



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	132224
Inspection date	12 May 2006
Inspector	Denise Rosemary Olsson-Hildick
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 1997 and lives with her husband and two children in Tolworth, Surrey, near local shops, parks, schools and bus routes. Children have access to the entire home though are discouraged from going into the loft extension. There is an enclosed garden at the back of the property. The family have one cat.

The childminder is registered to care for 6 children, 3 of whom may be under 5 years at any one time and is currently looking after 6 children part-time after school.

The childminder walks and drives to schools to take and collect children and takes children on regular outings. Children who have a special need or speak English as an additional language are welcomed and supported. The childminder is a member of the local branch of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The standard of accommodation is good. French windows open directly onto the garden, allowing children easy access to the outdoor play area. The house presents as light, clean, safe and well-maintained. Photographs of her own family and minded children, pictures and personal belongings help to create a warm and welcoming environment for children to play in.

Standards of hygiene are good. For example, medication is stored out of sight and reach of children. The first aid box only contains those materials currently recommended and is checked regularly. An extra first aid kit is kept in the car to enable prompt attention in case of accidents. All children have separate towels in order to limit cross-infection and wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals. The family have one cat that is neutered, inoculated and treated regularly to prevent worms and fleas. If children are unwell they lie on the sofa, have a drink of water and use a bowl if they are nauseous. Parents are informed. These precautions ensure prompt, caring action is taken to secure children's health.

Arrangements to enable children to rest, exercise and enjoy fresh air are good. For example, the French windows and side windows are open to allow a through-flow of fresh air, especially in warm, dry weather. Children take toys and games into the garden, play football and go on regular outings where they are encouraged to run or participate in sports. If children are tired they rest on the sofa. All these arrangements ensure children benefit from opportunities to relax or participate in vigorous activity.

The provision of nutritional meals and snacks is good. For example, children help themselves to orange squash and this ensures they are easily able to quench their thirst. They sit together at a table for meals, serve themselves and eagerly tuck into meals of, for example, baked potatoes, cheese, tuna fish, sweetcorn and baked beans. Desserts include yoghurts, slices of apple and pear, strawberries and chocolate mousse. Nuts are excluded from all meals as these are considered to be unsafe for children to eat. Children who are reluctant to eat are tempted to try a little and rewarded with, for example, a football token card for their efforts. Meals are healthy, attractively served, tasty and appealing. As a consequence children thoroughly enjoy their food and learn the value of a wholesome diet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The home and garden are generally safe for children. This includes, for example, thermostatically controlled radiators, locks on windows, safety glass at a low level, cleaning materials and toiletries stored out of reach, a secure garden and front door. The bathroom door can be opened from the outside. Smoke alarms are tested regularly, there is a fire blanket in the kitchen and an evacuation plan is in place. When younger children are taken out they have their hand held and older children stop at the kerb to wait for the childminder. Road safety is taught. Car seats conform to British Safety Standards and seat belts are always worn. These precautions, inside and outside the home ensure children's safety is assured.

Arrangements to safeguard children are satisfactory. For example, the childminder is aware of signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and knows what to do in these circumstances. In this manner children's well-being is protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Opportunities for children to enjoy their play and achieve their potential are good. All children are clearly at home, relaxed and at ease. They independently choose activities which include, for example, watching TV, colouring pictures or playing with Barbie dolls. Children take soldiers and cars to play in the garden and others look at books, telling each other about their day at school. Boys thoroughly enjoy an energetic game of football. Whatever their chosen occupation, all children concentrate for long periods, exchanging conversation, laughter and smiles. Photographs prompt children to remember past activities which they are eager to describe. These include hollowing out pumpkins for Halloween, grating cheese and spreading tomato paste on pizza bases, icing biscuits, making puppets, going on outings to a farm and to the bowling alley. They clearly enjoy these activities, their facial expression one of concentration, pleasure and delight. Smiles, eye contact and hugs are frequently exchanged and warm relationships with the childminder ensure children feel welcome and valued as individuals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Good opportunities exist for girls and boys to have the same access to play materials and games. For example children state that they can play with whatever toys they like, including girls who want to play football or boys with dolls. Some toys portray a positive image of people from different ethnic backgrounds including dolls, books, puzzles and flesh-tinted pencils. Dressing up clothes from other countries and a book display positive images of people from different countries and with a disability. These arrangements ensure children learn to value and respect differences and similarities.

Satisfactory arrangements are in place to welcome children with additional needs. For example, she welcomes all children depending on the nature of the difficulty, her family's needs and the suitability of the home environment. She is aware that the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership offer support and advice on this issue. This outlook ensures all children feel welcome and included.

Management of behaviour is good. For example, all children know the house rules, including not being allowed to jump on the furniture, play football indoors, or watch TV during meals. They also know that they are expected to use good manners. Acceptable behaviour is rewarded with treats, smiles, eye contact, hugs and endearments. The childminder takes good care to explain how unacceptable behaviour hurts others. Children learn to take turns, sometimes with the assistance of a timer that rings after a set period. Consistent, realistic boundaries, kindly applied, enable children to learn how to manage and control their impulses.

Relationships with parents are warm, open, honest and in some cases very long-standing. Conversations take place every day concerning children's activities, demeanour and meals. Eye contact, smiles, laughter and jokes are freely and naturally exchanged. The childminder explains how she looks after children for longer than the contracted hours in emergencies in the belief that this helps both parents and children. The confidence parents have in the childminder is reflected by children who feel secure and happy in her care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy playing in a well-organised home and garden, secure in a daily routine adapted to individual needs and able to choose activities of most interest to them. They benefit from the care provided by a committed childminder who provides stable, long-term provision. Records and documents are comprehensive and stored in a confidential manner. For example, the attendance register is up to date including times of arrival and departure and a portfolio includes useful, interesting information for parents. The exception relates to systems to record medication which can result in children receiving medication without parent's written permission. The childminder has a current first aid qualification and the National Vocational Qualification Level 3 in Child Care and Education. Children are protected and supported by sound administrative systems designed by the childminder, to ensure all children's needs are met. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection recommendations were raised relating to devising and practising an emergency escape plan. This is now in place and children are aware of what to do in an emergency. A recommendation was made concerning the hard ground under the swing and slide to ensure this does not pose a hazard. The swings and slide are now situated over a layer of wood chips in a different part of the garden and the potential for injuries from falls is reduced. A list of notifiable diseases that must be notified to Ofsted is available to consult. The childminder now has written permission from parents to take children in her car and this authorisation preserves parental choice.

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

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):

- ensure systems relating to giving medication include written permission from parents
- ensure umbrella washing lines are made safe from children

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk