

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148715
Inspection date	27 March 2008
Inspector	Maura Pigram

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 2001. She lives with her husband, an adult daughter and a son age 12 years. They live in the Chalk Farm area of London. All of the childminder's home is used for childminding. There is a lift to her fourth floor flat. Local parks are used for outdoor play.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends local age-appropriate groups and takes children to the local library. The childminder is registered to care for three children at any one time and is currently minding three children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. She is a member of the National Childminders' Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a broad range of activities that contribute to their good health. For example, they enjoy time outside in the fresh air on a daily basis as they visit nearby parks and visit a wide range of age-appropriate venues suitable for their interests and development.

Children learn about healthy eating and living through the provision the wide range of healthy foods which are offered for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Menus are devised and shared with children and their parents. The children regularly join in with the preparation of their meals and snack. They enjoy making pancakes and pizzas, choosing a variety of healthy toppings. Consequently, children are well nourished. Children's individual health needs, including possible allergies and dietary restrictions, are discussed before childminding commences. This means that there is a continuation of care between the childminder and the children's parents. Drinks of juices are offered during snack time and meals. Fresh drinking water is not readily available. This means that children are potentially unable to easily quench their thirst.

Children learn to understand simple, good health and hygiene practices such as washing their hands after using the toilet and they use tissues to wipe their noses. As a result, they are protected from infection. In addition the childminder implements clear procedures for parents to follow if their children have a contagious illness. The first aid kit is well stocked and easily accessible. This means that children's health, if they have an accident, is protected.

Children have plenty of opportunity for robust physical exercise. Every day they go outdoors, either to nearby parks or for local walks. They visit a wide range of venues where they enjoy activities such as climbing on suitable play equipment. Consequently, they enjoy activities which help to promote their physical development.

Children can rest and sleep according to their needs, the childminder is careful to meet parental wishes regarding sleep patterns and routines. As a result, children settle easily and are comfortable in the care of the childminder.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are emotionally secure because the childminder is warm and kind towards them. The safe and attractive toys set out in the lounge encourage children to separate from their carers and stay settled. Children are within sight or sound at all times as the layout of the childminder's home allows this. Children learn how to keep safe when they are on outings or when walking to and from school. During this time road safety is discussed and buggies with safety straps are used for younger children. An emergency evacuation procedure is practised with the children. Consequently, they know what to do in an emergency and they are helped to gain an understanding of how to keep safe.

Children move around freely to play and are able to access resources safely. These are cleaned and checked frequently to make sure they are safe for children to use. Some procedures ensure that accidental injury is minimised. For example, any spillage of liquid is quickly cleared and the hallway is always free of toys and equipment. Risk assessments are regularly carried out. However, the position of the kettle and a cooking utensil on the dining table is a potential risk to children.

The childminder has a satisfactory knowledge of child protection reporting procedures. She is aware of procedures to follow if she had any concerns. The childminder has updated her knowledge through attending a relevant course. However, at the time of inspection the childminder was unable to locate recent documentation outlining the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. As a result, information that supports children's welfare is not readily available.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle and become happy in the childminder's home because they are involved in a wide range of planned activities and spontaneous events. These include cooking sessions, making various items from art and craft materials and imaginative play. As a result, they gain confidence and self-esteem. In addition, children are taken out for part of each day. They visit a broad range of groups appropriate for their stage of development. These include toddler groups operated by the Sure Start organisation. Outings to local parks and stimulating environments such as London Zoo also contribute to the children's enjoyment. Consequently, activities both planned and spontaneous effectively support children's learning and development. The childminder is aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She refers to a relevant poster when planning activities. Consequently, children's development under three years is appropriately supported.

The childminder naturally and consistently talks to children throughout their day. This means that their language and understanding is promoted. Consequently, children respond to the childminder who is interested in what they say and do. Children freely choose what to play with and enjoy imaginative games such as playing hospitals. During this time a child bandages the childminder's 'poorly hand' and explores the 'doctors tools'. This means that children are confident to make decisions, explore and investigate. Overall all children are offered a wide and interesting range of activities and experiences to promote their learning and enjoyment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about diversity through their regular attendance at local groups. During this time children socialise with a rich mix of local children, their parents and carers. Festivals are celebrated and activities such as imaginative play with toy animals are used to discuss the animals' origins. In addition, children enjoy sharing books such as 'The skin I'm in' and 'We are Britain'. Consequently, children are effectively valued and they learn about the world in which they live.

Children behave well. They share toys and mirror the childminder's actions such as saying 'please' and 'thank you'. The childminder uses various strategies appropriate for children's stage of development and individual level of understanding. These include simple explanations and distractions. These are discussed with parents. This means that children know appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

The childminder cares for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Activities are adapted to ensure all children can participate to their full potential. The childminder is in the process of learning Makaton so that children's communication needs can be met. As a result, children develop good levels of self-esteem. The childminder ensures she has a close relationship with outside agencies and children's parents. Consequently, children's welfare is effectively supported.

Arrangements to settle children into the childminder's care are negotiated taking into account the needs of children and the requirements of parents and carers for flexible childcare. Diaries are used to share how the children have been throughout the day. Comments from parents in the diaries are positive and praise the childminder for caring so well for their children. As a result, there is a continuation of care between the childminder and the children's parents. The

childminder is aware of the need to record any complaints made in writing by parents. A poster showing the complaints procedure is on display. This means that parents are aware of procedures to follow if they have any concerns about the welfare of their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. Children's well-being is supported because the childminder has a natural manner with them. In addition she organises her time and resources skilfully. For instance, she devotes her day to the children to help them to play together meaningfully and make progress. Planned outings to the various groups within the community also contributes to the children's well-being.

Policies and procedures mostly work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. The childminder develops her knowledge on a regular basis. Courses she has recently completed include 'Nutrition for under 5's' and 'Activities that support child development'. In addition she is committed to providing an inclusive practice. Consequently, children are very well supported in their care and development. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to increase her resources suitable for the development needs of babies to children age five years. She also agreed to ensure there is a range of resources that reflect positive images. This has been done.

Children now have a broad range of developmentally appropriate toys and equipment. This are easily available for the children to initiate their own play. In addition, the childminder visits the toy library regularly where she obtains some equipment to support the children's interests and development. The childminder is mindful to ensure resources reflect positive images such as cultures, gender and disability. She visits the book library twice weekly where the children enjoy choosing resources showing positive images.

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 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 fresh drinking water is easily available
- assess the risks to children in relation to the storage of the kettle and cooking appliances on the dining table and take action to minimise these
- obtain government guidelines outlining the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and ensure this is readily available.

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