



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118947
Inspection date	19 September 2005
Inspector	Toni Hanson

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1998. She lives with her husband, adult daughter and two children aged 16 and 13 years. The family live in a house in a residential area of Upminster. Their home is within walking distance of local schools, shops, parks, bus routes and a main line/underground train station. Apart from the front room, the whole of the ground floor and the back bedroom and bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding. A fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 5 children aged under 8 years

at any one time. She is currently minding 1 child aged under 5 years one day per week and 13 children over 5 years before and after school. The childminder collects children from a local school. She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm, welcoming, childminding home. Medication is stored safely and the childminder's nappy changing procedures are hygienic, which supports children's good health appropriately. Children are learning about the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They use the toilet independently and know they must wash their hands afterwards. First aid arrangements for children are inadequate, as the childminder has not completed the appropriate first aid training. This means that the childminder does not have an up to date knowledge of procedures to enable her to deal with accidents appropriately.

School aged children freely choose from an appropriate range of snacks as they have their main meal at home. The snacks provided include fruit, yoghurts, crisps and chocolate bars. There are however, no systems in place to monitor what children are eating and ensure their choices are balanced and include healthy options. Snack menus are agreed with parents and the childminder has previous experience of catering for children's special dietary requirements. Parents provide milk and food for children aged under two years. This is heated or prepared appropriately by the childminder. Older children are offered regular drinks, particularly in warmer weather. Babies are provided with cooled boiled water frequently during the day.

Children enjoy a wide range of indoor/outdoor physical activities, which contribute to their physical good health. They walk to and from school, enjoy active play in the childminder's garden and enthusiastically dance to music. In warm weather children have free access to the garden where they enjoy ball games, imaginative play in the playhouse and climbing on the slide.

The childminder provides suitable sleeping equipment including a travel cot. Babies and toddlers benefit from flexible daily routines, which allow them to have a quiet rest or sleep according to their individual needs. School aged children rest on the settee and enjoy a quiet activity such as reading when they are tired.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Daily checks of the house and garden by the childminder and good supervision of children help to ensure they are protected from harm. Children are able to move safely, freely and independently around the childminder's home. They know they must not run indoors, touch the broken plastic window panes in the playhouse or play near the rubble in the garden until these have been made safe. Space is well

organised and children have ample room to play, a quiet place to rest or do their homework and a comfortable area to eat.

Children have access to a wide range of safe and suitable furniture, toys and equipment. These are well organised and accessible to children. The childminder checks her toys frequently to ensure they remain in good condition. Appropriate safety equipment is provided in the childminder's home, such as a fire blanket in the kitchen and a smoke alarm at each level of the house.

Children are developing an understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The childminder ensures they know and understand her 'rules' about how to behave when out walking. Younger children are appropriately secured in a buggy or hold the childminder's hand. Older children's understanding of road safety is developed as the childminder talks to them about potential dangers and encourages them to help her decide when it is safe to cross the road.

The childminder does not have effective procedures in place to ensure children are protected from unsuitable adults. Children are put at potential risk, as the childminder has not notified Ofsted of changes to the persons living in her home, or ensured that family members who have reached the age of 16 years complete the required suitability checks.

The childminder has a sound understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and her responsibility to protect children. She would not hesitate to act if she was concerned about a child's well-being. However, she does not have a copy of the local authority child protection procedures and is not clear about who she should contact if she needs to make a referral. This could potentially compromise children's safety if inappropriate action was taken.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Settling in procedures work well. Children are settled gradually into the childminder's care to ensure they and their parents get to know her well before the childminding placement begins. Children benefit from the childminders commitment to providing stable, long term placements for children.

Children have warm, affectionate relationships with the childminder who knows them well. They enter the setting confidently and make themselves at home. Each day after school, the childminder ensures she spends time with each child, listening to their news and discussing their day.

A broad range of play equipment is available to children, although few resources reflect diversity. The childminder regularly rotates her play equipment to ensure children remain stimulated. Weather permitting, the children can move freely between activities provided indoors and outdoor play in the garden. Children have regular opportunities to be creative, they paint optical art patterns and use their imagination well as they play 'families' in the garden playhouse.

The childminder ensures the activities she provides meet children's individual needs, for example sitting quietly and reading or watching children's programmes when they are tired. Children also enjoy enthusiastically dancing to loud music and playing ball games in the garden, when are full of energy and want to be active. Children receive the help they need with homework, for example, learning their times-tables.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are respected and valued as individuals. Their needs are well met as they follow their normal sleeping routine established at home and confidently choose their own toys and activities. Children behave well and are happy and settled in the childminder's care. They know what is expected of them and understand the childminder's 'rules', including not running indoors and behaving sensibly when walking home from school. The childminder is a good role model, treats children with respect and uses praise frequently to encourage wanted behaviour including saying 'please' and 'thank you'.

Appropriate systems are in place to support children with additional needs. However, children have few opportunities to explore the wider world and develop their understanding of diversity. The childminder continues to provide a limited range of activities, toys and books designed to increase and support children's awareness. Children explore their local community as they walk home from school and enjoy routine outings to the park.

The childminder's relationships with parents are good. She makes parents welcome in her home and shares information and discusses the children's progress with them each day. Children benefit from a gradual settling in process to ensure they and their family get to know the childminder well before the placement begins. The childminder mostly cares for children on a long term basis, this helps ensure continuity of care. Parents are very happy with the care their children receive. They value the relaxed, friendly and caring environment she creates.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The childminder's home is well organised. Children have ample room to play both indoors and in the garden. They have a good selection of enjoyable activities to choose from and have warm, affectionate relationships with the childminder.

The childminder's management of her childminding service is inadequate, consequently she does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. Children are put at potential risk, as the childminder has not ensured that adults living in her home are vetted appropriately. The childminder has also not established written agreements with parents. This means that there are no systems in place to confirm the expectations of both parties as to the care of the children, activities provided and business agreements. The childminder's first aid

arrangements for children are unsatisfactory, as she does not have the required first aid qualification.

Children benefit from the childminder's well-organised registration system. Although she is caring for a large number of part-time children, their attendance is clearly recorded. This ensures she only cares for the number of children stated on her registration certificate. Children's records are well organised, up to date and stored securely.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the childminder has improved her recording of children's personal information and the organisation of her childminding records. These are now readily accessible on the premises and available for inspection at all times.

Children continue to have limited access to activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. The childminder has not yet established written agreements with parents that sets out the expectations of both parties as to the care of the child, activities provided and business arrangements.

The childminder has not attended the required first aid training and does not have an up to date knowledge of first aid procedures.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters. In this instance, notifying Ofsted of any changes to persons living on the premises

- make sure that there are effective vetting procedures in place to ensure any person aged over 16 years living in the household is suitable
- complete an appropriate 12 hour first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children.

These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk