



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY246909
Inspection date	16 January 2007
Inspector	Karen Scott
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 2003. She lives with her husband and two children, one who is aged five and one who is over eight years in Rainham. 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. There are shops and parks within walking distance. The childminder attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of an approved childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children follow good hygiene practices, washing their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating food. The childminder protects children from illness, as children who are unwell do not attend. However not all parents are aware of this or the procedure the childminder takes when a child becomes ill while in her care. The childminder has written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment if needed, helping to care for children in an emergency. Children do not participate in daily physical exercise as this tends to be left to the warmer months when they go to the park. This does not help them understand the need for regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Children develop healthy eating habits. They receive healthy snacks such as cheese and help themselves to prepared fruit throughout the morning. Lunches are home cooked hot meals such as casseroles. The childminder is aware of children's food likes and dislikes but she encourages them to try new foods too. Children sit at a child sized table and chairs for lunch. They show independence as they prepare the table and themselves for lunch. This is an enjoyable part of the day. Children have their own beakers and help themselves to a drink whenever they need one, preventing them becoming dehydrated.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a spacious, clean, well-organised environment. This allows them to move around freely and safely and to extend their play. Children have access to a vast range of toys and resources that they access with ease but younger children are protected from toys with small parts that could harm them as these are stored out of their reach, and when older children are playing with them the childminder monitors their play. Children play in a safe environment as the childminder has taken steps to minimise risks to them. For example, a safety gate is in place and sockets have covers on them. Although the childminder has thought about how she would vacate the house in an emergency she has not put this in writing or practiced with children regularly, resulting in them not knowing the process if there should be a fire, for example. On the few occasions that children play in the garden the childminder supervises them, helping to keep them from harm.

The childminder has a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse. However, she has a poor understanding of the procedure to follow should she have concerns about a child in her care. Consequently, this is not discussed with parents and carers and does not help to protect the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, relaxed and confident. They show independence and make choices about the toys that they wish to play with and the childminder enhances their play by supplying the

necessary resources that they require. She understands the different stages of children's development and helps them to progress through them. Children play alone, parallel and together. The childminder interacts with children but lets them lead their play. She encourages them to do things for themselves but gives good support when they are learning new skills. Children learn important social skills such as sharing and turn-taking. Good quality toys provide a range of experiences. Mathematical thinking is encouraged through playing with jigsaws, building blocks and games. The childminder and children count toys together too. Children develop an interest in books as they have access to a large range of fiction and non-fiction books. The childminder extends children's vocabulary as she introduces new words into their play. Regular opportunities to colour in and draw, occasional painting opportunities, dancing and imaginative play encourage children's creative development. Children also enjoy helping with household tasks such as hanging the washing out to dry. Children benefit from regular visits to a toddler group.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of equality of opportunity; children are treated with respect and made to feel good about themselves. Differences are acknowledged positively although children have access to only a small range of resources that promote positive images of diversity including gender, culture and disability. The childminder has a good understanding of working with children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She works with parents and other agencies to ensure that children have the consistency of care that they require. Children benefit from lots of praise and encouragement. The childminder's handling of behaviour is developmentally appropriate, respecting individual children's level of understanding and maturity. Parents are involved in devising strategies to support children so that they learn acceptable behaviour. This also helps to ensure consistency in behaviour management.

Parents and carers are informed of the childminder's practice verbally and in some written policies and procedures. They learn about their child's day through informal chats. Care diaries inform parents and carers of their child's day. Parents and carers are aware of how to complain as this information is clearly displayed in the entrance hall.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Children benefit from playing in a welcoming environment. Space and resources are well organised. Colourful posters help to keep parents and carers informed about the childminder's conditions of registration and weekly activities. All regulatory documentation is in place. However, parents are not fully informed about all of the childminder's policies resulting in them not being clear as to what all of her procedures are. The childminder has back up plans in place. For example another registered childminder is available to call on in an emergency, and parents are aware of this. The childminder keeps herself informed of current childcare practice through

reading relevant documentation and liaising with other childminders. This helps to offer up to date care to children. She holds a current first aid certificate, enabling her to administer first aid in the event of an accident. All records are stored confidentially but are easily accessible when needed. A register is used to record children's actual times of arrival and departure meaning that there is an accurate record of attendance.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, it was recommended that the childminder ensures children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and that she provides a complaints procedure for parents which includes Ofsted's complaints helpline contact number.

Children play with toys regardless of their gender. The childminder has purchased some resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. These include several dolls, some books and dressing up clothes. However, there are still not many and it is recommended that the childminder adds to these toys and resources. A written complaints procedure is displayed in the hallway. It informs parents how to complain and has the relevant telephone number on.

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 childminder 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):

- write a policy about sick children and the procedures followed if a child becomes sick while being minded
- write a fire drill procedure and practice regularly

- develop knowledge and understanding of issues relating to child protection and procedures to follow in the event of a child protection concern or allegation
- continue to update resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

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