

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	208053
Inspection date	13 February 2008
Inspector	Jennifer Getty
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 1998. She lives with her husband and family including two children aged three months and six years. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a pet dog, cat, rabbit and fish. The childminder takes children to the local library.

The childminder is registered to care for four children at any one time and is currently minding four children most of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder holds an early years childcare qualification and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted because children learn suitable hygiene procedures. They wash their hands at appropriate times in the day, including after playing with the animals. Areas are kept clean such as the kitchen, where food is prepared hygienically. There is a satisfactory nappy changing procedure in place, however, the risk of cross-contamination for babies is not

fully prevented. For example, a changing mat is not always used when changing nappies on the floor and hands are not consistently washed. There is a clear policy in place for the care of ill or infectious children; they do not attend or they are collected by parents if they become ill whilst in the care of the childminder. Children are cared for appropriately if they become ill or have an accident because the childminder holds a current first aid qualification and there is a well-stocked first aid box. Parents give written permission for seeking medical treatment or advice which promotes children's health in an emergency. The childminder records details of medication administered. However, the childminder does not consistently obtain prior written permission each time, this heightens the potential for children to be incorrectly medicated. The risk of this is minimised because she telephones parents beforehand. She records the time, dose and amount clearly and parents consistently sign records at collection time.

There are opportunities for children to have fresh air and physical exercise. There is a garden for outdoor play where children are able to use the trampoline. Children go on the local walks and older children play on bicycles. Indoors, babies have space to crawl and pull themselves up, helping them develop their large muscle skills. Babies can access toys easily, promoting their independence.

Children are provided with healthy food such as fruit, sandwiches and vegetable sticks. They have access to drinks at all times and the childminder ensures that she obtains children's dietary requirements so that their health needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder's home is bright and welcoming which helps children feel secure and comfortable. There is a broad range of toys that meets the needs of the children's varying ages and stages in development. For example, there are rattles, threading beads, jigsaws and electronic toys for babies. Older children are able to develop good independence skills as they access resources such as books, beads, games and dressing-up clothes. Toys are checked for safety as they are put out each day.

The premises is checked daily for hazards to ensure that children are cared for in a safe environment. However, toys kept on the shelf in the storage cupboard downstairs are untidy and are a potential hazard to children who are able to reach them. Outside, the gate or the door allowing access to the house is usually locked, however, this system is inconsistent and as a consequence children's safety is potentially compromised. The childminder has an emergency escape plan and knows how to put this into practice ensuring children are protected in the event of a fire. Parents give written permission for children to travel in the car and the childminder promotes children's safety by using the necessary car restraints. Younger children are learning to think about their own safety as the childminder explains the dangers of climbing on chairs.

Children are further protected because the childminder has a good safeguarding children policy in place and is able to put current procedures into place when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. They enjoy their time in the childminder's home and are developing good levels of self-esteem and confidence as they respond well to the consistent

praise and encouragement from the childminder. Babies enjoy making sounds and imitating the childminder as she speaks, therefore developing good language skills. Children smile and point out things they recognise in a book, saying the correct word. The childminder uses lots of good language and provides a wide range of activities to promote children's learning and development. She is aware of children's needs and abilities, adapting activities and offering good levels of challenge. Children are therefore developing an interest in language and their surroundings. Activities for young children include matching the pieces in an animal jigsaw, playing with animal fuzzy felt and making the animal noises. Children have opportunities to learn about colour as they thread cotton reels and they are able to express their own feelings through paint, play dough and craft activities. Older children are able to rest and relax according to their needs at the end of the school day.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel valued as the childminder listens to them and values their opinions. Relevant information is gathered to ensure that all children are included in the setting and the childminder has an awareness of how to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, for example, assessing her daily routine and working with outside agencies. The children form strong relationships with the childminder and feel at home in the childminder's house. Equality of opportunity is promoted as children have access to all resources and they are treated as individuals. There are opportunities for them to learn about the local community, as well as the wider society, through visits to the library, dressing up and celebrating some festivals during the year.

Children are well behaved and respond well to the childminder's consistent approach. The use of discussion and explanation is used effectively to help children manage their own behaviour and younger children respond to techniques such as distraction. Lots of praise and encouragement is offered and the activities provided ensure that children are actively engaged at all times, providing a happy learning environment.

The positive partnership with parents works well to benefit children's welfare. Information is routinely exchanged between parents and the childminder to ensure that children's daily needs and requirements are met. There are appropriate permissions requested from parents and there is an information board for parents as they enter the house. Children settle quickly as the childminder maintains the children's home routines to provide consistency of care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall children's needs are met. Children are cared for in a warm and caring environment. The childminder holds an appropriate early years qualification and has a sound awareness of children's abilities and stages in development. The childminder ensures that children are protected from those not vetted. Time and space is well organised to ensure that they are able to move freely and experience a range of activities. Documentation is generally well maintained to promote children's welfare, learning and enjoyment, although, some require further development. A record of children's hours of attendance is maintained, promoting children's safety, as well as, allowing the childminder to plan appropriate activities for the range of children attending. Children's details are maintained effectively and include samples of children's work, providing a record of their progress which can be shared with parents.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to: devise and implement an incident book; maintain a smoke alarm on every level of the house, ensure parents are aware of the complaints procedure; review written permission for emergency medical treatment and obtain written parental permission before administering medication.

Children's health and safety is promoted because the childminder has addressed the recommendations. A smoke alarm is fitted on each floor of the house and the childminder ensures these are checked regularly. There is a system in place to record any incidents and these are signed by parents. There is a written complaints procedure that includes details of how parents can make a complaint and who to contact. This policy is available for parents to see. Written permission obtained from parents for seeking emergency medical treatment or advice is clear and kept for each child. The childminder has written permission for administering some types of medication and she telephones parents beforehand to gain further permission, however, written consent is not obtained each time medication is given, potentially compromising children's health.

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):

- ensure prior written permission is consistently obtained before administering medication
- ensure the premises are secure at all times so that children are unable to leave unsupervised and promote safety indoors, with particular reference to the toy cupboard.

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