

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	147371
Inspection date	29 February 2008
Inspector	Kay Williams
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 was registered in 2001. She lives with her three children two of whom are grown up and the youngest is aged eight. They live in Burnt Oak which is located within the London borough of Barnet. The ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. The outdoor space is not currently in use.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding three children under the age of eight.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local library and visits local parks.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning about the importance of good personal hygiene as they wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet, although the hand drying facilities are limited. The policy for the care of sick children is effectively implemented and children who become ill are restricted from attending until the risk of cross infection has significantly reduced. The childminder maintains a current first aid qualification, consequently children are well cared for in the event of an accident. However, accident and medication records are not retained for a sufficient length of time.

Children are fed according to their dietary requirements and parents provide most of the children's food. The childminder has sound knowledge of the importance of healthy eating and offers the children snacks of toast and fresh fruit. They are able to request a drink of water at anytime.

Children do enjoy fresh air and exercise as they walk to and from the local school. The childminder does not currently use her garden as she feels it is unsafe for the children. However, children visit local parks regularly to compensate for the lack of outdoor play space within the home.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children clearly feel comfortable and at ease in the childminders home. The childminder enjoys the children's company and they respond well to her attention. The home is warm and welcoming and with the children in mind the childminder has turned her conservatory into a play room. Children are able to move freely between the lounge and the play room enjoying independent access to a satisfactory range of play materials and resources.

Children's safety is given adequate priority. Appropriate equipment is effectively used to protect children from the risk of potential hazards. For example, the childminder uses a safety gate across the stairs and electrical socket covers are in place. The childminder has thought through a plan for emergency evacuation although this has yet to be practised. Smoke detectors are regularly checked and maintained. First aid kit equipment is close to hand and is always taken along on outings.

Children are sufficiently safeguarded as the childminder has sound knowledge of how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and knows how to respond appropriately. However she is less secure in her knowledge of what to do if an allegation of child abuse was made against her.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time spent with the childminder. She makes effective use of the Birth to three matters framework in planning a range of stimulating worth while activities for the younger children in her care. Older children also enjoy well planned activities, these are especially

significant during the school holidays where children enjoy a wide range of outings to places such as museums, the model village and the cinema.

Children have fun as they learn. The childminder makes a good play partner for the children engaging at their level and encouraging them to think and talk about what they are doing through appropriately questioning their play. For example, children are asked to consider the taste, colour and texture of the banana that they have chosen to eat for their snack. Consequently children are confident communicators. They enjoy singing rhymes and are secure in their knowledge of the words to a wide repertoire of songs, including; 'wind the bobbin up' and 'are you coming out to play'. Children make good use of books, choosing to look at them independently or while enjoying sitting on the childminders lap to listen to their chosen story. The childminder makes good use of daily routines to encourage children's learning through a range of everyday activities. For instance, the children count the slices of toast they have made. When the post is delivered they look at the letters to see who they are for and as a result they are developing their understanding of the importance of written information and are learning to appreciate that written text carries meaning. Children have good opportunities to develop their early writing skills as a variety of pencils and paper are readily available to them. They enjoy mimicking the world around them as they dress and care for 'dollies'. They enjoy making music as they sing and dance to recorded music and use their own instruments to accompany the tune.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident individuals who are able to communicate their needs to the childminder well. She in turn knows them well as individuals and responds appropriately. Knowing for example what very young children are trying to articulate in their language that is still in its formative stage. Children are developing a good sense of personal identity as they play with resources which reflect some images social and cultural diversity. For example children are encouraged to consider the different countries of origin of the musical instruments that they play with.

Children are well behaved. The childminder creates a good sense of fun within the home and the children respond well to her. She has a clear understanding of appropriate strategies for managing children's behaviour effectively. For example she promotes children's self esteem by praising their achievements and uses methods of distraction and discussion if she feels that a child is losing their own self control.

The settling in procedure is a gradual process and this allows the childminder to develop a positive relationships with the parents. Children benefit from the effective partnerships which have been forged between the childminder and the parents as clear line of communication ensure that children are cared for according to their individual needs. Parents are offered some written information about the service that they receive, although this is not extensive. The complaints procedure is out of date and the certificate of registration is not displayed.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for in an environment that is well organised and which centres around the children's routines. Children's personal information is well collated and serves as useful reference for the childminder. Written information is generally well collated and covers most

of the required standard although there are gaps. The complaints procedure is out of date and the certificate of registration is not appropriately displayed.

The childminder is committed to her role and is aware of her overall responsibilities, but is not always up to date with changes to the regulations. Documentation is effectively recorded, although not always retained for a sufficient length of time.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of the children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to develop a policy regarding the exclusion of sick children, to set in place a complaints procedure and to make effective use of equipment to facilitate the sleeping and eating arrangements for younger children.

Children now benefit from improvements to the policy for the exclusion of sick children as this supports good practice and the risk of cross infection has been reduced. Younger children are now using appropriate equipment including a travel cot and a high chair in order that they can rest and eat comfortably. However, the complaints procedure which is currently in place is out of date.

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

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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):

- retain all accident and medication records for a reasonable period of time, at least until the next inspection
- develop a clear understanding of what to do if an allegation of abuse was made against the childminder
- update the complaints procedure and make sure that there is a system in place for recording complaints in order to share this information with parents
- display the certificate of registration.

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