

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	305635
Inspection date	21 April 2008
Inspector	Cathryn Parry
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 1992. She lives with her two adult children in the Concord area of Washington. The whole of the ground floor and the bathroom and toilet on the first floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden, which is usually available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding three children aged under eight years. She also cares for children aged over eight years. She walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has a rabbit.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into suitably clean premises where they have sufficient space to play. They access some opportunities for large physical activity, including walking to and from school. The childminder stated that children can not currently use the garden as she is waiting to have rubbish removed by the council refuse department. This limits the amount of physical play

children can enjoy. Children are active or restful through choice in-line with their individual needs. The childminder only cares for children before and after school. She provides them with a light snack, such as fruit, crisps or biscuits. Consequently, they are adequately nourished. Children confidently ask for drinks when they are thirsty, as well as having diluted juice and water regularly provided.

Children demonstrate an awareness of routines that promote their health. These include washing their hands after using the toilet and taking their shoes off when they come in from school. Records are kept in respect of accidents and medication and these are shared with parents and carers. However, parents and carers do not sign to acknowledge administration of medicines. This has a negative impact on children's well-being. Children do not attend if they are sick, which enables the childminder to protect others from illness. She can respond appropriately if children have an accident as she is trained to administer first aid. Written permission from parents and carers to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is also in place. Consequently, their welfare is safeguarded.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept secure as the childminder ensures the front and back doors are locked. This is complemented with appropriate procedures for adults collecting children. Windows in the living room and dining area enable children to benefit from natural light whilst playing indoors. Those that walk to and from school are kept safe as they learn road safety procedures and understand simple rules, such as waiting at the curb before crossing the road. Children's knowledge about personal safety is encouraged by gentle reminders from the childminder to tie their shoe laces so they do not trip, and not to climb on the furniture in case they fall.

Children experience adequate levels of supervision and appropriate safety equipment is in place to ensure hazards are reduced. This includes electrical socket protectors, smoke detectors and a fire blanket. The childminder has generally taken necessary steps to ensure children's safety. She said that hazardous substances are usually stored out of the children's reach. However, at the time of the inspection toilet cleaner and other cleaning materials were easily accessible by children. This has a detrimental effect on safeguarding children. The childminder has a suitable understanding of her role and responsibility concerning child protection. She has obtained relevant contact details and has booked on to a related course. As a result children's safety and well-being are ensured.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder and are happy to participate in the activities provided. These include using construction toys, watching television and playing board games. Sufficient support is given, which nurtures children's independence. An example of this is where the childminder encourages them to have little jobs, such as helping to prepare the fruit. Their confidence and self-esteem are raised through praise and encouragement. Children enjoy looking at books, both independently and with their friends. This is particularly evident when they sit together to find a specific character within the picture in a book. Children's creativity is nurtured as they access opportunities to make models with pipe cleaners and manipulate modelling materials.

Children are happy, settled and relate well to the childminder, as she joins in with their play. They benefit from a flexible routine, including an appropriate balance of child-centred and adult-led activities. There is an adequate selection of toys and activities, which provide suitable challenges for those attending. Children's communication skills are fostered resulting in good interactions between themselves and the childminder. They enjoy mark making and are developing good hand to eye coordination. Children enjoy using their imagination, for instance, when they pretend to be the headmaster, teacher and pupil. They develop mathematical thinking when they use calculators in their play, participate in card games and enjoy an activity with dominoes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

A short induction period, including visits with parents and carers, enables children to settle into the new environment. The childminder's appropriate attitude to equal opportunities has a suitable impact on children's understanding of the wider community. However, there are very few resources to complement this. Consequently, this has a negative impact on raising children's awareness of difference. The childminder also works at the local school supervising children at dinner time. In this role she has had a limited amount of experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She does show a positive attitude to providing an inclusive environment, so long as she can meet the needs of all those attending.

Children receive consistent care as there is a daily exchange of information between the childminder, parents and carers about the children's day. Parents and carers are also welcome to telephone the childminder during the day to change their plans or to check their children are alright. The childminder has a basic complaints procedure in place that she shares with parents and carers. This ensures they are equipped to make a concern known if the situation arises. The childminder uses age-appropriate behaviour management strategies, such as changing the tone of her voice and removing children from the situation. Consequently, she suitably manages a range of children's differing behaviour.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children access play opportunities through the suitable organisation of space, time and resources. The use of the living room, dining area and kitchen enables children to participate in a range of quiet, boisterous and messy activities. The childminder plans her time flexibly to meet individual children and their family's needs. An example of this is where she picks them up later from school after various activity clubs. There are sufficient resources, which are stored at the children's height to promote free choice. The childminder complements this by rotating toys to maintain children's interest.

The childminder has been caring for children for over 16 years and is starting to access training again. This has a positive impact on the quality of care provided. Children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded as the childminder and other household members have had suitable checks completed. She is aware of her current registration requirements and adheres to them. This has a positive impact on children's well-being. Documentation for each child is suitably organised and stored confidentially. Consequently, their privacy is maintained.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the childminder was asked to plan and provide a suitable range of activities for children, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs. She was also asked to provide equipment and toys which are appropriate for their purpose, for example, that they are complete and no hazardous objects are available. A request was made to develop knowledge of safe guarding children procedures such as, signs and symptoms of abuse. The childminder was requested to ensure that an up to date first aid certificate is gained in line with requirements. She was also asked to develop knowledge of a complaints procedure and inform parents and carers about it in line with current legislation. The childminder has addressed all of these issues positively. This has a positive impact on children's overall development and well-being.

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):

- ensure parents and carers sign to acknowledge administration of medicines
- ensure all hazardous materials are kept out of the children's reach in the toilet
- ensure all rubbish is removed from the garden
- further develop equal opportunities resources.

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