



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	137981
Inspection date	01 November 2005
Inspector	Amanda Jane Tyson

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 has been registered to care for children since 1991. She is currently caring for 3 children, aged 10 months, 1 year and 2 years. They each attend on a part-time basis.

She lives with her husband and two adult aged children in a three bedroomed house in a residential area of Morden. The home is situated within walking distance of local shops and community resources. All areas of the home are available for childminding use, although the childminder does not currently use the bedrooms. Activities take place within the lounge, toilet facilities are on the first floor, and there is a fully

enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The family has a pet dog.

The childminder is a member of the Merton Childminding Association and runs a local carer and toddler group for minded children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy, confident and secure, primarily because the childminder is sound in her knowledge and understanding of children's health and emotional needs. She provides a consistent and calm routine, which is highly considerate of their individual needs, such as sleep times. The childminder knows the children well, and her close relationship with the children is demonstrated by the frequent displays of physical affection and animated gestures between them. Children have their own coat pegs, and space for their personal belongings, their creative work is displayed on furnishings, and as a result children demonstrate a strong sense of belonging.

The childminder minimises the risk to children of cross-contamination to children by practising high standards of hygiene. Each child has their own colour coded hand towel and they are reminded about how germs are spread when they clean their hands before snack time, or after touching the family pet dog. She operates a 24 hour exclusion period for contagious illnesses, such as conjunctivitis, and diarrhoea, which is well detailed in her written procedure for parents. The childminder's 'basic food hygiene' training equips her with additional knowledge to protect children, for example, food preparation.

A high standard of written documentation demonstrates the childminder's professional approach to ensuring children's health needs are consistently met. Written parental consents have been obtained to enable her to administer first aid, and to seek emergency treatment. Records such as accidents, administered medication, and personal health information contain concise detail and are appropriately signed by parents.

Children are developing a fondness for healthy foods because the childminder provides a nutritious balanced daily menu of which includes fresh fruit, vegetables and un-processed meats. Water is offered as apposed to sweetened drinks. A wide variety of outdoor activities, such as nature walks to collect leaves, trips to parks and farms, and regular use of the garden ensure children keep active and receive plenty of fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and well maintained home, whereby potential

hazards are generally very well identified and minimised. Cleaning fluids and sharp knives are stored out of children's reach and a wide variety of safety gadgets, such as, electrical socket covers and child safety gates keep children protected from harm. The childminder ensures high levels of protection for children whilst on outings. She carries a mobile telephone and children wear an illuminated tabard with her telephone number clearly detailed, so that they can be easily spotted in a crowd, and quickly re-united with her if they become lost. Children play safely because the extensive range of toys and resources are regularly checked and consistently replenished. Equipment, such as high chairs conform to British safety standards and the childminder ensures that resources such as scissors are never left around when babies and toddlers are present. Fire safety has been carefully considered and a recent practise of her written procedure proved successful. Children cannot leave the garden unsupervised. However, partitioning to prevent children having access to the rear of the garden is insecure and presents a climbing hazard, and unsuitable equipment, such as ladders are accessible to children to the side of the property. Children's safety in the garden is not sufficiently protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are making excellent developmental progress because the childminder plans a broad and stimulating range of weekly activities, both inside and outside the home. She uses her developing knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, secure understanding of children's individual needs, and skills learned from the wealth of training that she regularly completes, to guide her planning. The childminder sets a monthly learning target, such as the colour 'white' and play and learning throughout the month consolidates this well. For example, planned Christmas activities include making snow from cotton wool, and hopefully building a snowman. The childminder uses a topic based approach when there are older children attending. A wealth of outdoor experiences introduce children to the wider, natural and living world, for example, they recently visited a Windmill, the Bluebell railway, and held animals during a farm visit. Children are consistently challenged, for example, counting skills are reinforced in number songs, and from the excellent home made laminated number game cards. Children regularly use tools such as scissors, glue and paint, and babies' developing mobility is positively encouraged. Excellent use is made of photographs to support and encourage learning; babies are able to 'find themselves' from the photo-board, and children are able to recall and discuss special events by browsing through albums. Social skills are developing well; children have regular opportunities to mix with others when the childminder takes them to local community groups. Indoors, children participate in activities which are well adapted to enable them to play together.

Toys are of excellent quality and very regularly replenished and supplemented. As a result, children play contentedly and use their imagination well to act out real and imaginary experiences, for example, arranging the dolls house with the extensive range of furniture and people figures which represent different family generations. Babies laugh with delight as they knock down a tower of bricks, and they respond eagerly with developing language skills when the childminder initiates animated

conversation using the resources.

The childminder maintains a daily record of children's nappy changing, food consumption and sleep times. She keeps a portfolio of their creative achievements and photographs of them engaged in activities. Her knowledge and understanding of children's individual stage of development is comprehensive and she has begun to devise a system to evaluate developmental progress on a three monthly basis.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder's professional, but friendly approach with parents, ensures high levels of communication and a consistent approach between children's two environments. Parents are informed of the monthly learning intentions, and arrangements for encouraging aspects of developmental progress, such as, language skills is clearly agreed with parents. Parents are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the childminder's practices and regulatory responsibilities, including, the procedure for making a complaint, because she provides them with a wealth of written information.

Children's self-esteem is enhanced by the displays of their creative work and the childminder's consistent use of praise in response to their efforts and achievements. Children behave extremely well because the environment is calm and they are well occupied by the exciting range of activities and resources. Methods to manage challenging behaviour are well thought out and the comprehensive written policy provides parents with a clear understanding of the childminder's practice.

Children are introduced to diversity from an early age. The childminder has an excellent supply of resources to support learning of race, gender, religion, disability and family dynamics. Children learn to recognise the national costumes of a variety of countries as they play with her fantastic doll collection, miniature people in wheelchairs are manoeuvred around the dolls house in imaginative play. The fantastic collection of books includes specialist issues, such as, 'my daddy's in prison' for appropriate use.

The childminder recently completed a specialist training course because she wanted to extend her knowledge of special educational needs and disability. She has good systems in place to ensure any special needs of children are met.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder organises the space in her home to meet the physical needs of children, for example, babies are able to crawl safely and freely around. The home is exceptionally well resourced with high quality play and learning resources which are accessible for children to help themselves. She makes very good use of local community resources, such as toddler groups, and open spaces, and plans the wide

range of exciting activities around the routine needs of attending children, for example, babies' sleep times.

The childminder is booked to commence NVQ3 training in January 2006, along with a variety of other shorter courses, such as 'Birth to Three Matters'. She makes excellent use of the training opportunities provided by the local childcare partnership, for example, this weekend she is updating her child protection knowledge. Her first aid qualification remains valid. She is a member of the Merton childminding network and runs a drop-in group for childminders and carers twice per week.

All required records and documentation, and a comprehensive range of additional policies and procedures are in place. All of which are used very well to promote high quality care and learning experiences for children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The last children act inspection recommended that the childminder should practise her emergency evacuation plan. A practise was completed, and a record of the date kept. Regular practises are now included in her procedure.

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

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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):

- make sure that children are unable to access hazards stored to the side of the property, and that partitioning at the rear is both secure and safe.

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