

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	202627
Inspection date	16 July 2007
Inspector	Justine Leong
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. She lives with her son in a residential area of Kelvedon. The whole of the premises is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends a local carer and toddler group on a regular basis. The family have three cats and a rabbit.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy at the setting as the childminder follows appropriate hygiene routines throughout the day. Children are able to independently wash their hands and are reminded to

do this after using the toilet or stroking the animals, and before eating. A well stocked first aid box is in place and the childminder has recently undertaken first aid training, helping to ensure children's health is protected in the event of an emergency. All required documentation including an accident and incident record is in place to support this. The clear sickness policy, including exclusion times for common illnesses helps to ensure cross-infection is minimised if children are ill.

Children are given ample opportunities to enjoy physical activities outdoors, helping to further promote a healthy lifestyle. The childminder has provided a broad range of toys for children to use in the garden including large wheeled toys, scooters, bicycles and a climbing frame. Children also have access to bats and balls, providing valuable opportunities to develop skills such as coordination. The children benefit from regular trips to local areas such as the park and nearby allotments.

Children are learning about the importance of a healthy diet as the childminder provides healthy snacks such as fresh fruit and vegetables. The childminder also provides children with a hot lunch every day, preparing healthy meals including toad in the hole with vegetables or jacket potatoes with a choice of healthy fillings. Children have access to drinks, although these are not constantly available and must be requested by the child.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright and welcoming environment where they have adequate space to play and explore the range of resources provided. Children are kept safe and the risk of accidents minimised as the childminder has taken precautions to ensure the environment is free from potential hazards. There are cupboard locks on low-level cupboards, electrical sockets are covered and stair gates are in place to ensure children are unable to access potentially dangerous areas. The childminder has written a clear evacuation plan to be used in the event of an emergency and this is practised regularly with the children. Fire alarms throughout the property and a fire blanket in the kitchen also help to ensure children's safety is promoted.

Children have access to a wide range of safe and well-maintained toys and resources. The childminder ensures these are regularly cleaned and involves children in the cleaning routine. All resources are stored at child height to allow children to safely select what they would like to play with. They are developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe as the childminder reminds children to sit whilst using scissors and not to run indoors to minimise the risk of accidental injury.

Children's welfare is well promoted as the childminder has a thorough understanding of her role and responsibilities in protecting children. Recent training and relevant up-to-date information ensures the childminder is confident and competent in following correct procedures and knows who to contact should she have any concerns about the children in her care

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a range of activities that helps with their learning and development. Flexible daily routines offer a variety of play activities often based on imaginative play. Children play with a range of small world toys such as the farm and play kitchen and make connections to their own experiences. They spend time exploring the extensive range of toys and equipment

provided by the childminder based on her knowledge of child development. The childminder is aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, but has not yet implemented this system to ensure activities are planned to promote the development of younger children. Children enjoy free play much of the time in the home, making their own choices from a range of toys provided. However, there are limited opportunities for children to participate in more structured, planned activities, potentially hindering progress.

Children are developing in confidence as the childminder knows them well and praises their achievements. She spends her time supporting children's play, responding sensitively to their requests and respecting their individual personalities to promote their self-esteem. The childminder uses questioning to support children's understanding although this is rarely used to extend their thinking. The childminder joins in with children's play, encouraging them to share and take turns while playing outside in the garden. Children are able to access a range of books which they enjoy sharing with the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a good sense of belonging as the childminder knows them and their families well and ensures they are all valued and included. Children have built good relationships with the childminder who respects their individual personalities and responds sensitively to their individual needs. All children have equal access to toys and equipment helping them to develop confidence and independence. Children are cared for in an environment that positively celebrates children's differences and similarities and they enjoy celebrating a variety of festivals including Chinese New Year and Easter.

Children are encouraged to take an active role in daily routines such as tidying away toys and helping set up for lunch, helping develop a responsible attitude. The childminder is calm and consistent and uses appropriate explanations to promote children's understanding of responsible behaviour. Children are aware of the setting rules and are beginning to manage their own behaviour.

Children benefit from the positive relationships the childminder fosters with parents and carers. All required documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are cared for in line with their parents' wishes. Parents receive copies of policies and procedures to ensure they are well informed about childcare practices. Information is shared through a journal and daily discussions, to enable parents to provide continuity of care. Parents are aware of the complaints procedure at the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder effectively organises her home to provide a welcoming and child-friendly environment. Children are well cared for by the dedicated and experienced childminder who provides a stimulating range of activities to support their care, learning and play. They benefit from regular routines which helps them feel confident and secure. The childminder has attended a range of relevant training which supports and underpins her practice. Children are relaxed and happy and clearly benefit highly from the individual care and attention given.

The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards and her responsibility to comply with conditions of registration. Comprehensive checks are in place to ensure children

are cared for by a suitably vetted person and children are never left alone with any person not vetted. Children's welfare, care and learning are maintained through effective documentation, ensuring smooth running of the provision. All children's details are stored securely and confidentially and the childminder ensures children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the childminder ensure all plants in the garden are safe for children to be in contact with and that all required parental consents are available. Both these areas have been addressed. The garden contains only plants safe for children to be in contact with and all written parental consents are in place.

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):

- ensure fresh drinking water is available at all times
- develop planning to further extend children's play and ensure the range of activities offers sufficient challenge to children
- begin to use relevant material, such as 'Birth to three matters', to help inform planning of activities for younger 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