



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	560245
Inspection date	14 November 2006
Inspector	Samantha Smith
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1987. She lives with her husband and four children aged 11, 19, 17, 13 in Brentwood. The ground floor of the house is used and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at anyone time and she is currently minding five children on a full and part-time basis, including before and after school. She occasionally works with her daughter and her husband as her assistants.

The family have a dog and a pet snake.

The childminder attends the local parent and toddler groups which minded children attend.

She is a member of the National childminding association and the local networking group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in a clean home, excellent steps are in place that minimise the spread of infection and children are encouraged to follow effective hygiene routines from a very young age. They know to wash their hands before eating and using the toilet. They know the importance of regular hand washing through the good explanations they receive from the childminder.

The childminder maintains good hygiene practices in the home. She keeps work surfaces clean using anti-bacterial spray, ensuring that food is prepared in a clean kitchen. When changing nappies disposable gloves are worn and the changing mat is cleaned after use.

Children's health is well-fostered as the childminder has sound knowledge of the requirements when administering medication. All records are in place and records the required information, in line with regulations. As a result, children are cared for in line with parents wishes. The childminder also has excellent knowledge of early childhood illnesses which can easily be referred to and shared with parents.

Children enjoy very healthy snacks provided by the childminder including yoghurt, fruit, raisins and cheese sticks. Although meals are provided by parents, the childminder ensures that these are stored at the correct temperature. Their knowledge of healthy foods is being extended as they take part in visits to the farm shop to buy pumpkins and they grow their own vegetables in the garden.

Children benefit from an extensive range of activities which promote their physical development and contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy playing in the garden where they can run jump and move around freely, using a vast range of equipment including, bikes, large push and pull toys and swimming. They also take part in a range of outings including trips to parents and toddler groups and country parks.

Babies and toddlers benefit from well-organised, safe space in which they practise and become skilful in a range of movements such as crawling, balancing and rolling and retrieving balls, which develop children's co-ordination skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in welcoming home. Where they remain safe. The childminder is currently decorating her kitchen and making adaptations to the children's play area, she carries out rigorous risk assessments to ensure high levels of safety are maintained.

Toys and equipment are of a particularly high quality and the furniture is carefully arranged to support young children's growing independence. They move around the play areas safely as they begin to discover their limits and boundaries. The childminder carefully selects play resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development.

The childminder has taken some very positive steps to ensure children's safety both inside and outside the home. For example, smoke detectors are in place on all levels of the home and a fire blanket is in place in the kitchen. A stairgate is used to prevent children gaining unsupervised access to other areas of the home. Children are learning to take some responsibility in keeping themselves safe as they take part in regular fire practises and enjoy their walks to playgroups as they take part in a game devised by the childminder to raise their awareness as they look out for objects of awareness such as traffic lights and road signs.

Children's welfare and safety is promoted by comprehensive policies and documents that include highly effective child protection procedures. The child protection policy shows a strong regard for children's welfare and meets the guidelines of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children very much enjoy their day at the childminder's. They all receive attention and genuine affection from the childminder and they are very secure in their environment. Children participate in a huge range of activities, which develops new interests and extends their existing knowledge, and the childminder's skilful planning provides increased challenges to help children make all round progress.

Children's enjoyment and achievements are greatly promoted through the excellent documentation in place including many photographs of them participating in activities, daily diaries detailing experiences and achievements and displays of their artwork. Written plans demonstrates the stimulating and worthwhile topics the children take part in, including nature trails where they collect leaves, twigs, bark rubbings and looking at bugs. The childminder has skilfully adapted activities to include areas of children's learning. For example, during the transport topic she made cars, trains and buses with holes to encourage the children to thread through them. Messy and craft activities include making mud pies, digging, painting, clay, playdough and cooking.

Children are treated with equal concern and respect by the childminder who has a wonderful manner and overwhelming warmth towards them. They thrive in the stimulating, relaxed and homely environment. All children are welcomed with open arms and are encouraged to build relationships and gain trust in each other. Older children enjoy taking an active role in caring for the baby as they sit with the childminder to help feed the baby his bottle.

Children have their individual needs met as routines are adapted accordingly. The childminder shows great sensitivity and understanding of their needs and preferences to ensure that activities and routines are fulfilling. For example, children have opportunities to be active, rest and eat at times that suit their needs and their own interests are considered when activities are planned. The childminder has a very sound understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and has incorporated some of the play and practical support ideas into the activities she provides for younger children. Including making a Den, discovering texture as they explore the soft toys and playing 'peek a boo as they hide behind furniture. Consequently, children are making very good progress in all areas of their development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's sense of belonging is fully fostered through the warm, welcoming and homely atmosphere created by the childminder, as well as the childminder's overwhelming commitment to their care. They are learning about cultural diversity, using an excellent range of resources in their play that promotes positive images of race, gender, and disability. They take part in very good activities that encourage them to acknowledge and respect difference. For instance, they demonstrate the letters to form they name using simple signing which they have learnt during National Deaf week.

Children are very relaxed in the childminder's home. They display extremely high levels of confidence and self-esteem as they interact with the childminder and her family. They are developing good levels of personal independence and manage their own needs very well.

Children's behaviour is excellent because the childminder is calm and consistent. She offers clear explanations ensuring that they know what is expected of them. Positive behaviour is promoted extremely well with very good use of ongoing praise and encouragement. This results in children who are confident and secure, and who enthusiastically participate in activities. Children show genuine concern for their peers, offering them comfort when they become upset.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. The childminder works very closely with parents to ensure that their individual children's needs are met and gives them good daily information about their children's activities and routines. She provides high quality information about the setting and the curriculum they are following so that parents feel well informed and secure about the environment in which their child is cared for. Parents views and are respected and taken on board in the way of questionnaires. Parents of children under three are given comprehensive information on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and how this is reflected in the childminder provision.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is promoted through the detailed documentation the childminder has in place. She has systematically updated her policies and procedures to address recent changes to the National Standards for Childminding.

The childminder's portfolio evidences her commitment to providing good quality care for children. Written policies, procedures and photographs, show true representation of the first rate practice of the childminder, it includes certificates of any additional training courses she has attended, photographs and planning sheets. All necessary documentation is completed correctly, is up to date, reviewed regularly and is well organised.

Space is organised sufficiently and all resources meet the children's requirements. Individual needs are met well through the childminder's attention to each child's routines and requirements. For example, trips and outings either spontaneous or planned ensure that children's needs are considered.

Overall children's needs are met

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to devise and implement an incident book and to maintain confidentiality with regards to accidents, incidents and medication records. The childminder has devised individual accident, incident and medication records which are now stored in each child's file.

The childminder was also asked to obtain written parental permission from parents prior to administering medicine and to seek emergency medical treatment and ensure parents sign their acknowledgement that medication has been given. Written permission has now been obtained from all the parents before administering any medication and to seek emergency medical treatment and the parents sign their acknowledgement.

An action was given, to complete a first aid course which includes infant and young children within six months. A current first certificate has been completed.

All actions and recommendations have been completed and effective procedures are in place, ensuring children's health and well-being is fully supported and maintaining high levels of confidentiality.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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