

Mole, Jean

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY243413
Inspection date	22 March 2007
Inspector	Shirley Leigh Monks-Meagher

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 has been a registered childminder since 2002. She lives with her husband and three children; a son aged 11 and two daughters aged 10 and seven years. Her husband acts as her assistant. They live in the Droylsden area of Tameside, Manchester. Children have use of the whole of the ground floor with the exception of the conservatory. Bathroom facilities are on the first floor and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to provide care for four children aged under eight years and five children when her assistant is present. There are currently four children on the register, who attend for a variety of sessions.

The family have two pet dogs which are housed outside in a secure pen. The childminder takes the children to the local facilities. She 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 warm, clean and well maintained home where many sensible hygiene procedures are in place. For example, appropriate hand washing and nappy changing routines are in place, and appropriate cleaning equipment and anti-bacterial sprays are available. This approach generally protects children from infection, however, individual children's dummies are stored together, promoting cross-contamination and putting their health at risk. Suitable procedures are in place to record medications administered and any accidents sustained, and an effective sick child and exclusion policy protects children from illness.

Children are able to follow their own individual routines and can rest or sleep when they are tired. Children regularly enjoy activities, which contribute towards good health and physical development. Babies have appropriate space and equipment to develop their physical skills, such as pulling up against the furniture, sitting and crawling. A well equipped rear garden, walks along the canal and visits to the local park provide many opportunities for fresh air and healthy exercise. This helps children develop strength and coordination.

Children's health and dietary needs are recorded and acknowledged. The childminder takes account of children's allergies and medical needs. Children are refreshed and hydrated. They have frequent drinks of water. A written healthy eating policy is shared with parents and the food that parent's provide is stored safely and appropriately in the fridge and kitchen cupboards. Healthy snacks are provided by the childminder, for example, wholemeal toast, fresh fruit and breadsticks. Children are developing an understanding of healthy food options and physical exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a welcoming environment and have access to appropriate facilities. Regular risk assessment minimises hazards to children, who are vigilantly supervised and are becoming aware of safe boundaries. For example, they are beginning to learn about the consequences of running and climbing indoors.

Procedures are in place for the safe collection of children from the childminder's home and children cannot leave the premises unattended because exit doors are kept locked. Fire safety precautions are in place, including evacuation plans; equipment is maintained. However, the emergency evacuation has not been practised with the minded children to contribute towards their understanding of how to keep themselves safe within the setting. Children are able to safely select clean and well maintained toys and resources from a selection organised at floor level or child height.

Children's welfare is safeguarded. The childminder clearly understands her responsibilities relating to keeping children safe from harm and neglect and her role in protecting the welfare of children. She is fully aware of the procedures to follow in the event of a concern about a child or allegations of abuse. She shares her responsibility with parents, via a written statement.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly with the childminder and happily explore all the play opportunities offered. A good range of suitable resources and play activities are offered to maintain children's interest. Children are stimulated and purposefully engaged. They are able to play freely to develop their skills, with sensitive support and appropriate intervention by the childminder. For example, when a brick gets stuck in the shape sorter, she eases the child's frustration with sensitive words and suggests ideas of how they can release it. Books are used effectively to help toddlers to widen their vocabulary as they look at pictures and learn new names or make connections between what they see in books and the world around them. For example, they point alternately between the picture of shoes and their feet and make appropriate animal sounds when they see animals they recognise. The children enjoy lots of sensory experiences. They explore treasure baskets, handle wooden bricks and puzzles and discover that their actions can produce sounds. For example, when they roll the duck, it quacks.

Children enjoy trips in the local area, such as walking to the canal to feed the ducks or visiting the library for story time. This broadens their experiences, extends their social circle and widens their understanding of the community. Children share warm relationships with the childminder and her assistant; hugs and affectionate gestures are freely exchanged. Communication and language skills are skilfully fostered by the childminder as she listens and responds to children's early speech patterns and gestures.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel secure and able to explore all the opportunities on offer at the childminder's house. They are gradually becoming aware of and beginning to respect boundaries in a supportive and caring environment. Children regularly receive praise, reassuring smiles, kind and warm words and appropriate physical contact. This boosts their self-image and promotes confidence in their abilities. Children are developing trusting relationships. Appropriate strategies are in place to promote positive behaviour according to children's differing abilities. For example, younger children are easily distracted whilst older children are diverted and offered clear explanations about why their behaviour is unacceptable.

Children learn to make choices and are developing independence. They are encouraged to choose activities, select resources and feed themselves. Children have a few play materials that reflect positive images, however, there is little to positively represent gender, disability or the diversity of cultures in our modern society. This limits children's understanding of similarities and differences and hinders their chances of developing positive attitudes towards others. Visits to the local facilities are helping children to gain an awareness of their local community and environment.

Information about individual children's progress and interesting events and activities are shared verbally with parents, on a daily basis. A well prepared portfolio provides parents with a wealth of information about the childminder's setting, including the policies and procedures which underpin her childminding practice. This approach ensures continuity of care for children and creates links between their home and the childminder's home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The happy, settled children enjoy their time in the childminder's home where they can make choices, select resources and engage in a variety of play opportunities and activities which promote positive outcomes. There is ample space for children to play in comfort and move around safely in well organised play areas. They enjoy opportunities to play outdoors and visit local facilities as part of a planned routine.

Children benefit from a suitably qualified carer, who is a member of the National Childminding Association. She has a clear understanding of her role and responsibilities towards children.

The childminder has most of the legally required documentation in place, which contributes to children's safety, welfare and well-being. They are well organised, maintained and secure. However, there is no written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment on children's records. This poses a risk to their welfare.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder agreed to: increase her toys and resources to meet the developmental needs of children and promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory play; organise toys and equipment so that children can select them easily; and ensure some paperwork was in place.

The childminder has increased her range of toys and resources to ensure that children enjoy age-appropriate activities and opportunities, which promote their overall development. Children are encouraged to follow their interests and to participate in all the experiences, activities and opportunities available. Some play materials which help children develop an understanding of our diverse society have been added, but these are few. Toys and resources are stored in baskets and tubs at floor level or at child height, enabling children to make independent choices and develop independence.

All children's files now contain written parental consent for them to be transported in a vehicle and a copy of current business use car insurance is kept in the parent portfolio. As a result, children's safety and well-being is better protected.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there are 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):

- improve storage of children's dummies to reduce risk of cross-contamination
- plan activities and opportunities to help children develop an understanding of keeping themselves safe, for example, practise emergency evacuation
- continue to develop positive image resources to help children widen their understanding of our diverse society
- ensure all children have written parental consent for emergency medical treatment or advice in place.

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