



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	590215
Inspection date	25 January 2007
Inspector	Kerry Freshwater
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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children aged six and three in Newport, Essex. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding two children under eight, both of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also cares for children over eight years. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group. The family has two pet hamsters.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because the childminder has a highly effective approach to health and hygiene. Thorough procedures and documents are in place to ensure that children's individual needs are very well met. Accident and medication records are in place, appropriate treatment given and parent's signatures and consents have been obtained. Children learn about the importance of being healthy through the childminder's skilful support and guidance. For example, they know to wash their hands on arrival from school, after using the toilet, before food and after touching the pet hamsters. They learn about germs and the need to wash them away. The childminder reduces the risk of cross-infection by ensuring that her home is always clean and well maintained. Individual flannels and towels are used, washed and changed daily. Food preparation areas are regularly cleaned with antibacterial products and children have their own cups and cutlery.

Physical activity is highly regarded and children are able to develop their physical skills in a wide range of activities on a daily basis. They enjoy daily walks and activities in the garden, such as football, skipping, ball games and bike riding. They participate in mini discos and action rhymes and use various apparatus at local parks. Children's fine skills are extended through a range of imaginative activities and resources. For example, children mould coconut mice, manipulate play dough, build with various construction toys and thread with buttons. This helps to develop their coordination and physical abilities. Children are able to rest and sleep as they need to.

Children are clearly aware of good nutrition and understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They enjoy an excellent range of fresh fruits which they participate in the preparation of. For example, they enthusiastically prepare fruits for a fruit salad and make a range of different fruit smoothies. Meals provided include freshly prepared foods and a selection of fresh vegetables. The childminder is happy to meet individual dietary requirements of which she has obtained clear information from parents. She works closely with the parents to ensure that these requirements are met and information about health and diet are shared.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is a high priority and they are cared for in a home where risks are identified and minimised. They move around safely, freely and independently and adhere to house rules to keep them safe. Children know not to run in the house in case they fall and hurt themselves, not to stand in front of the swing if somebody is using it and to stay out of the kitchen when the childminder is cooking. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves free from harm inside and outside of the home through discussion and leading by example. Children learn the 'Green Cross Code', they know to look left and right and to keep looking and listening as they cross the road safely. The childminder takes added precautions to protect children when they are on outings to larger places. Wrist bands are used to ensure children can be easily identified and the childminder contacted, children are encouraged to wear appropriate

footwear and buggies and reins are used as and when necessary. Fire detection equipment is in place and an emergency evacuation procedure has been considered and discussed. However, the evacuation process has not been practised and therefore children are potentially at risk in an emergency situation as the procedure is not familiar.

A broad range of safe, developmentally appropriate resources are stored around the room at child height for easy access. This enables the children to independently select their play and activities safely. The childminder has the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. For example, she has a good understanding of child protection issues. She has carried out some home based training in this area and has all the relevant documentation in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a broad variety of exciting play and activities which are child-led or planned and organised by the childminder. They receive extra support if needed but their independence is promoted as much as possible. They are given the opportunity to carry out a wide range of art and craft activities which they adapt to accommodate their own ideas and interests. Children enjoy word games, they learn to recognise different letters as they use the Noddy puzzle books, begin to form their own names and sound out letters as they play.

Children benefit from a range of activities which help develop their knowledge and skills. For example, they learn to recognise different colours when they choose coloured bricks or push buttons on activity toys. They count as they climb up and down the stairs or sing nursery rhymes. They match and sequence with activity games and learn about weight as they prepare ingredients for cooking. Children gain an understanding of the natural environment as they plant cress seeds and watch them grow, enjoy local nature walks and spot different birds on their walk to school. Regular use of creative materials such as pencils, crayons, paint and a wide range of collage materials, encourages the children to represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. They enjoy making tree pictures using shells, twigs and other items of interest, they make glittery string baskets, paper mache snowmen and enjoy using salt dough to make different shapes. Children learn to recognise how foods are prepared and cooked prior to being eaten as they make bread and butter and then sandwiches to see the process right through to being eaten. They learn how different ingredients combine as they bake cakes and mince pies. Children develop their imaginations as they instigate different role play activities. For example as they pretend to pack up and go to the seaside together.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is developed by the childminder who gives them frequent praise and encouragement as they play, they are listened to and encouraged to make their own suggestions. Children's sense of belonging is promoted by the childminder who knows them well and values their achievements which she displays and shares with parents. They make positive relationships with children of differing ages and abilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a good range of activities and meaningful resources to promote a positive view of the wider world. Dual language books, dolls and activities to celebrate a variety of festivals increases children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. The children enjoy making lanterns for Chinese New Year and learn about different people they see in the local environment through discussion with the childminder.

Children are valued and respected. Their individual needs are well met as they follow their daily routine which is discussed with parents. Children behave very well. They understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age-appropriate methods used by the childminder to manage behaviour. Children participate in rule making which helps them to monitor their own behaviour. Children are considerate of each other, they share, take turns and are polite, remembering to say please and thank you. They play well together and enjoy each other's company. Realistic challenges are set by the childminder to help the children develop. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem. They feel relaxed and secure and able to make independent choices about what they want to do.

Children benefit from a very strong partnership between the childminder and parents who exchange information frequently. They have daily discussions and the childminder keeps a diary to record the day-to-day activities, achievements and routines of the children. This helps keep parents well informed of how their child's needs are being met and of their developmental progress. Written information has been produced to inform new parents of the service provided, this includes house rules, policies and references. Children's artwork and writing are displayed in individual scrapbooks which are taken home when full. This shows that their efforts are valued and enables them to proudly show what they have created.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children's needs are met through effective organisation and good communication with parents. Equipment and resources are organised in such a way that children are able to access them easily and independently which enables children to make choices about their play. A balance of child-led activities and organised play ensure children have a range of different enjoyable experiences whilst they are with the childminder. They enjoy quiet drawing and writing times, craft and imaginative play. They benefit from routines which make them feel secure and relaxed. Children play, eat, sleep and rest as they need to.

Documentation is stored securely and information shared appropriately with parents. All of the required policies and procedures are in place to help keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare, policies are signed by parents to confirm their agreement. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge and experience which she continues to update with relevant training. She has completed post registration training, a current first aid qualification and carried out a short course relating to the recognised under threes framework. Overall, the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection and previous visit, the childminder was asked to ensure that Ofsted are notified of any changes and to ensure parents are kept fully informed at all times about changes to daily routines or incidents that involve their children.

The childminder is aware of the need to keep Ofsted and parents fully informed of any changes to the setting and daily routines. The childminder's husband has since registered as an assistant to support her in the childcare provision.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 1 2004, Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard 1 (Suitable Person) and 6 (Safety). Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit on 03 November 2005. Evidence was found to substantiate the concerns and the provider was given an action under Standard 12 to ensure parents are kept fully informed at all times about changes to daily routines or incidents that involve their children. The provider was given a new condition of registration that she may at times agreed and confirmed in writing by parents, leave an assistant in sole charge of the children. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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):

- practise the fire evacuation plan to ensure the procedure is familiar in an emergency situation.

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