

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135633
Inspection date	17 October 2007
Inspector	Angela Konarzewski

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 satisfactory. 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 for 13 years. She is registered for a maximum of four children under eight years, of whom no more than three may be under five years and, of these, no more than one under one year.

The three-bedroom house is situated in a residential area with local amenities close by, including a large park. The childminder lives on the premises with her two teenage children. Children make use of the ground floor of the premises which consists of a hallway and a large through lounge, plus a first floor bathroom. Children have limited, supervised access to the rear garden and kitchen. There are two kittens and a hamster on the premises.

The childminder walks or drives children to school and nursery and she attends parent and pre-school groups. The childminder has completed an NVQ Level 3 in Early Years Care and Education.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder promotes sound health and hygiene practices. Dietary requirements are discussed with parents who supply a healthy packed lunch. Drinks are continuously available. Children know about the need to eat fresh fruit and vegetables and to drink water rather than squash. The childminder has good knowledge about healthy eating herself, including the risks of eating too much fat and salt. This enables her to give good advice to parents.

Children are fit and healthy, and rarely off with illnesses. The house is very clean. Toys are also clean and this ensures that the risk of the spread of infection is limited. The childminder makes sure children wash their hands after going to the toilet. They have wet wipes rather than towels to promote hygiene. A child gate at the entrance to the lounge limits children's access to the kitchen, as two new kittens have their feeding bowls situated here. Both kittens have been inoculated to protect them from infections. The litter trays are kept outside during the day and the feeding area is clean. Children have limited contact with the animals and always with supervision.

Children benefit from physical exercise when they walk to school with the oldest child, and when they visit the nearby park. At pre-school playgroups, they have opportunities to develop physical skills by using climbing frames and other large equipment. Use of the childminder's garden is limited and any access is supervised. The small pond, which accommodates rare newts, is not fenced or made inaccessible to children, limiting children's opportunities to play safely outside.

Health records are maintained and shared with parents who countersign to give permission for the administration of medicines. The record of accidents shows that children rarely have accidents. The childminder is trained in first aid and has parental consent for seeking treatment or advice in emergencies. There are suitable arrangements for children's rest and sleep, when required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder arranges the premises to ensure that accidents are rare. Inside the house, the children are safe and secure. They feel welcome, whatever their age, and they greet the childminder with great pleasure when they see her. She checks continuously that the children are safe within the large space available to them, and they are aware of the need to play safely. Children are unable to play safely unsupervised in the garden as the pond is not safe or made inaccessible.

Children under three have access to a wide range of toys which are in very good condition. The childminder is vigilant in ensuring that small items are put away when the baby is present to protect from accidental swallowing. There is a lack of equipment more suitable for use by children over four years to further promote their learning during their short time with the childminder.

On the school run, children are secured in safety seats when the car is used. The childminder talks to the children about safety in and around the car. She teaches them about road safety to ensure they are protected when crossing the road, by, for example, holding hands. Children

follow her guidance, making their own comments on each other's safety, demonstrating a caring attitude.

The childminder has received training in child protection and has a good understanding of the signs of child abuse. She follows set procedures for safeguarding and protecting children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children happily play and talk with each other. They share toys and games and watch television with confidence and enjoyment. The childminder is very experienced with managing children and they are happy in her care and in each other's company. There is a family atmosphere in which individual children and their needs are valued and respected.

The childminder promotes children's learning by talking to them and asking questions to develop their language and thinking skills. An older child enjoys reading to the younger children, practising reading skills. The baby likes listening to music on the television. Play activities are not planned, but younger children have opportunities to choose equipment, books and toys from a very large selection. The childminder has a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters Framework, however it is not used when planning activities, to help younger children to progress with their learning.

The childminder regularly takes pre-school children to toddler groups where they have opportunities to take part in musical and singing activities for enjoyment. They also join in with art and craft activities, developing their fine motor skill and creativity. In addition, these opportunities help to develop children's social skills, while expeditions to the park support their physical development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the wider world through their experiences both inside and outside the childminder's home. Equal opportunities are actively promoted to ensure all children feel equally valued and included.

The children are happy and self-assured. The childminder manages the behaviour of the different ages appropriately, and in accordance with positive behaviour management strategies. She uses praise effectively to reinforce correct behaviour and children are clear about what is expected of them so they feel secure. The older children aged three and above behave very well. The childminder provides comfort when the baby cries, but she also encourages the baby to be independent and to play appropriately with the other children. The childminder is highly effective in developing children's social skills. All children communicate confidently with adults and with their peers.

The childminder has the confidence of parents, with whom she has a very good relationship. Parents speak highly of the childminder's care for their children and of her flexibility and support. Children benefit from the close partnership between parents and the childminder, as this ensures consistency in every aspect of their care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from welcoming premises where they feel secure and their individual needs are taken into account. Children safety is adequately maintained. The childminder regularly attends courses to update her knowledge of childcare issues, and she holds a first aid certificate. She has suitable arrangements to safeguard children, ensuring they receive appropriate care. Children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development.

The childminder's records and documents are available and they are maintained appropriately. She keeps attendance records, and information about health and medication required. The system currently in use for storing documents does not provide easy access, when they are needed. Records about individual children are shared with parents, ensuring good communication of information both ways.

The childminder displays her registration certificate clearly. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to make improvements to the documentation which she has carried out, in line with her NVQ training in Child Care and Education. The daily attendance record is now accurately maintained and up-to-date and records are readily accessible on the premises, although they would benefit from further organisation. The sick child policy has been reviewed and there have not been any complaints.

The childminder has increased the range of toys available for children under three years, although activities are not planned. There is scope to further improve the range of toys and resources for children aged over four years. The play resources are readily accessible to the children, and they choose toys independently.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- improve outcomes for children under three by implementing an approach in line with the Birth to three matters framework
- provide more opportunities for children to regularly use the garden by making the pond safe or inaccessible
- provide a wider range of equipment and resources for children aged over four years
- develop the system for storing and filing documents and records.

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