

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY346003
Inspection date	12 June 2008
Inspector	Lisa Paisley
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 2006. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and five years in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house and the bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and when working with a co-minder, registration is for a maximum of six children at any one time. The childminder is currently minding three children under five a combination of part-time and all day and one child over five after school. She walks to local schools to take and collect children and the childminder attends the local parent and toddler group. The family has a dog, cat and a hamster.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are exceptionally well protected from the spread of infection as the childminder applies excellent standards of hygiene to ensure their good health. The home is exceptionally clean and well-maintained. Proactive steps are taken to protect the children's health, for example, older children are gently reminded to wash their hands after playing in the garden and before mealtimes. Children have access to warm running water, liquid soap and individual hand towels and the effective nappy changing procedures further minimises the risk of cross-infection.

Children thrive in the healthy environment where they frequently enjoy fresh air and exercise. They enjoy an excellent range of physical activities which helps keep them healthy such as walks to the local park, shops, beach and farmers market. There are also regular visits to the local toddler groups with the younger children. All children have access to physical play through the excellent range of resources the childminder provides, which are mainly outside. Children have very good opportunities to rest and be active, according to their individual needs, in the home.

The childminder has excellent procedures and policies in place to record accidents, medication administered and for the treatment of emergency and medical advice. This means that parents are kept informed and their wishes are acknowledged and adhered to. The childminder is able to provide effective and appropriate treatment in the event of children having an accident, because she has undertaken relevant first aid training.

Children enjoy a wide range of healthy meals, which are provided by the childminder, including breakfast, snacks, lunches and teas. Freshly cooked food is provided which are low in salt and sugar content and meals consider individual children's needs. Written menus detail the type of food and snacks that the childminder provides, for example, roast dinner, couscous, chicken, pasta, tuna and avocados. These are served to children in a well-organised social setting, where children develop a excellent range of social skills as the childminder effectively supports children during meals and snacks. Drinks are freely available, ensuring children remain hydrated during the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Space is exceptionally well organised, enabling children to freely explore and take risks while being protected from harm. Children's artwork and photographs of activities are displayed in the designated play area valuing their achievements and play experiences. Children access an extensive and outstanding range of good quality, safe and suitable toys and resources that are creatively displayed for independent choice. Children know how to keep themselves safe in the home as they tidy away toys after use and they participate in regular fire drills. A laminated fire evacuation plan is clearly displayed in the hallway. As a result, children are developing an understanding of how to evacuate the home safely in the event of an emergency or an incident.

Exceptional safety precautions have been taken to minimise accidents. For example, the fire and all low-level electrical sockets are protected; safety gates are in place and are securely mounted and the premises including the garden is safe and secure ensuring children cannot leave unsupervised. The childminder carries out a wide range of checks on the house to ensure

the environment is safe for children and these are recorded in the risk assessment. The risk of accidents outside the home is reduced, because the childminder is conscientious about ensuring children are safe whilst on outings. For example, all children are safely restrained in the car and appropriate equipment is used when walking to and from the park. Older children have a clear understanding of road safety procedures and the need to be aware of stranger danger. The childminder ensures children are supervised at all times as routines are effectively organised.

Children's welfare is extensively safeguarded. The childminder has an excellent knowledge, understanding and practical experience of the different types and possible signs of abuse. She knows the procedure to be followed if she has a concern about a child, including contact details of social services. There is a comprehensive written child protection policy in place and updated information has been obtained with regards to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Child protection information is shared with parents, this ensures that they are fully aware of her role, reassuring them of their child's safety and welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, relaxed and contented in the home as they are warmly welcomed by the childminder. They are offered a wide variety of activities and play experiences that are interesting, age-appropriate and challenging, for example, sand, water, cooking activities, growing sunflowers, puzzles and books. Older children particularly enjoy going to the park, participating in relay races, football and climbing trees. All children enjoy creative activities such as making three dimensional robots and Dr Who characters.

Activities plans for all children are flexible taking into account of children's current interests, needs and overall development. For example, planned visits to the farmers market where children have the opportunity to talk to local tradesman about the processes of food production. Written activity plans are in place for younger children, however, planning and assessment requires further development to ensure children's play and learning opportunities are not limited or repetitive. Children particularly enjoyed finding out about frogs, where they handled live frogs, compared, colours, shapes and patterns and found out further information on the internet.

Children's confidence and independence is developed as the childminder encourages children to try new activities in a safe and supportive environment. They look to the childminder for reassurance, help and assistance and she responds in a warm, caring and enthusiastic manner. Children are beginning to distinguish between right and wrong as the childminder uses a range of appropriate and sensitive strategies for managing children's behaviour. Children receive regular praise and encouragement, developing their self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the home as the childminder provides a safe and secure environment, where inclusion is positively promoted. The childminder has a good practical awareness of how to include and appropriately care for children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children gain an awareness of diversity as there is a good range of activities and resources offered to children such as dolls books, puzzles and play people. They also celebrate a number of festivals such as Chinese New Year and Father's Day. Children learn about their local community through regular trips out to the park, beach and local shops.

Children are happy, sociable and behave well. They benefit from the childminder's very clear understanding of managing their behaviour sensitively and positively. All children are encouraged to be polite, share and play together through the childminder's caring attitude. They receive gentle, clear and consistent guidance with regards to rules and boundaries and they clearly know what is expected of them. Children receive regular praise and encouragement which promotes their emotional well-being and development. Strategies used to manage behaviour are discussed with parents to provide consistency.

Parents are well informed about the care that the childminder provides, as they are given clear written information about her role, written policies, certificates and reports. Parents receive both verbal and written feedback on a regular basis and they are updated with regard to any changes to the child's day, such as planned outings and special events including a sponsored bounce. This results in good continuity of care for all the children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A calm, welcoming and child-centred environment is provided by the childminder, ensuring children feel happy and secure. Space is well-organised so children can play, eat and rest in comfort, meeting their individual needs. Children make maximum use of the garden where they can run freely, use a range of resources to test their physical skills, explore materials such as sand, water and gardening. The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of all the children in her care, organising her time and resources appropriately to ensure children are stimulated and enjoy their time in her care. Children take an active part in deciding what activities they would like to do, fostering their confidence and independence. Parents' wishes are actively sought and respected, enabling appropriate care to be provided.

The childminder updates her child care knowledge and skills by attending training. She has completed the Introduction to Childminding Practice (ICP), first aid, food safety, fire management and child protection training. A comprehensive range of written records, policies and procedures are efficiently organised and well maintained enabling the childminder to spend her working day with the children.

Overall the provision meets the range of the needs of all the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to develop learning and play opportunities for children through a wide range of activities outside. The childminder has further developed a range of outdoor activities that promote children's physical development. Good improvements have been made with regards to children's overall physical development.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted. A concern was raised in relation to National Standard 1 – Suitability, National Standard 12 – Working in partnership with parents, National Standard – 13 Child protection and National Standard 14 – Documentation. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to investigate this concern. At the visit there was evidence that National Standards 12 – Working in partnership with parents and National Standard 14 – Documentation had not been met. As a result the provider was given four actions

under National Standard 12.1, 12.5, 14.2 and 14.3. A satisfactory response has been received by Ofsted and the provider remains registered.

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):

- continue to develop children's activity plans and assessment procedures.

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