



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY262160
Inspection date	01 August 2006
Inspector	Cheryl Langley
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 registered in 2003. She lives with her 2 adult children in a house in Loughton. All of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have 3 cats. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time and is currently minding 5 children at various times. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Procedures are in place to keep the children healthy and avoid cross infection. The childminder has the required information and documents to ensure she can act in the children's best interests if they need medical attention. Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal

care. They are cared for in a welcoming, clean home. They understand the advantages of regular cleaning routines to keep them healthy. Children help wash the toys so they are clean and safe to play with. They have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands before eating, after playing in the garden or using the toilet. Children learn about keeping their bodies healthy through activities, discussion and enjoyable story books. For example, they visit the dentist regularly with the childminder to keep their teeth free from decay and share stories about seeing the doctor or potty training.

Children understand the benefits of a healthy diet. The childminder makes eating fun, creating characters out of food and encouraging the children to try new and unusual fruit and vegetables. They know which type of food is good to eat so that they grow 'big and strong'. Children have access to drinking water or very diluted fruit juice throughout the day and eat fresh fruit and vegetables. The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents and works with them closely to provide nutritious snacks and meals that appeal to the children as well as meeting their dietary needs.

Children enjoy regular walks in the fresh air to contribute to their health. They become confident to balance and co-ordinate their bodies by participating in a range of physical activities. Children play in the garden on the sit-on rides, push buggies and climb up and move down the slide. They use the large play equipment in the park to move over, under, up and through the climbing frame. In the house they become adept at using tools and utensils for cooking and art and craft activities, or to activate technology toys and complete puzzles and jigsaws. Children enjoy threading food to make necklaces and manipulate play dough into different shapes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe in the childminder's care whilst in her home and on outings. She carries out regular risk assessments and takes action to remove any potential hazards. All of the required documents and parental consents are in place to support the safety of the children. Their welfare is safeguarded because the childminder has a sound understanding of child protection issues and is aware of the procedures to follow should she have any concerns.

Children engage in different types of play safely. They move around freely and make choices from a good range of toys which are stored suitably for the children to access independently. Children learn how to protect themselves from harm. They adhere to house rules to stay safe. Children do not move around when they are eating to avoid choking and know not to climb on furniture so they do not fall and hurt themselves. They are aware of strategies to keep themselves free from harm inside and outside of the home through a variety of interesting books, discussion and the examples set by the childminder. Children learn to be aware of strangers and procedures to follow in difficult situations. They practise codes for crossing the road safely and know what to do in the event of a fire through regular fire drills.

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. Their knowledge and skills are developed using a good range of resources and interaction with the childminder and other children. For example, children learn to count in sequence. They sing nursery rhymes and simple songs, count butterflies in the parks and gardens and move counters in games. Children use simple calculation to add and take-away money to pay for items at the shops. Language and literacy are enhanced as they share story books, recite poems and make up their own songs to sing to each other. Children recognise the colours of toys and paint. They enjoy painting rainbows, the sky and different leaves. Children use mathematical language to construct objects with connecting bricks or weigh ingredients for cooking. They use cylinders to make rolling pins. Children recognise patterns and similarity to match pairs or complete puzzles.

Nature walks and visits to the local nature centre teaches them about the natural environment. They enjoy collecting leaves and making collage pictures and leaf rubbings. Children use all their senses to explore. They smell the scent of flowers and have fun observing mini-beasts and drawing pictures of bugs. Favourite activities include play acting and role play where the children express their feelings and experiences. They dress up to sing and dance or act out their favourite characters on the television. Regular use of creative materials such as pencils, crayons, paint and play dough, encourages the children to represent their ideas. They enjoy drawing animals and making cards for different anniversaries. Children have fun with group activities, playing board games or 'Blind Man's Buff'. They become resourceful, helping the childminder to recycle paper and plastic bottles.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children become confident and develop their self-esteem with the childminder. She praises and compliments the children on their achievements and values their accomplishments which she shares with parents. Appropriate strategies are used to manage behaviour which ensures the children are well behaved. They understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries and sensitive reminders. Children are considerate, share, take turns and are polite, remembering to say please and thank you. The childminder provides a range of opportunities for the children to socialise. They make positive relationships. Realistic challenges are set to help the children develop. They are given sufficient time to complete tasks, such as dressing and feeding themselves. Children have a sense of belonging and feel relaxed with the childminder. This makes them feel secure and able to make independent choices and try new experiences.

The childminder provides a limited range of activities and resources to promote a positive view of the wider world. Children taste food from different countries and cultures and take part in some art and craft activities to celebrate traditional festivals.

Children benefit from a strong partnership between the childminder and parents. Their individual needs are met as they follow their daily routine which is established during the settling-in period and updated frequently. The childminder and parents have daily discussions and review

contracts, policies and procedures regularly. This helps keep parents informed of how their child's needs are being met and their developmental progress. However, the complaints procedure has not been updated to include a system to record or share appropriate action regarding a complaint, to ensure parents' concerns are respected and acknowledged and the children's welfare monitored.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children's care is enhanced by efficient and effective organisation and communication with parents. Space and equipment is prepared so that children have a variety of choices and can access resources easily and independently. This enables them to make decisions about their activities. They take part in a balance of child-led and organised play which ensures they have a range of different enjoyable experiences to keep them stimulated and challenged. Children benefit from routines which make them feel secure and relaxed. They play, eat, sleep and rest as they need to.

Documentation is stored securely and most information is shared appropriately with parents. A comprehensive set of written policies and procedures are in place to help keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge and experience. She has completed the 'Introduction to Childminding Practice' and has a current first aid qualification. Overall, the needs of all the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to a number of recommendations and actions to enhance the care and safety of the children.

She has completed the 'Introduction to Childminding Practice' course to update her knowledge and understanding of child development and care. The childminder has a current first aid certificate to enable her to provide suitable and appropriate first aid to a child requiring medical attention.

Hazards in the home are reduced to keep the children safe, for example, trailing wires are not exposed and dangerous substances are kept out of reach at a high level or in cupboards with child-proof locks.

A record of any accident is kept and shared with parents to make sure they are aware of any health issues that may arise and continuity in health care is provided for individual children. Public liability cover is up-to-date to support the safety of the children. Contracts and registration details for every child are in place to ensure parents and the childminder work in partnership to care for each individual child appropriately. An accurate record of the children's times of arrival and departure are kept. This is to make sure the correct information of all those present at the setting is available in an emergency situation, registered numbers are adhered to, to keep the children safe, and details are available, if required, to safeguard the children's welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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):

- make parents aware of the complaints procedure which includes sending a written response to any concerns they may have within twenty-eight days and a record of all complaints received which may be shared with all parents
- provide play materials which reflect diversity such as books and puzzles which show positive images of boys and girls and men and women from a variety of cultural backgrounds and with varying needs.

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