

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY341693
Inspection date	06 May 2008
Inspector	Carolyn Mary Hasler

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 satisfactory. 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 2006. She lives with her partner and three children, aged 11, 13 and 17 years in the Highmans Park area of the London Borough of Waltham Forest. The whole of the premises, with the exception of the loft rooms, is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight at any one time and is currently minding four children on a part time basis. The childminder has two cats and a dog. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health and wellbeing is promoted to a satisfactory level, the environment is clean and well presented and all children are encouraged and are learning to adopt appropriate hygiene routines, such as washing their hands before and after meals and after going to the toilet. More able children are increasing their independence while toddlers are supported

through toileting skills. However, the childminder has not fully assessed the risk to children from cross contamination, when sharing towels.

Children are able to access first aid when injured or sick. There is a sickness policy in place and the childminder understands that children who are infectious should not attend. The childminder has sufficient understanding on how to respond to emergencies and ensures that children are comfortable. There are systems in place which are used to record accidents, incidents and administration of medication. The childminder also obtains written consent from parents to seek emergency treatment.

Children have free flow access to the rear garden in clement weather, the area offers them opportunities to play on grass or the tiled patio. They have room to move around freely both inside and out and have access to resources such as push and ride cars, buggies, tunnels and rockers. In addition they walk to the local park where they have access to the playground equipment and walks in the forest. On one of the days they attend; children visit a physical play club and on occasion they go swimming with the childminder. As a result children have plenty of opportunities to develop physical skills and learn how their bodies work.

Children are offered healthy choices at snack and mealtimes, they have access to drinks at all times. The childminder works with parents to ensure that a balanced diet is available for children, appropriate storage has been provided for parents who wish to provide meals. All children are independent eaters. The childminder has recently undergone a basic food hygiene training course, she offers parents information on meals and in turn collects information on children's dietary needs. This ensures that children's individual needs are catered for.

Children under three build secure relationships because they receive lots of affection and warmth from the childminder who offers her time and attention. She is receptive to their individual needs and this helps them develop a healthy dependence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel welcomed because of the warmth and affection they receive, they enter an environment which allows them to explore and investigate and where toys and play equipment are brightly coloured, attractive, and there is furniture which is child size. They have access to the whole of the ground floor but the main play area is situated at the back of the house within the kitchen and dining area. There is free flow to the garden. In addition they have access to the front room for quiet activities such as watching the television and sleeping. All areas on the ground floor have practical flooring allowing children to play and move around safely. There are good sources of natural light from the kitchen and patio doors and windows, the premises are centrally heated and thermostatically controlled. There are comfortable places to sit and rest or they can choose to sit at the dining table and play with table top toys. The toilet is situated on the first floor, children are able to use this area independently.

Toys, play equipment, nursery aids and furniture are all of good quality, the childminder carries out a visual check to ensure resources are clean and in good repair. She carefully selects equipment that will best meet the needs of the children who are attending and successfully balances the needs of both younger and older children. They know where toys are stored and can self select.

Children are learning important skills in keeping themselves safe. They know not to open the front door or to enter into conversation with strangers, and are learning to respect the childminder's home. Older children are learning that small toys are dangerous for babies and toddlers, they listen and respond to the childminder's reminders. The childminder carries out a visual check on the premises to ensure that they can move around safely. In general she has been successful in identifying hazards for small children. Areas not used for minding have been made inaccessible and the childminder has considered and prepared for the risk to children from house fires. In hot weather, the childminder prevents them from playing outside during the hottest part of the day, she has provided shade for them and ensures that sun cream has been applied. On outings they are learning basic road safety skills and they know to stay close to the childminder.

Through documentation and discussion the childminder demonstrates a sound understanding of child protection issues. She ensures that parents are made aware of her responsibilities to safeguard the children in her care through her policy. All members of her household have been appropriately vetted and historical records concerning childcare are in place for the regulating body to inspect. Although there was some knowledge and understanding in place, the childminder demonstrated a lack of confidence in regard to how she would identify, monitor and report her concern. She is not sufficiently aware of her own policy to fully safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are fully settled into the childminder's home and engage in a variety of interesting and stimulating activities. For example they enjoy playing both inside and out with painting and sticking activities, small world and role play equipment. They have a sand pit available and challenging outdoor equipment, for quiet times children enjoy looking at books and have a wide range of games and puzzles.

