

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	590132
Inspection date	10 August 2007
Inspector	Sarah Williams
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 2001. She lives with her two children aged 10 and 16 in Clacton-on-Sea, Essex. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder is currently minding five school age children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept healthy at the setting as they learn habits and follow procedures which help them lead a healthy lifestyle. They understand why they must wash their hands after using the toilet or messy play and before handling any food. Children can take and use a tissue and dispose of it hygienically. Children are cared for in a house which is clean and tidy; surfaces and food preparation areas are wiped down and kept clean, helping prevent the spread of infection.

Children who require first aid for minor injuries are treated and the details are recorded for a parent or carer to sign off. Similarly, any child requiring medication has the dose recorded and signed off to prevent any accidental overdosing. If children become poorly they are kept comfortable until they can be collected by a parent or carer. Children who are ill or infectious are not allowed to attend, to help prevent the risk of spread of infection.

Children have meals and snacks as required. Some children bring packed lunches, which are stored in the fridge until needed. Meals prepared by the childminder take account of any allergies and dietary needs as well as food preferences. Children can have a drink of fresh water at any time, keeping them hydrated and healthy.

Children have access to fresh air and exercise. They can play in the garden and also enjoy outings to the park, beach and local swimming pool, promoting their physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and suitable environment that is organised well to support their care, learning and play. Children have access to the ground floor only; the lounge and garden are used as play areas. Toilet facilities and the nappy changing area are situated in the downstairs toilet, however, this is currently used as a storage area for large equipment so is a potential hazard to children. Children do not routinely access the kitchen; a stairgate prevents them entering unsupervised. Outdoor play is in the secure and well-maintained garden.

There is a range of equipment and toys so that children can eat and play together comfortably. Children use the family dining table for crafts and table-top games, as well as meals and snacks. Equipment is safe, clean and well maintained. Children can reach the toys and select what they would like to play with; this provides them with a balanced range of activities that are stimulating, challenging and fun.

Children are cared for in a safe secure environment where the childminder takes steps to minimise all risks. For example, children are aware of what they should do in the event of an emergency evacuation. Fire safety equipment such as smoke alarms and a fire blanket are in place. Children have written consents in place for outings and to travel in a vehicle.

Children are protected from potential harm by the childminder's understanding of local safeguarding children procedures. The childminder talks to parents prior to minding in order that all parties understand the responsibilities of the childminder, to ensure children's well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a range of play activities suitable for their age and stage of development. This includes crafts such as colouring and mosaic pictures, cooking and painting. Board games and puzzles are available. Children may use the garden for outside play and go for outings to the park and beach nearby. Children attending after school can do homework and relax watching television or videos. They can listen to music or read quietly.

A travel cot is available for any younger children needing a sleep. Older children use the soft furniture to relax and nap if they want to.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's details are recorded on the registration forms, enabling appropriate care to be provided. Resources include puzzles and books which have positive images of children and families from around the world, introducing ideas of the wider society.

Children with additional needs are cared for and supported; the childminder finds out what she needs to know to make sure all children have their needs met. Children generally behave well. The childminder uses positive methods such as praise and encouragement as far as possible. If children need to be reminded of how to behave properly they are spoken to quietly and calmly.

The childminder develops an effective partnership with parents. A daily informal exchange of information ensures that expectations are clear on both sides and parents are aware of what their child has been doing. Parents appreciate the flexibility which allows them to be reassured that their children are being properly cared for whilst they are at work. The childminder has many cards and letters of thanks from parents and children she has cared for.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a house where adults have been checked and vetted to ensure they are suitable to be in contact with children. The childminder has completed all required training courses and has attended several other courses in order to keep abreast of trends and developments in the child care field.

Children's attendance is recorded and the ratios as set down in the conditions of registration are adhered to at all times. The childminder organises her time so that when children are present she is available to meet their needs.

Documentation and paperwork to support children's care and welfare needs are available and securely stored to maintain confidentiality. Records are updated as required to make sure contact details are correct.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. Resources have been added to and now include books and puzzles with positive images of children and families from around the world.

The childminder agreed to establish a written agreement with parents that sets out the expectations of both parties as to the care of the child, activities provided and business arrangements, and to record information about children's individual needs, personal details and preferences. This has been done and documentation is now in place.

The childminder agreed to make hazardous cleaning materials inaccessible to children; the kitchen cupboards now have safety catches and a stairgate prevents children having access to the kitchen unsupervised.

The childminder was asked to obtain a copy of the booklet ' What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'. This is now in place.

The childminder agreed to obtain the parents' written consent to seek emergency medical treatment. This is now in place for all children attending.

The childminder was asked to plan a range of activities and play opportunities for children's creative development. Children now have a range of crafts and kits to enjoy creative play, as well as regular cooking sessions.

As a result of actions taken, children's overall care, safety and welfare are improved.

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):

- make sure all areas of the property used for childminding are safe and suitable for their purpose (this refers to the downstairs toilet and wash hand basin).

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