



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124800
<b>Inspection date</b>	02 February 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Beverley Jane Bruno

<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 has been registered since 1992.

She is registered to provide care for 6 children under 8. At present she has 7 children under 8 on her roll. She also cares for 1 child over 8 after school. She has experience of caring for children with more particular needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The childminder's husband works as her assistant.

The childminder lives with her husband and 2 children aged 14 and 20. They live in a two-storey house in a residential area of Selsdon, within walking distance of shops,

schools, a library and parks. The whole ground floor of the property, which includes bathroom facilities, is used for childminding. Children sleep in an upstairs bedroom or in quiet areas downstairs. There is a fully enclosed garden available for childminding. The family have one cat.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The children stay healthy because of how the childminder maintains the accommodation and follows current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines. There are also effective food hygiene and handling routines in place. The family have one cat which is appropriately cared for and has its own space away from children.

Children are also unlikely to catch infectious diseases as the childminder has good practices in place and teaches children the self help skills that should help them avoid passing on germs. For example, children respond positively to her reminders to wash hands before and after cooking and after going to the toilet. They also put their hands over their mouths and noses when they cough or sneeze. Children have their outer clothing removed and are encouraged to wear waterproof smocks before they enjoy the indoor water play. Children are then methodically dried off and redressed after they have finished. The childminder has an effective exclusion policy. She discusses it with parents at their initial interview. There are methodical arrangements to store medication in a high cupboard in the kitchen. Children also learn about healthy living whilst in the care of the childminder as they follow her competent guidance. She weaves in information and knowledge as children go about doing associated activities. For example, whilst the children enjoy their lunch, the childminder talks to them about what they are eating and explains, in an age appropriate manner, why certain foods are good for the children's bodies.

The children are well rested and sleep according to their needs. The childminder has good multiple facilities to sleep children using travel cots in upstairs bedrooms. The childminder actively follows parental requirements and responds promptly to children's individual needs.

Children enjoy the healthy snacks provided which in turn helps them develop healthy eating habits from a young age. The childminder also provides the more substantial daily meals. She works hard to ensure she uses mainly non-processed foods from the different food groups. As a matter of course she does not use nuts in her cooking. Food is thoughtfully presented to encourage good eating habits. The childminder is careful to work positively with parents to ensure she meets children's individual dietary needs and parental requirements.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are comfortable and relaxed as they safely play in a warm and welcoming environment. The childminder very effectively organises the room primarily used for childminding in such a way as to ensure there is little clutter and furniture is kept to the sides of the room. The back room which is an integral part of the open plan kitchen diner extension, is set up as a designated play room. Posters are displayed on the walls and there is a display area which is changed according to the theme the children are enjoying at present. The ceiling also has a themed frieze as well. The house is kept at a suitable temperature, is well ventilated and maintained. Toys and resources are thoughtfully and methodically stored in age appropriate storage containers within the main play area. Further resources are effectively stored throughout the house. There is a suitable garden which is mainly laid to grass.

Children happily and confidently access and use a good range of quality, well maintained modern inside and outside toys, equipment and resources, appropriate to their age and development. The childminder ensures that she makes these items available according to the age of the children she is minding on a given day and the topic she is planning to cover. She rotates toys to avoid boredom, to match the pace of play and in accordance with her planning.

Children access and use a secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment made suitable by the childminder's very regular and thorough risk assessments. For example, the childminder reminds children to stand on the towel covering the plastic sheeting whilst they are enjoying the water play activity. She has had circuit breaker alarms fitted to the external doors so she then has an audible alarm to warn her of children trying to leave the building and of strangers trying to get in. Children are safe from the effects of fire. The childminder has appropriately positioned and maintained smoke alarms, and has a fire blanket in the kitchen. She also has a manual alarm that can be set off if a fire is discovered. She has a fire evacuation procedure thought through in her head, which she practises with children. There are clear procedures in place that ensure children's safety whilst on outings. Children are kept safe as the childminder does her best to eliminate risks before they arise. She thinks through the day's events before undertaking them. She uses places that she knows are suitable for young children. She takes her children's parents' contact information out with her. Should her health be compromised the emergency services would suspect all the children are not hers because she carries this information.

Children are protected from abuse because the childminder has a good understanding of her role in child protection. She understands how to put appropriate procedures into practise when necessary. She has had experience of child protection issues in a previous job capacity. She has access to the necessary contact telephone numbers and holds the relevant literature.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are provided with very many opportunities to engage in a very extensive range and depth of free play and more structured activities arising spontaneously

from previous play, visits, or pre-planned themes and topics. The childminder demonstrates verbally and in practise a very good understanding of the individual and developmental needs of the children she cares for. She uses this understanding to effectively plan the children's day across the different areas of development.

The childminder makes excellent and effective use of local child centred amenities and outings. For example, they go to the local library and take part in a 'Book Trial'. Children are awarded certificates by way of praise and encouragement for their efforts. They go to the seaside, parks and local children's farms. Whilst there they may collect items to use in follow up art and craft activities. On their return the childminder may also encourage children to look at associated books and computer software to help them build on what they have seen and learnt.