Children benefit from their time together, they are learning how to get along with each other, co-operating and communicating to make their feelings known. The childminder provides them with a warm and friendly atmosphere. Through their interactions they are learning and building strong relationships with each other and the childminder who is constantly with them and knows them well, she is able to predict and respond to their needs.

The constant communication between children and the childminder means that their language is supported and extended. An appropriate level of questioning enables children to explore activities more fully, they generally talk throughout the day about what they are doing. They enjoy looking at books and snuggle into story time sharing books with each other and the childminder. The use of the local library ensures that there is always a variety to choose from.

The childminder has begun to monitor and record children's development in the form of photographic evidence and art work which are collected into journals and scrap books to share with their parents. On initial contact parents are shown a daily routine which explains the planned activities children are involved with.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel valued because they are treated with equal respect and care. The childminder explains that children have opportunities to meet other people who are different to them at nursery and when they are out and about. She has a policy in place which she shares with parents. However, she is not fully confident about her role in developing children's awareness of how other people should be valued and acknowledged for their differences and developing their skills in tolerance. There are limited opportunities for them to learn about other cultures, backgrounds or religions because, although she does have some multi racial dolls, toys and resources are not generally selected to reflect diversity.

Through discussion the childminder demonstrates a sound understanding of special needs. Although current minded children do not have specific learning difficulties or disabilities, she has had experience of this issue. She is happy to work in partnership with parents and other professional bodies and she demonstrates a positive attitude to ensuring that all children have equal access to activities. She takes all reasonable steps to ensure that all children have a good level of care specific to their needs, in order to meet their full potential.

Children are developing effective strategies for managing their own behaviour, they are learning to be polite and kind, to share and co-operate with each other. They are learning right from wrong. The childminder talks about how children are learning to acknowledge their own and each others feelings and to apologise when they have acted unkindly. The childminder adopts a calm approach and helps them to talk through their differences. She praises their good behaviour, sometimes introducing a sticker system for when they have been very good. This reinforces good behaviour. As a result children were very well behaved.

Children benefit from strong relationships between parents and the childminder. During initial contact, the use of sensitive strategies help children to adjust to separation and build trusting relationships within new care arrangements. Contractual agreements and records establish roles and responsibilities. Parents are welcomed into the home and provided with a selection of policies and procedures which they sign once they have been read. There is a complaints procedure in place and the childminder understands her responsibility to keep records of complaints.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has completed a basic course in childcare and first aid and continues to develop her knowledge by attending short courses provided by her local authority. She demonstrates a sound knowledge of the National Standards. All adults who have contact with children have completed robust vetting procedures to ensure they are suitable. The childminder's registration certificate is displayed on the wall for parents to see and she works within her conditions of registration. Her home is effectively organised to provide a child centred environment. They are successfully learning how to live healthy lifestyles and important skills in staying safe. The childminder understands her role in supporting children's learning and play and they are successfully making progress. Their days are well planned and allows for periods of quietness or active play.

The childminder demonstrates a clear understanding of the regulations regarding the keeping of records which she now does successfully. Her documentation was well organised and available for inspection.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to meet several actions concerning the welfare and safety of children. She was asked to assess the health risks to children in relation to dog faeces in the garden and take action to minimise this. This issue has now been addressed. The childminder is able to safeguard children's health. In addition she was asked to complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children. This has now been met. This means that children can access immediate first aid if they become sick or injured. Lastly the childminder was asked to ensure that all records relating to childminding activities are appropriately maintained, readily accessible and available for inspection at all times. This has now been met. This means that Ofsted can check historical records in the event that children are placed at risk.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- assess the risk to children from cross contamination issues (when washing hands)
- develop knowledge and understanding of child protection issues
- extend and develop knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities and consider the positive impact of offering children a variety of play equipment which encourage them to explore and develop their interests in others who are different to themselves

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