



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118909
Inspection date	10 May 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 1997. She lives with her husband and three children aged 15, 13 and 12 years. The family live in a house in Elm Park, which is within walking distance of bus routes, a main line train station, schools, shops and local resources. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The family have a pet rabbit kept in a hutch in the garden and a corn snake kept in a locked tank indoors.

The childminder is currently minding three children aged under five, all on a part-time basis. Two children were present during the inspection. The childminder collects children from a local school, takes minded children to a local pre-school group and attends a childminding group on a regular basis.

The childminder has completed the Introducing Childminding Practice (ICP), Developing Childminding Practice (DCP) and is in the process of completing the Extending Childminding Practice training (ECP). She also holds a current first aid certificate. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm, welcoming, childminding home. Their good health is promoted well, for example medication is stored safely, the childminder has a current 12 hour first aid certificate and there are appropriate hygiene arrangements in place to protect children from pets.

Children are learning about the importance of good hygiene and personal care. The childminder ensures they know why they must wash their hands after playing in the garden, before eating and when they have finished handling the rabbit. Each child has their own towel for hand drying to reduce the risk of cross infection.

Children are provided with a healthy, balanced diet that includes snacks of chopped fruit and a choice of vegetables with each meal. Older children confidently ask for drinks when they are thirsty and younger children help themselves to beakers of water and low sugar juices. The childminder agrees menus with parents and is happy to cater for children's special dietary requirements.

Children enjoy a wide range of indoor/outdoor physical activities, which contribute to their physical good health. They learn to manoeuvre the dolls buggy around the lounge, visit the park to use the slides, swings and climbing frame and have access to soft play equipment at the childminding group.

The childminder provides suitable sleeping equipment including a travel cot. Babies and toddlers benefit from flexible daily routines, which allow them to have a quiet rest or sleep according to their individual needs. Older children rest on the settee and enjoy a quiet activity such as reading a story 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, safe and child centred environment. The childminder's daily check of the house and garden before children arrive and very good supervision of children, help ensure they are protected from harm. The

childminder knows that the children in her care are changing/developing fast, so she is continuously risk assessing and making changes to her home and equipment to prevent accidents. The child-sized table and chairs have recently been removed while a toddler enjoys using these as a climbing frame! Appropriate safety equipment is provided in the childminder's home, including a safety gate at the foot of the stairs, smoke alarms and fire blanket in the kitchen.

Space is well organised. Children have ample room to play, a quiet place to rest and a comfortable, safe area to enjoy their meals.

Children are developing an understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The childminder explains why they must not touch the radiator and shows them how to shut the cupboards doors carefully. Children's security is a priority. The childminder keeps her front door locked during the day as the handle is at child height. A child who enjoys greeting visitors knows they must wait until an adult unlocks the door before they can help open it.

Children have access to a wide range of safe, suitable furniture, toys and equipment. These are well organised. Small toys are kept out of the reach of the youngest children and the childminder checks her equipment regularly to ensure it remains in good condition.

Children are kept safe on trips and outings. The youngest children are secured appropriately in a buggy and older children understand they must hold the childminder's hand when out walking. Children are learning about road safety. They know why it is important to stop at the kerb when crossing the road and are encouraged to help the childminder look out for traffic and decide when it is safe to cross. Children also know they must not touch dogs they do not know when visiting the park.

Suitable child protection procedures are in place to protect children and ensure concerns about a child are dealt with appropriately. The childminder has a copy of the local authority procedures and completed an assignment about child abuse as part of her childminding course. She has a sound understanding of her responsibilities and stated she would not hesitate to implement the child protection procedures if concerned about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Settling in procedures work well. Children are settled gradually into the childminder's care to ensure they and their parents get to know her well before the childminding placement begins.

Children have access to a good range of play equipment, including toys and books that positively reflect diversity. Some are stored in low level cupboards and boxes to give children opportunities to choose their own resources. The childminder regularly rotates her play equipment to ensure children remain stimulated.

Children are interested and keen to learn. A wide range of activities are provided to meet each child's developmental needs. Opportunities for children to enjoy books and stories are good. They visit the library on a regular basis. The childminder reads stories and shares books with children each day. Even the youngest children handle books carefully and show their enjoyment of books as they laugh and point to the pictures. Children enjoy creative activities each day, including painting, drawing and making shapes and models with play dough.

Children benefit from a warm, trusting relationship with the childminder who knows them well. She offers cuddles and reassurance appropriately, such as when someone new visits the home. The childminder ensures all the children present are able to enjoy the play activities on offer. She also questions children effectively to further develop their learning, such as talking about the colours and shapes of the bricks as they build 'helicopters'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their individual needs are well met as they follow their normal sleeping routine established at home and decide what they would like to eat at snack time. They make themselves at home, confidently choosing toys and equipment and helping themselves to drinks.

The children behave well and are learning to share, take turns and co-operate with others. The childminder is a good role model, treats children with respect and manages children's behaviour in a calm, positive way. She helps children feel good about themselves by using praise frequently to reward 'good' behaviour such as sharing bricks and taking turns with the dolls buggy. Children are also encouraged to care for other living things. They enjoy picking dandelions and preparing carrots for the rabbits 'breakfast'.

Children explore their local community as they visit places of interest such as the library and enjoy routine outings to the local park and shops. They have appropriate opportunities to explore the wider world. They play with toys and books designed to increase their awareness of diversity, including dolls, small world people, books and dressing up clothes. Occasionally children enjoy activities to help them learn about other cultures and lifestyles, such as making dragon collage pictures for Chinese New Year.

An effective partnership between the childminder and parents ensures children's individual needs are well met. The childminder discusses the children's progress with parents each day and uses a daily communication book to share information about her care of babies. These help to ensure continuity of care for children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are confident and feel at home in the welcoming, well organised childminding environment. The childminder is committed to promoting children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. She works closely with parents to ensure children's care is consistent. Children benefit from childminder's commitment to further develop her childcare knowledge and skills through training. Overall, the needs of all the children who attend are met well.

The childminder's documentation, which is required for the efficient and safe management of the childminding service, is well organised, up to date and stored securely. She has produced a range of written policies and procedures to share with parents, these include child protection information, a lost child procedure, medication and sick child policy and a fire evacuation plan.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the childminder has improved her range of activities and resources that promote children's awareness of disability. These include a small doll in the dolls house who uses a wheelchair, a puzzle and books.

The childminder has also expanded her range of policies and procedures. These provide parents with clear information about some of her childcare practices including her fire evacuation procedure and sick child policy.

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):

- Increase the range of activities provided that help children learn about 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