



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	590108
Inspection date	28 June 2006
Inspector	Anita Bartram
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 has been registered since 2000. She lives with her husband and their two children aged ten and eight years on the outskirts of Chelmsford. The whole of the premises is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum six children at any one time and is currently minding four children all of whom attend on a part time basis. The childminder attends a local toddler group. The family has no pets in the home.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to understand appropriate health and hygiene practices through the generally sound cleaning routines the childminder has in place. For example, she uses individual wipes to clean children's faces and hands and frequently changes hand towels which children use after visiting the toilet. As a result, children are suitably protected from cross-infection. The childminder has clear procedures in place to follow in the event of a child becoming ill whilst in her care which means children have their health needs appropriately met.

Children are appropriately well nourished. The childminder provides a balanced range of meals such as sausages, mash potato and vegetables. Children are able to eat fruit for snack and drinks are readily accessible to all the children. Children enjoy regular opportunities for physical activity. The childminder makes use of local parks and indoor play areas to enable children to expend excess energy and develop their physical skills. Consequently children are learning actively about healthy living.

Children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs and bring comforters from home. The childminder is skilled at supporting children emotionally and plays a strong role in fostering their sense of belonging. As a result, children have their emotional well-being fully promoted.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming environment. The childminder provides a playroom for children to use freely which has low-level storage to enable children to choose their toys safely. All toys and equipment are suitable and safe for the age of children being cared for. Consequently, children are able to play comfortably in a child-centred environment.

Children play in a secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment. The childminder has taken steps to minimise hazards to children which means they are well protected from accidental injury. Children are able to begin to learn to keep themselves safe through simple routines the childminder encourages them to follow. For example, when getting out the car, the childminder asks children to stand still safely away from the kerb whilst she gets babies out of the car. Whilst on outings children have to hold on to the buggy or are strapped in. The childminder has given good thought to emergency contact with parents whilst she is out. As a result, children are kept fully safe on outings

Measures are appropriately in place to safeguard children. The childminder has a sound working knowledge of child protection and has completed some introductory training through her registration course. Consequently, children are suitably protected from non-accidental harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children and babies are developing high levels of confidence and self-esteem. The childminder encourages an open and warm atmosphere. As a result, children are confident to ask questions, offer their comments on what they see or ask for favourite activities they enjoy. For example, when they first arrive they rush into the playroom eager to find the dolls they like playing with and then ask for colouring as they sit themselves at the table. They are becoming independent in their choice of toys. This is enhanced by the easy access to a broad range of toys the childminder provides in the playroom.

Children are developing very positive relationships with the childminder and each other. For example, older children speak warmly to babies and take delight in watching the babies as they play peek-a-boo with their bibs in their high chair. Children speak openly to the childminder who answers their questions honestly and at a level that is age appropriate. This has a positive impact on children's behaviour which is very good. The childminder gets to know each child's personality and is aware of their different likes and dislikes. As a result, children have their individual care, learning and play needs well met.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a very strong sense of belonging. Due to the childminder's warm and consistent care children feel secure and content. They are able to make meaningful choices and take decisions in their play and what they have to eat and drink. As a result, children are becoming aware of their own needs and the needs of others.

Children's behaviour is very good. The childminder uses very positive language with the children to encourage good behaviour and respect for each other. As a result, children show respect to her and very positive relationships are developing. For example, children thank the childminder for a nice snack when they have finished eating. Children are starting to develop a good appreciation of responsible behaviour. The childminder has a suitable range of toys showing positive images of diversity which are readily accessible to children whilst they play. Consequently babies and children are able to start forming an appropriate awareness of their wider world.

Children receive appropriate support to accommodate their different needs. Although the childminder has limited experience of caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities she has a sound understanding of working with parents to meet children's more specific needs. The childminder has developed strong relationships with minded children's parents and exchanges daily information with them through discussion at either ends of the day. As a result, children receive suitable levels of consistency in their care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of all the children. This is particularly evident in her support of their emotional well-being. She has completed all required training

and is aware of her responsibilities. She ensures children are suitably protected from non-vetted persons such as people working on the premises. The childminder aims to ensure her time with the children is well spent. She has organised her house to provide a playroom that children have sole use of. This effectively supports children's care, learning and play.

The childminder has well organised policies and procedures which are stored confidentially and securely. She makes effective use of these within her care practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and their ability to make a positive contribution. Although the childminder has a generally sound understanding of her responsibilities to safeguard children, she does not yet have a copy of current government guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Summary'. All documentation is appropriately shared with parents.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children. The childminder has now completed her training and her certificate was seen to expire in 2008.

She agreed to ensure that hazards to children on the premises are minimised. This referred to the banisters at the top of the stairs. The childminder has since taken appropriate action to prevent children from going upstairs. However, during this inspection the childminder agreed that to enable children to have more space to play she would cover the gaps in the banisters. This would enable the childminder to use all areas of the property for minding.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since April 2004.

Information was received by Ofsted that indicated the childminder had exceeded registration numbers on a specific date and that on that date children had not been safely escorted across a road. This relates to Standard 2: Organisation and Standard 6: Safety. Ofsted investigated by carrying out an unannounced visit on 16 December 2004. The childminder was found to be working within her registration numbers. Ofsted raised an action under Standard 14: Documentation; to ensure an up-to-date and accurate register of attendance is maintained. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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):

- obtain and read a copy of 'what to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Summary'.

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