



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	219662
Inspection date	15 December 2005
Inspector	Margaret Coyne

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 1 child aged 9 years. The whole of the ground floor and 1 bedroom on the first floor are used for her childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

Currently the childminder is registered to care for 4 children under 8 at any one time and is currently minding 1 child under 5 on a part time basis.

The family has a pet cat a dog and a tortoise.

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 benefit from a healthy diet. They enjoy home cooked meals, which parents supply and the childminder reheats carefully. Meals include all the food groups and are healthy and nutritious for children. Children enjoy trying new tastes and experiences as they take part in many food preparation activities and have opportunity to prepare some snacks and make cakes and biscuits. These opportunities help develop their awareness of different types of food, healthy eating and encourages them to try new things. Children's needs are met in a capable manner through the childminders experience and with the information provided by parents of any child's dietary needs. Children have drinks available at all times and reminders are given to encourage children to ask for drinks when engrossed in play.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene from an early age, through well organised routines and practice. They know to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating meals and snacks. Children contribute to their own good hygiene practice by using tissues and wipes. They enjoy helping around the home and wash some of their own toys and equipment. The children are protected from infection because the childminder is well informed about their health and employs suitable methods to prevent infections spreading, such as implementing her sick child policy and ensuring the cleanliness of toys and equipment. She has developed procedures and records to protect the children and safeguard their welfare. Information is shared with parents relating to any aspect of their child's health and she values and respects parents wishes. Written consent has been obtained from parents to administer medication and to seek emergency treatment or advice. The childminder's first aid certificate has recently expired. She is endeavouring to book onto another course to update this training and is confident she can deal with any minor accidents.

Children take pleasure in a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. Each day there are opportunities to play outside or engage in indoor activities which improves their all-round physical skills. Children look forward to walking the dog each day as part of their routine and access the local woods and areas of interest to develop skills such as climbing trees and making mountains of leafs. The children are provided with ample opportunity to use their bodies in a variety of ways as they visit the indoor adventure playgrounds and parks. Here children can be adventurous using different activities and equipment. The children's fine motor control is developing as they use small toys and equipment such as painting, gluing and building train tracks. The childminder has an understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and applies this when planning activities. Children have access to highly varied activities and excellent levels of support which give them confidence to try out new skills, set their own limits and know when to ask for help. The childminder supports the children and is on hand to guide their play. Children are able to rest and sleep in accordance to their own needs and the wishes of parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a safe, clean and well-maintained environment. The childminder safeguards children's welfare and has an excellent awareness of safety. An effective visual risk assessment is carried out on the premises, toys and activities to ensure potential risks are identified and minimised. Children are able to move around the home and garden and explore and take risks in a safe, controlled environment. Space and resources are organised to allow maximum free space for the children to access safely. Children benefit from an effective range of safety measures. For example, cupboard locks, socket covers, fireguards and a range of fire safety equipment. The childminder has simple effective safety rules in place with the children such as never answering the front door. However, children's knowledge of emergency evacuation is not extended through regular evacuation practice.

The children learn about keeping themselves safe both in and out of the home. They learn about acceptable behaviour and the impact this has on their safety. For example, children know to hold hands on the buggy when out of the home and to stay together always in sight of the childminder. They learn about the reasons to pick up after themselves to keep things safe when playing. Supervision is of a high standard. Car safety is taught as children have appropriate sized car seats and restraints and know they must never undo these while travelling. Children have access to well-maintained, developmentally appropriate toys and equipment. These are selected according to their age and ability to ensure they gain maximum benefit from them and can play safely with them. Well thought out activities ensure the children's safety at all times. Children are able to play and take risks in a safe and controlled environment with suitable adjustments made to meet all their needs.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect. The childminder is attentive to her responsibility to protect the children in her care and shares responsibility with parents. She has all supporting documents in place to reinforce her practice. She keeps all records up-to-date to provide a clear record of her practice and to ensure the protection of the children. All accidents are fully recorded and a confidential system is in place to record any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, secure and contented as they take part in an extensive range of activities both in and out of the home. Children have excellent opportunities to socialise with others as they get together with another childminder and her children. They enjoy trips in the local community. The childminder arranges outings to the park where children benefit from new experiences and can explore new areas of interest, particularly with their physical capabilities. Outings are extended into learning opportunities such as walking the dog in the woods and discovering nature first hand.

Children are very well supported and are provided with an imaginative range of stimulating and challenging opportunities and activities. These include imaginative

play, being creative, and experimenting with cooking. Books play a large part in the child's day as they enjoy shared reading and handle books well. Free-play is incorporated into each day where child-initiated play is encouraged and supported by the childminder. Children have free choice and activities are readily available and well presented to encourage children to take part. Activities are appropriate for the individual children's development, enabling them to move forward at their own pace. Themes are carried out throughout the week and children develop rapidly due to the care and excellent preparation which goes into the planning and implementation of the activities. For example, children have been making salt dough figures for Christmas and are enthusiastic about painting them. Children's individual needs and stages of development are considered and activities are often adapted to ensure all children present can participate.

