



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY306512
Inspection date	09 December 2005
Inspector	Jacqueline Oldman

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 2005. She lives with her husband and son aged 4 years. They live in a house in a residential area of Leigh-on-Sea, close to schools, pre-schools, Belfairs Park and the shops. All areas of the property are used for childminding, except the front bedrooms. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently caring for two children, both of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The family has a cat.

The childminder takes children to and collects them from a local school and pre-school. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because the childminder has sound routines which meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Children benefit from the good understanding the childminder has of food nutrition. They are becoming knowledgeable about healthy eating because the childminder talks to them about what they eat and what they like. The childminder offers children good opportunities to prepare and cook a wide range of healthy foods for snack time. This encourages them to make choices about their food and experience new tastes. Daily outdoor activities help children's physical development as they gain control over their bodies. They enjoy exercise and being outdoors as they walk to and from activities, climb and run in the park, or take part in sponsored walks. The childminder has organised the management of prescribed medicines so that she can act in children's best interests if they are unwell. Children are protected from the spread of infection through a clear written sickness policy that is shared with parents and effectively put into practice. Children are protected as the childminder can deal with children's minor injuries, is trained in administering first aid and has obtained written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. The childminder ensures that pets do not pose a health risk to children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and explore in a safe and well-organised environment. The childminder is knowledgeable about safety issues and demonstrates a sound understanding of the importance of providing a balance between freedom and safety. Children independently access activities from a range of good quality toys and equipment that are appropriate for their age and stages of development. The childminder is very vigilant about security in her home. Parents are asked to give clear information regarding the people authorised to collect their child. A clear written policy is implemented effectively when out walking. Children's safety is paramount because the childminder assesses and minimises possible risks. Younger children and babies sit in a buggy, while older children's growing independence is fostered through the use of clear and consistent boundaries to help keep them safe. Children's practical road sense is developed well by the childminder. Good use is made of safety items such as socket covers and cupboard locks, which help children understand about potential hazards and safety issues. Smoke detectors are tested and a suitable fire blanket is in place. A clear written emergency evacuation plan has been devised but children are not yet fully protected as it has not been practised with them. The

childminder has a sound awareness of the need to safeguard children; she demonstrates a good understanding that she has responsibility for child protection and is fully aware of the need to implement appropriate procedures if she has concerns about a child's well-being. Parents receive a copy of the written child protection procedures and are made aware of the childminder's responsibility.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive at the childminder's home and settle quickly to activities that are set up ready for them. They are provided with a wide range of play opportunities they find interesting and enjoyable whilst promoting their all round development. The childminder achieves a good balance between supervised activities promoting informal learning and allowing children the freedom to express their imaginations. Children learn effectively through their play, because the childminder uses thoughtful questioning to help children develop their ideas. They demonstrate confidence in their creative skills as they freely join in with familiar songs and rhymes or mix different coloured icing sugars. They show delight as they imaginatively decorate their cakes. Interaction between the childminder and children is warm, friendly and meaningful. Children play independently and with confidence knowing the childminder is on hand for support and reassurance. They persevere and express pride in their achievements. Praise and encouragement is frequently given to raise their confidence and self-esteem. Children's requests are dealt with promptly and the childminder consistently shows interest in what they do and say.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident, happy and respected as individuals. The childminder takes time to gather information about each child so that good relationships are formed, helping children to settle quickly. They are developing increasing independence in organising their play, supported by the childminder's arrangement of the routines, materials and equipment. Children are enabled to gain self-confidence to try new things. They know how to communicate, share and co-operate with others and are developing a sense of belonging by socialising with others, both at the childminder's home and on outings. The childminder has an understanding of the issues in relation to equality of opportunity and some appropriate activities and resources are used to help children become aware of diversity. They are encouraged to take part in charity events and enjoy feeding the horses at the local park. However, the childminder recognises this is an area she can develop further to ensure children gain a positive attitude to culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. The childminder develops a trusting and mutually supportive partnership with parents. She actively encourages a two-way flow of information and provides written policies and procedures that can easily be seen in practice.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The daily routines are well-organised to give children the opportunity to experience a wide range of age-appropriate activities, both inside and outside the home. They have plenty of space and can safely explore due to well-implemented policies and procedures. Time is made for children to take walks, play and rest. Children are cared for according to their needs because the childminder uses the information she holds effectively. She keeps her records up to date and reviews them regularly to ensure she has all the correct information about the children. The childminder has taken time to write clear policies and procedures, which are shared with parents. This ensures the efficient and safe management of the provision and supports the welfare, care and development of the children. A two-way sharing of information about children's progress and well-being is encouraged to keep both parties fully informed and contribute to continuity in the children's care routines. Training such as attending the Introduction to Childminding Practice and the first aid course supports the childminder's good practice. The childminder is very enthusiastic about her role and children benefit from her motivation and commitment to providing high quality care.

Overall, the needs of the range of children being minded are being met.

Improvements since the last inspection

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 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):

- assess the risks to children in relation to practising the emergency escape plan and take action to minimise these
- continue to develop the range of activities and resources, which promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

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