



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118825
Inspection date	16 December 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 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 January 1996. She lives with her husband and their two adult children. The family live in a house in Rainham, Essex, which is within walking distance of local schools, shops, parks and bus routes. All areas of the property are used for childminding and a fully enclosed garden is available for outside play.

The childminder is currently minding 3 children aged 2 years, 1 year and 10 months. She takes them to the library and park on a regular basis. The family have a pet dog. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, welcoming childminding home. Their good health is promoted well. The childminder's preparation of food and drink is hygienic and young children learn about the importance of personal hygiene through daily routines such as hand washing after using the toilet or potty. First aid arrangements for children are good. The childminder has completed a relevant 12 hour first aid training course to ensure her knowledge of first aid procedures is up-to-date and that she can deal with an accident appropriately.

Children are provided with healthy, balanced menus that include freshly prepared fruit and vegetables with each meal. The childminder has a sound understanding of the nutritional needs of children and provides balanced and substantial meals. Children are provided with drinks of water and low sugar juices frequently during the day. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure children's individual dietary needs are met and has experience of catering for children's special dietary requirements.

Children enjoy indoor and outdoor activities each day which allow them to be active and further develop their physical skills. They skilfully manoeuvre dolls buggies around the lounge, enthusiastically dance and sing to music and visit the local park regularly to use the swings, climbing frame and slide. Suitable arrangements are in place to allow children to quietly rest or sleep when they are tired.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure and safe environment. Daily checks of the premises by the childminder and her good supervision of children help ensure they are protected from harm. Children have ample room to play, a quiet place to rest, a comfortable place to enjoy meals. They move confidently and safely around the childminder's home. Appropriate safety measures are in place to protect children including plug socket covers, a fire extinguisher and smoke alarms at each level of the house. Children have easy access to a broad range of age appropriate, safe and suitable play equipment. The childminder checks these regularly to make sure that they remain in good condition. Children learn how to keep themselves safe as they are reminded to hold on to the banister carefully when going upstairs, and talk about road safety when out walking.

Suitable vetting and child protection procedures are in place to promote children's welfare. Although the childminder does not have a copy of the local authority child protection procedures, she has a sound understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and knows what to do if she has concerns about a child's wellbeing.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled, happy and enjoy the play opportunities the childminder provides. Suitable settling in procedures ensure children are settled gradually into the childminder's care, to ensure they and their families get to know her well before the childminding placement begins. This and the childminder's warm, caring manner helps children to feel secure. Children's self-esteem and confidence is promoted well as they choose toys and activities, and are praised for their help with the tidying away of toys.

Children have easy access to an appropriate range of toys and activities each day, including a small range of resources that reflect diversity. They confidently help themselves to the play equipment stored in the hallway. The childminder regularly rotates her resources to ensure children remain stimulated. Children have daily opportunities to enjoy creative play. They draw, create interesting collages pictures with glitter, glue and tinsel and make Christmas crackers to take home as presents. Children express their imagination well through role-play as they wash puppets in the play washing machine, take their dolls for walks to the 'shops' and busily make cups of 'tea' for visitors using their tea set. Children have regular access to books and stories and visit the library each week.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and have satisfactory opportunities to learn about themselves and the wider world. Children have access to a small range of play resources designed to develop their understanding of diversity, including small world people, dressing up material and books. Children learn about the needs of others as they talk about a child the childminder sponsors who lives overseas, and learn to say 'yes' and 'no' using sign language. Children explore their local community as they visit the library, park and childminder's group.

Children mostly behave well and are learning to share, take turns and co-operate with others. The childminder uses distraction effectively when there are difficulties between the youngest children, for example they want the same toy. The childminder's use of praise to reward positive behaviour, such as showing care and concern for others, promotes children's self-esteem. Children learn about responsible behaviour as they help tidy away toys.

The childminder is keen to develop close links with parents and ensure children's care is consistent. Financial and care arrangements are agreed and confirmed through the use of written contracts between the childminder and parents. The childminder makes parents welcome in her home and gives them verbal feedback about their children's progress each day. The childminder uses a 'daily report sheet' to exchange useful information with parents, including children's sleep times, how they have eaten and activities they have enjoyed during the day. A childminding journal is used effectively to record each child's achievements and share these with

parents; this includes photos of children and samples of their art work.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children confidently make themselves at home in the welcoming, safe childminding environment. They enjoy the interesting range of play experiences the childminder organises for them, although too few activities are provided to help children learn about themselves and the wider world.

The childminder's vetting procedures ensure that all adults living in her home are suitable to have access to children. The childminder has a sound understanding of the National Standards for Childminding and her responsibility to comply with these to provide a good standard of childcare. She has worked hard to improve her organisational skills and the business side of her childminding service. All the required documentation is appropriately maintained, up-to-date and stored securely. This supports children's welfare. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She is keen to further develop her childcare skills and has recently attended first aid training.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the childminder has completed a relevant first aid training course to make sure that the first aid she administers to children is appropriate.

The organisation of the childminder's documentation has improved and is now to the required standard to promote children's welfare. Written agreements with parents are in place to confirm care and financial arrangements and provide consistency of care for children. An accurate daily record of children's attendance is maintained. This ensures that every child would be accounted for and protected in an emergency situation.

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):

- extend the range of play opportunities provided to promote children's understanding of diversity and the wider world.

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