminder to react appropriately to the children's needs.

Children are offered regular meals, snacks and drinks throughout the day. Drinks are freely available and children are encouraged to take in fluids. The childminder is aware of children's preferences and any allergies that may affect them, therefore, children are prevented from eating or drinking anything that is unsuitable for them. Children enjoy light lunches that are nutritionally balanced. The older children are able to take part in simple cooking sessions producing food such as rice crispy cakes. Children are beginning to understand what foods are healthy and those that are not and to make healthy choices for themselves.

Children are developing an awareness of their physical growth and general well-being. They are energetic and therefore have lots of opportunity to exercise in the park and garden. There are special trips to toddler club and walks. In this way, children are developing their physical skills, gaining confidence using a wide range of large and small equipment safely. They are developing a positive attitude towards physical exercise and the outdoors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a home that is safe, secure and organised to meet their needs. The premises are bright, clean and well ventilated. The children use the ground floor primarily for play and have use of the garden with supervision. Younger children can rest downstairs where the childminder can check them regularly. Bright posters are displayed around the room.

Children access a wide range of equipment that provides them with challenging, fun activities. The childminder ensures that toys are easily within reach of the children, this allows them to use their own initiative when choosing games. They can pick toys freely from the shelves in a very well-organised room. This freedom of choice promotes the children's autonomy and expands their awareness of their boundaries. Children can play safely with the resources as the childminder monitors the condition of the equipment regularly.

The home is visually risk assessed daily and a written check is completed too. Children are closely supervised as they play. Children practise a fire evacuation procedure and understand the reason for doing so. Children are encouraged to stay safe generally, when walking by the road and following house rules regarding running and climbing. Explanation is also given about safely using hand tools such as scissors and cutlery. They begin to develop confidence in the outside world, learning to keep themselves safe when they are away from the security of their families.

The childminder is aware of the current information regarding child protection issues which ensures she acts in the best interests of the children. Written procedures are shared with parents and reviewed to reflect changes such as the role of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. However, the childminder acknowledges that additional awareness of the issues assists her to keep the children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children experience a good range of activities that are planned and spontaneous, for example, going to the park and local children's clubs. Children are learning to interact with adults and other children. Their opinions and ideas are important and affirmed. Children are also learning that it is alright to feel angry and sad as the childminder has put strategies in place so that the children can deal with their feelings, for example, talking through any upsets calmly and distracting the children's attention.

Children have pride in their work; it is appreciated by their parents and childminder. Their independence is increasing and they are able to make sense of the world as the childminder provides a variety of activities to extend their knowledge, for example, talking about letters and colours. Activities promote independence, for example, when playing pretend games with dolls and prams.

The children have freedom to choose their toys, with guidelines that they tidy away other toys before a new toy is chosen. They are learning that there are boundaries as they play and that they must help and take responsibility for some tasks. Children show enthusiasm as they play and the childminder extends their language skills by asking questions and responding positively to their views. The childminder is taking time to ensure that the children listen and answer, extending their conversational skills.

The childminder did not have the opportunity to complete the training module on the 'Birth to three matters' framework. However, she has a good understanding of child development and the needs of the very young child.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children access a good range of resources that reflects diversity in the community. Boys and girls are treated equally and can choose to play with all the toys. Children understand that they must not make unkind remarks and that they must be sensitive to each other's feelings.

Children who require additional support are welcomed and advice is sought from parents to accommodate the children's requirements. She understands the importance of liaising closely with parents and any outside agencies involved with the children's care.

Children are developing excellent relationships with adults and other children. They are able to feel a sense of belonging, make choices and work in harmony together. Children know they are valued and that their contributions and achievements are acknowledged. This adds to their confidence and growing self-esteem. Children respond to the childminder's clear and consistent approach to behaviour management. They behave well and understand their boundaries. Young children are handled in a sensitive but firm manner; instructions are repeated and the children asked to acknowledge what should or should not be done. In this way children are learning right from wrong.

There is very good communication with parents and this ensures that children's needs are met. Parents are fully involved with their children's care and their role is valued and appreciated. Parents are given a full range of policies and procedures outlining the childminder's practice. However, the complaints procedure is not reflective of current guidelines. Time is made to

discuss the children's progress and welfare, creating an environment where they can flourish and thrive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is enthusiastic about her work and is committed to training. She has already completed the basic training and is looking for additional courses that will assist her. Children are protected by the childminder's overall knowledge of her responsibilities for their welfare and the regulations and conditions that govern her work.

The daily routine is organised to ensure that ratios are maintained and that children are able to move freely around the home. There is ample space for children to play both inside and outside of the home. Activities are organised to meet the needs of the children attending. The childminder concentrates her time on looking after the children and giving them individual attention, therefore children benefit from the input of a carer who strives to meet their needs.

Documentation is kept confidential but records concerning their own child are accessible to parents. Written agreements and other appropriate forms contain all the relevant information required to ensure the children's welfare is protected. Paperwork is in very good order and the documentation enhances the childminder's care of the children.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, 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:

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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):

- increase awareness and knowledge regarding safeguarding children

- ensure that the complaints procedure reflects current guidelines.

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