The childminder's actions and interactions with the children are also cleverly geared and sensitively timed to their care needs and the pace of play. Children watch and listen to the childminder as she supports their social skills, play and learning. She then withdraws to allow them to practise and play. Children also develop good communication skills as they readily engage in conversation with the childminder and she uses effective, open-ended questioning to extend their vocabulary. For example, she uses indoor water play, filling up big and small watering cans to introduce or reinforce new maths vocabulary and concepts about volume. She also encourages children to estimate what might happen next; will the containers sink or float? Children stick dry pasta onto pre-cut paper shapes. The childminder introduces the names of the shapes.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The childminder's commitment to ensuring she is able to provide a high standard of care for children starts at the initial interview with interested parents. She finds out as much as she can about the parents' requirements and children's individual needs. She then offers a supportive service to accommodate these needs, regularly liaising with parents to sensitively support their parenting styles and skills. She successfully builds strong nurturing long term relationships. She ensures parents receive daily written or verbal feedback as to what the children have been doing that day according to parental preference.

The childminder works very hard to ensure children feel a sense of belonging, of being fully included in the life of the setting. She understands the need to get quality information from parents at the interview to use as a good foundation for her care of the child. The childminder warmly invites children into her welcoming playroom. She successfully integrates minded children by helping them feel as if they are part of her family. For example, the family celebrate the minded children's birthdays. The childminder's in-depth understanding of the children enables her to ensure a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated indoor and outdoor activities and interactions. She has their preferred free play toys ready for them to enjoy and activities ready for them to start when they are settled. She prepares the activities in such a way as to ensure children of all ages have the opportunity to take part in them. For example,

babies sit in a high chair and enjoy painting with their hands. Slightly older children begin to master the use of age and developmentally appropriate brushes.

Not only does the childminder pay attention to verbal communications from children but she also watches for non-verbal communication or emotional changes that may indicate need. In turn, many of these interactions and activities result in children feeling confident to make choices and decisions that contribute positively to the group. They confidently make their requests known either verbally or in their actions in a calm and relaxed fashion. For example, a child moves towards the water play area, stops and looks around to see if the childminder is watching. The childminder asks the child if he would like to play with the water. He nods and then points at the equipment. Children feel safe in the knowledge the childminder will react respectfully and in a caring manner, towards the requests and decisions they make.

Children enjoy positive respectful relationships with the childminder. They are beginning to use the social skills they have watched the childminder use during play and discussions. They play and interact harmoniously in line with their age and developmental stage. The childminder actively encourages children to become more socially aware. She asks them to reflect on how they feel, who they are, on their behaviour, and what they can do. The childminder skilfully extends this ability to reflect, in her discussions with children, so they can begin to take into account how others may be feeling or what they may or may not be able to do. She also effectively delivers themed activities that help children to understand similarities and differences between cultures. To support her positive ethos the childminder has a growing selection of toys and resources reflecting positive images for children, of age and gender, as well as of different cultures and ethnic groups. For example, she has imaginative play characters, books, maps, puzzles, as well as paints and crayons in skin tone hues.

The childminder is committed to providing appropriate support for children with more particular needs. For example, she has experience of caring for children with asthma and a nut allergy. She has also cared for children who use English as an additional language. She is very aware of the need to ensure she works closely with a child's parents to be certain she is meeting any specific needs. For example, she knows children who speak a different language at home, may need support to help them settle successfully into other social groups, such as at nursery or school. She understands the importance of assessing her ability to care for a child with specific needs and of ensuring the environment she can provide is suitable. She knows to consider any changes to the dynamics of the existing group of children she cares for.

Children are beginning to understand about responsible behaviour. They follow the childminder's lead as she encourages them to tidy up toys before they move onto another activity. She gives this time an appropriate name to help children understand the concept. She talks about 'tidy-up-time' and shows children what to do. Children's play and interactions with the childminder also helps them to begin to distinguish between right and wrong. For example, the childminder successfully uses age related behaviour management techniques. She uses strategies associated with positive parenting to good effect. She effectively looks out for signs and behaviours that may trigger inappropriate responses. She then effectively responds to them. She sets a good role model for children as she behaves in a calm, polite and respectful way

towards them and other adults. She regularly liaises closely with parents to ensure the strategies used are consistent between home and the childminder.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder is suitably qualified to care for young children. She holds an NNEB Nursery Nurse qualification and has 30 years experience in child care. She is committed to seeking further training. For example, she may undertake a refresher course on child protection. In the meantime she keeps herself up-to-date by reading child care magazines.

The childminder has ensured that any persons living in her home over the age of 16 are vetted. Her childminding practices ensure that children are not left in the care of unvetted persons. The environment is very welcoming and very well organised. The childminding day is very effectively planned yet remains flexible to cater for children's individual needs and requirements. The childminder self regulates the numbers and ages of children she cares for at any one time. In this way, she successfully ensures she is able to meet their individual needs. The childminder's husband works as her assistant. He is not on site all the time. When he is around he effectively helps with the children's care routines, so the childminder can concentrate on supporting their play and delivering the activities. He looks after the children whilst the childminder makes school runs. Although the parents are aware he is sometimes left in sole charge of the children, the childminder does not have written confirmation of this.

Most of the legally required and otherwise relevant documentation and records are maintained to promote the smooth running of the setting and support children's needs. At present the childminder does not seek prior written consent and instructions to administer individual courses of medication. She holds global consents. She ensures she keeps all her documentation in a safe and secure place to protect children's confidentiality.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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):

- ensure written parental consent is obtained to leave the assistant in sole charge of the minded children
- refine current work practices, to reflect best practice, in obtaining written consent and instruction for the administration of individual medications.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)