

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	202165
Inspection date	23 May 2007
Inspector	Deirdra Keating

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 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged 12 and nine in Clacton on Sea, Essex. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding seven children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and takes children to the local park. The family has a cat and two rabbits.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and a local childminding network group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children understand good hygiene practices as the childminder is extremely consistent in reminding them to wash their hands. Clear guidance regarding contagious illnesses is discussed with parents prior to minding to ensure children are not at risk from cross-infection. A downstairs cloakroom encourages children to develop independence in their personal needs. Children receive good quality care if they become ill or have an accident as the childminder follows appropriate and accurate procedures. A well stocked first aid kit is readily available and any incident is recorded and signed by parents. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and good knowledge of first aid practice. However, the childminder has not obtained written permission regarding emergency treatment which could compromise children's health. Children can rest and sleep according to their needs in a corner of the large playroom. A travel cot is available for younger children and older children can rest in soft chairs. Children enjoy the benefit of daily fresh air and exercise which is promoted by the childminder. They walk to school, the local park and have free access to the well kept garden during warmer months. The children enjoy playing outside where a good range of toys and equipment enable them to accomplish new skills out in the fresh air. The children have many opportunities to gain exercise as the childminder's house is very close to a park where the children regularly use the apparatus.

Children's dietary requirements are detailed in written contracts which ensure their individual needs are respected. Packed lunches brought from home are stored at the correct temperature. Children request drinks as they need them, however these are not always available for children to freely access. Freshly prepared snacks and meals are provided in the clean kitchen where high standards are maintained. These consist of fresh fruit, sandwiches, yoghurt and biscuits. The childminder is careful to ensure that children eat their savoury foods before any sweet foods are given.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and spacious environment where they are safe and secure. The space is organised very well to accommodate children and enable them to eat and play together comfortably. A large bright and child-friendly playroom houses a wide range of resources. The walls are painted with well known characters that appeal to the children. Resources are laid out attractively and double doors lead out to the well kept garden. Children can also access toys of their choice from open plan shelving where well-organised resources enable them to see what is available and make choices. This promotes their independence and decision making well. Children's safety is maintained well through careful steps taken by the childminder to minimise all potential risks. Daily risk assessments are conducted and the house and garden are secure. Fire drills are practised with the children and all preventative equipment is in place to protect children in the event of a fire.

Children are taken out with written permission from parents in safe and suitable car seats. Children are supervised at all times as they play in the secure garden which is assessed daily to ensure any potential hazards are minimised. The childminder has a good awareness of her role and responsibilities in safeguarding children and has attended relevant training. This has given her up to date knowledge of the correct procedure to follow should a concern arise. Clear policies regarding children's welfare are shared with parents prior to admission to ensure that

all parties are aware of the childminders responsibilities in protecting children from potential harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy an excellent range of play opportunities provided through an extensive range of toys and stimulating activities. The children are building confidence and self-esteem as the childminder has developed close and trusting relationships with them. Children are warmly welcomed by the childminder who is very intuitive to their needs. Children are settled and self-assured as they select from the exceptional range of activities. Children have many opportunities to explore messy activities such as; sand art, cooking, water play and painting. An excellent range of books encourages children to enjoy stories and one to one time with the childminder. The childminder gets down to the children's level and supports their play extremely well. She is interested in what the children say and do and consequently children are secure and confident. Children make choices about how to spend their time and the childminder goes along with their interests. The children relish the activities on offer and recall past activities with enthusiasm and excitement.

Children are developing many physical skills through a varied and interesting range of activities. They benefit from playing in the garden where there is a good selection of equipment including a large enclosed trampoline, climbing frame, seesaw and slide. Children enjoy trips to an indoor playcentre where they accomplish different skills through a good range of equipment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are warmly welcomed and made to feel part of the childminders home. Children's records detail all requirements and ensure that children are looked after according to their parent's wishes. Children are valued and have a good sense of belonging. Photographs of families give children links with their homes and a sense of personal meaning to each child. Careful planning and supervision ensure that children all have equal access to resources and toys. Children have stable and positive relationships with the childminder who clearly respects their individual personalities. A clear equal opportunities policy is shared with parents and children all have equal access to toys. The children learn about diversity through books that reflect positive images of people from different backgrounds and wider society. The childminder has an extremely positive approach to supporting children with learning difficulties or disabilities. She has relevant and valuable experience of supporting individual children and understands the importance of working closely in partnership with parents and carers. Inclusive and creative strategies are deployed alongside parents to ensure children's individual needs are comprehensively met. The childminder has a good understanding of the need to access training and support in order to best promote children's welfare and development.

Children's behaviour is consistently good as there are a few simple house rules. The childminder is extremely calm and consistent in her approach using strategies that are appropriate to the age and stage of the child. Good behaviour is rewarded and any other incidents are noted and shared with parents. Child-friendly rewards such as a magnetic sticker chart celebrate children's good behaviour and encourages them to become increasingly independent in preparation for school. Parents are kept extremely well informed by a daily diary. They receive excellent information regarding the childminder's practice. A concise and informative complaints policy

is readily available should it be required. Information given prior to minding exceeds requirements with colourful brochures introducing the childminder's family and pets illustrated by large photographs. Children benefit from the trusting relationships the childminder has built with parents and carers. This is supported by cards from parents detailing the many positive aspects of her extremely good practice.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder organises her home well to support children's care, learning and play. Children receive good levels of support from an experienced and dedicated childminder. Children make good use of the spacious environment making choices about how to spend their time. Activities are well planned to incorporate a good balance of outdoor and indoor play. The childminder is extremely committed to further training and ongoing professional development. She has attended a good range of courses which is clearly reflected in her knowledge of children's development and needs. Comprehensive policies that are user friendly underpin all aspects of the childminder's excellent practice. Relevant documentation is stored securely and confidentially and all requirements are met. A register with arrival and departure times recorded accurately is well maintained. The childminder has a sound understanding of the National Standards. Consequently children's welfare, learning and care are well fostered.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain the most recent written procedures on child protection. This has been done and the childminder has up to date contact numbers and information which ensures that children are protected from potential harm. The childminder was also asked to continue to add to the resources which reflect equal opportunities. The childminder has a good range of books that reflect cultural diversity and wider society. Consequently children are learning about their similarities and differences

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 that fresh drinking water is available for children to independently access
- obtain written permission from parents regarding emergency treatment.

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