



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	202245
Inspection date	08 February 2006
Inspector	Cheryl Langley

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 registered in 1996. She is registered to provide care for a maximum of six children at any one time, and is currently minding 12 children. She lives with her husband and adult daughter in a house in Billericay. The whole of the premises is used for childminding, with the exception of the ground floor, dining room and study, and the three upstairs family bedrooms. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and of the local Childminding group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They are cared for in a welcoming, clean home where they appreciate the advantages of regular cleaning routines to keep them healthy. Children are developing an understanding of why they must wash their hands after playing in the garden or using the toilet. They learn about keeping their bodies healthy through discussion, their daily routines and a range of interesting books.

Children know which type of food is good to eat and the benefits of a healthy diet. They have access to drinking water throughout the day and are encouraged to eat fresh fruit and vegetables. The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents and works with them closely to meet the children's dietary needs.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. They play in the garden and walk to local parks regularly to benefit from the fresh air. Children experience a variety of activities to develop their physical skills using both large and small equipment. For example, in the garden they jump on the bouncy castle, crawl through the tunnel and push and pull toys. At the park they use the climbing equipment and swings. In the house they move and dance to music, play musical instruments, complete puzzles and jigsaws, stack cups and build towers with bricks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is a high priority and they are cared for in a home where risks are identified and minimised. They move around freely and independently, adhering to house rules to keep themselves safe. For example, children know not to climb furniture so they do not fall and hurt themselves. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves free from harm inside and outside of the home with a variety of interesting books, discussion and leading by example. Children learn to be aware of strangers and practise codes for crossing the road safely. They have a good understanding of the procedures to follow in an emergency, such as evacuating the premises in the event of a fire.

A broad range of safe, developmentally appropriate resources are stored around the room at child height for easy access. This enables the children to select their play independently and take part in activities safely. The childminder has the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. For example, risk assessments are carried out regularly and she has the required parental consents as well as a good understanding of Child Protection issues. She has attended training in this area and all the relevant documentation is to hand.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a broad variety of exciting play and activities which are child led or planned and organised by the childminder. They receive adult guidance to give them extra support if needed but their independence is promoted as much as possible. The childminder sets them challenges along with a range of stimulating play to aid their development. For example, children are encouraged to count during play and daily routines and learn new words to greet their parents.

They benefit from exciting activities which help develop their knowledge and skills. For example, children learn to recognise different colours when they choose coloured bricks. They count pictures in books or count as they sing nursery rhymes. Children learn mathematical language when they weigh ingredients for cooking. Sharing stories enhances their communication skills. The children enjoy reading about 'Spot'. They learn matching and sequencing with activity games. Observing the changes in leaves during the autumn and growing marigolds, cress and sunflowers teaches them about the natural environment. They enjoy using the bug box to watch the spiders and ladybirds. Children are encouraged and supported with their school homework.

Regular use of creative materials such as pencils, crayons, paint and play dough, helps the children to represent their ideas in a variety of ways. The children draw pictures for their parents, print with paints to decorate an octopus and make flowers to put in yoghurt pot vases. Extensive opportunities for imaginary play enable the children to express their feelings and experiences. They use the home play toys to care for dolls or pretend to prepare drinks for the childminder. They are encouraged to take part in everyday routines to learn about their local community such as visiting a local shop to buy fruit or vegetables.

Their confidence and self-esteem is developed by the childminder who gives them frequent praise and encouragement at appropriate times. Children's sense of belonging is promoted because she knows them well and values their achievements which she displays in her home and shares with parents. They make positive relationships with all the other children and adults at the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a good range of activities and meaningful resources to promote a positive view of the wider world. Books, dolls and activities to celebrate different festivals and cultures increases children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. The children enjoy using chopsticks and tasting noodles to celebrate Chinese New Year. They talk about the brightly coloured Russian dolls, dress figures in traditional dress and have a lot of fun dressing up for their 'multicultural day'.

Children are valued and respected. Their individual needs are well met as they follow their daily routine which is discussed with parents. Children behave very well. They

understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age-appropriate methods used by the childminder to manage behaviour. Children are considerate, share, take turns and are polite, remembering to say please and thank you. Realistic challenges are set by the childminder to help the children develop. They are given time to complete tasks at their own pace and become independent, such as putting on their shoes and fastening the buckles. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem. They feel relaxed, secure and able to try new things and make choices about what they want to do.

Children benefit from a strong partnership between the childminder and parents who exchange information frequently. They have daily discussions and review contracts, policies and procedures regularly. However, the complaints procedure lacks some of the required detail to meet the National Standards. The childminder keeps a diary to record the achievements and routines of younger children. This helps keep parents well informed of how their child's needs are being met and their developmental progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children's individual needs are met through effective organisation and good verbal and written communication with parents. Space and equipment is prepared so that children can access resources easily and independently which enables them to make choices about their play. A balance of child led activities and organised play ensure children have a range of different enjoyable experiences whilst they are with the childminder. They benefit from routines which make them feel settled. Children play, eat, sleep and rest as they need to.

Documentation is stored securely and information shared appropriately with parents. All of the required policies and procedures are in place to help keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge and experience which she continues to update with relevant training. She has a current first aid qualification. Overall, the needs of all the children who attend are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to provide resources that reflect a positive image of different cultures, genders and disabilities to make the children aware of wider society. An excellent range of toys which include brightly coloured dolls from around the world, dressing up clothes, cooking utensils and jigsaws, along with interesting planned activities ensure the children learn about difference in a positive and exciting way.

The childminder also agreed to make sure all adults in the household undergo checks and to request parental consent for emergency medical treatment and advice. All of the adults over the age of 16 years have been vetted to ensure the children are cared for in a safe household. To make sure the childminder can act in the children's best interests if they need urgent medical attention, parental consent for emergency

medical treatment and advice has been requested for all minded children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004. 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):

- update the complaints procedure to inform complainants that they will be notified of the outcome within 28 days and that a record of all complaints is maintained and appropriate information from that record is shared with parents on request.

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