The childminder plans her days and has a flexible routine she follows with the children. Children benefit from this as they know what to expect and which activities will be available. These are often child-led as children will ask for different activities or favourite things and the childminder is happy to accommodate requests for toys and activities. Children have warm relationships with the childminder. The childminder interacts at the children's level, encouraging communication and independence skills. Children approach her for physical comfort and reassurance which contributes to their sense of belonging. They love to climb up and have cuddles and fun times with the childminder demonstrating their feelings of security with her. They have opportunities to think for themselves, express their ideas and thoughts and interact with others by sharing and taking turns. Children's learning and development is extended by the childminder's awareness and knowledge of child development. She involves them in suitably challenging, fun activities and has an excellent knowledge of them as individuals. Their self-esteem is developed carefully with consistent praise for their achievements. A great deal of positive language is used by the childminder and emulated by the children.

The childminder has found the 'Birth to three matters' framework a useful aid to her practise and she is adept at understanding the children's needs in order to help them grow and extend their development. She clearly knows the children well and avoids any child becoming frustrated or despondent by her knowledge of them as individuals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a sensitive awareness of diversity and an understanding of the needs of others. This is achieved through a range of activities and resources which promotes a positive outlook of the wider world. Books are readily available and children enjoy discovering the world around them through stories with the childminder and playing with dolls, jigsaw and cooking utensils. Children accept each other as individuals with the childminder setting a lovely example by valuing and respecting each child. Children's needs are met in a sympathetic manner through her open, honest and effective communication with parents and children. Many Spanish festivals are introduced to the children through the childminders heritage such as

Kings Day in January. Activities are adapted to meet the needs of all children and a sensitive approach ensures children can play without fear of discrimination. The childminder has provided care for children with special needs and feels this has been very successful for the child and parents. She works closely with parents and is happy to seek advice from others if required. She keeps written records of the child's progress and development and shares this with parents. The childminder's happy and respectful attitude encourages children to feel good about themselves and show respect for others. The childminder knows the children very well and is responsive to their needs. For example, if a child needs extra reassurance or cuddles this is happily provided and children respond positively knowing they can climb up for a cuddle at any time.

The children know and accept the realistic boundaries in place and this impacts positively on their behaviour. For example, sharing with others. They respond well to the childminder and the high level of support and consistent strategies help them understand what is acceptable. Children are happy, secure and confident. They ask for help when needed and praise and encouragement for their positive behaviour is widely given. Their confidence and self-esteem is enriched by the support and praise provided. When asking a child to respond the childminder always gives a reason and explanation for her request. This again helps children feel valued and respected. Children are absorbed and enthusiastic when playing happily and there are smiles, cuddles and other unspoken communication which confirms the happy and relaxed environment they have created between them.

The childminder has developed information for parents detailing all aspects of her practice. A portfolio is in place which provides them with useful and clear information about activities, consent forms, contracts and many other items of useful information. Policies have been developed and are shared with parents so they can gain a further insight into her practice. Daily information is recorded to form a two way sharing of information between parents and the childminder. Each parent has time to discuss their child's day and are able to share and play an active and important role in their child's care. Children's care and development is fostered due to the childminder's commitment to working closely with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and secure playing in a well-organised environment. Space and resources are very well planned to ensure maximum play space is available to the children and this helps them become self-reliant and independent. Children are confident when initiating their own activities in this vibrant safe setting. Well organised activities provide stimulating and challenging experiences for children of all ages within a fun and supportive environment.

The childminder has a highly professional, yet caring, fun and sensitive approach to her practice. Her organisational skills are enhanced and benefit both children and parents. High regard to the organisation of records and documentation impacts on each child's care and these are well organised and up-to-date. Records are shared

with parents and communication contributes to the trusting relationships developed between them which impacts on the children's feelings of security. The childminder has developed purposeful policies and procedures which are clearly reflected in her practice. Ratios are met at all times and the childminder has an excellent awareness of the impact these have on the children's health, safety, socialisation and learning.

The childminder is committed to the care she provides for the children. She had begun to participate in a Quality First scheme, which has been put on hold, but has helped her to enhance her practice and understanding of the National Standards. This is clearly demonstrated in her plans for the future development of her practice and the care she provides for all children. She ensures each child's potential is recognised and activities support, challenge and stimulate each child. Overall the childminder meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to implement any actions raised by her participation in the Quality First scheme. However this scheme has been put on hold due to the childminder's ill health at the time she was taking part.

Complaints since the last inspection

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.

'There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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):

- complete a first aid course which includes training in first aid for infants and young children, and which is consistent with any guidance issued to local authorities by the Secretary of State.
- ensure children develop an understanding of emergency evacuation

procedures

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk