

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY276365
Inspection date	07 February 2008
Inspector	Carolyn Mary Hasler

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 registered since 2003, she lives with her husband and two school aged children. They live in a quiet residential area of freshwater, in the London borough of Enfield. It is close to local shops, parks and schools which the childminder uses. Both ground floor and first floor of her home is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for out door play.

The childminder is registered to care for three children under the age of eight years, there is currently three children on roll. She has requested a variation to mind five children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning to lead healthy lifestyles. They have opportunities to be active both around the childminder's home and also by visiting local playgrounds and walking to and from school each day. They are learning how to control their bodies, developing co-ordination skills because they are enjoying learning how to roll, throw and catch balls, use bats, run and dance in time

to favourite musical tapes. Co-ordination and balance is further encouraged through the use of walkers and push and ride toys and they are increasingly becoming more confident in their mobility. This helps them feel energised and keeps their bodies fit.

They are learning about personal hygiene, older children are independent in their use of the toilet and washing their hands, while babies and toddlers are dependent on the childminder for care needs. However, they are becoming increasingly skilled in self help skills. They have a clean and well presented environment to play and learn in. The childminder ensures that her cleaning routines prioritise areas which are most used. For example, floors, surfaces and areas of high contamination such as the toilet are cleaned daily and play resources are cleaned regularly ensuring that cross contamination of germs have been minimised.

In the event that children become sick or have an accident on the premises, the childminder acts appropriately in the interests of the child. She has completed a first aid course and keeps a first aid kit close at hand. She knows how to alert emergency services should they be needed and keeps parents informed. There are systems in place to keep all the required records that support children's health and welfare.

Children have access to drinks throughout their day, this ensures that they do not become dehydrated. Initial discussions with parents and record keeping ensure that children's individual dietary needs are met and establish how meals and snacks will be provided. They receive a mixture of packed lunches and food provided by the childminder and she ensures that meals are nutritionally balanced, made from fresh ingredients and offer children variety and choice. As a result children are learning how to eat well and this helps their bodies stay fit and grow healthy enabling them to be alert while they play and learn.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to the whole of the childminder's house, although younger children are limited to the ground floor on most occasions. The ground floor of the premises has been well planned to ensure they can move around actively. It consists of two main rooms, the front room is used for quiet activities such as reading, and watching the television, while the back room is used as a play room. Thought has been given to the planning of furniture to ensure that floor space has been maximised. Rugs and cushions ensure that they are comfortable at this level while they play. There are comfortable places to sit and rest, they have access to the families dining room table to play and eat meals. Although the main play area is in the centre of the house and is primarily lit by overhead electric lighting, natural light filters through windows from both ends of the house. The premises are centrally heated and this can be controlled to ensure the environment is at a comfortable temperature. Children feel welcomed into the childminder's home because she has taken care to provide a variety of brightly coloured toys and play equipment stored in low level storage boxes and cupboards, this means that they can help themselves. There are child friendly posters on the wall and the whole environment is conducive to playing and learning. Toilets which are positioned on both floors, allows those children who are learning new skills easy access. Although the rear garden is not currently in use, the childminder intends to make this area available to children in the near future.

Children are learning important skills to keep safe both while they play and during every day situations. Timely reminders such as not going near hot objects or equipment and learning basic road safety skills such as holding hands while walking on the road and watching the traffic before crossing helps children establish safety ground rules. They are encouraged to be

adventurous and take controlled risks in the playground of the park when they are being closely supervised and supported by the childminder. Toys, play equipment, nursery furniture and equipment have been well planned, they are of good quality, well maintained and suitable for the age, range and abilities of children cared for. Children's safety has generally been considered by the childminder. For instance, the premises have been risk assessed and no hazards were identified during the inspection. Although there is fire safety equipment in place, the childminder has not thought through how to evacuate the premises in the event of a fire and children have no experience of this. On occasions when children travel in the families car, verbal permission has been sought from parents. However, this has not been formalised and there was no documented evidence available to state that the car is road worthy. This compromises children's safety.

Children are appropriately safeguarded from abuse because the childminder demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. She is familiar with the different areas of abuse and their signs and symptoms, knows how to record, seek advice and report her concerns. She has a copy of the recently issued guidance on child protection for childminders to refer too. However, the childminder was not confident on how she would respond should an allegation be made against a member of her household and this compromises children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are growing in confidence and self-esteem, their independence is increasing because they are encouraged to help themselves to toys and play equipment, making choices about their play. Relationships with the childminder are secure, she offers them a high level of attention and they respond well to this by engaging with her in play. There is lots of language all around them, the childminder talks to them about their games and encourages them in their play. They enter into conversations, listening and responding to the childminder. Role play games extend their vocabulary and expression of emotion as children become more confident in expressing themselves verbally. They have opportunities to be creative, through art work both directed and free, enjoying painting, gluing and sticking, and mark making. Access to musical instruments help them to express their creativeness in a different way. They are learning to respect books, enjoying looking at them and are challenged through shape sorters, puzzles and games.

The childminder is beginning to develop her skills in planning, observing and evaluating children's play, helping her to monitor children's development, although this is not currently formalised.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning about their own cultures, religions and abilities and those of other people. They come from a variety of different cultural backgrounds and have opportunities to meet others through community groups such as toddlers, nursery and school; building friendships which help them to recognise and respect those who are different to themselves. They hear positive messages on how to relate to one another and a selection of play resources offer positive images of culture, religion and disability. Stereotypical ideas are discussed and questioned helping children explore their thoughts, interests and feelings in a safe and supported environment. The childminder demonstrates a confident knowledge and understanding of equality issues and offers children the opportunity of learning about and celebrating other

people's religious festivals, such as, both Christian and Muslim festivals. She shows an interest when children come home and tell her about others which they are learning about at school, for example, Chinese New Year.

Although the childminder does not currently work with any children with special needs or disabilities, she demonstrates dedication to working in a supportive environment where no children are disadvantaged. Her ability to offer services are sometimes limited because she does not drive. However, she is committed to working in partnership with parents and other professional bodies unless this disadvantages others. The childminder is happy to research and attend training if this will support the needs of individual children. The childminder makes all reasonable adjustments to her care arrangements in order to support children's development and help them reach their full potential.

Children are learning how to manage their own behaviour and this influences the behaviour of others. They are learning important social skills which help them relate to each other and appreciate their contribution. For example, they are learning to share play equipment and take turns and this helps them to play harmoniously. Clear and consistent strategies shared with parents help them learn right from wrong and how to behave in an acceptable way. They are learning to be careful and care for one another because they have role play materials to explore and the childminder offers them a good role model. As a result children were well behaved.

Children benefit when relationships between the childminder and parents are secure. Separation issues are generally handled in a supportive manner and this helps them settle quickly. The sharing of information on children, helps to inform the childminder's practice and ultimately support the child's care. Business agreements ensure that both parties understand their role in care arrangements. The childminder informs parents verbally about her services, she currently does not have a complaints procedure in place. The lack of information available to parents compromises children's safety. However, she is able to demonstrate verbally what happens when a complaint is made.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by the childminder who is kind and friendly towards them, she has completed a basic course in childcare and maintains her knowledge by attending short courses provided by her local authority. She ensures that each member of her household over the age of 16 years has been vetted by the Criminal Records Bureau. The childminder generally organises her service effectively. Children are learning how to live healthy lifestyles, and play safely. They are interested and engaged in play and learning, their achievements are acknowledged and affirmed. They are learning how to be positive contributors to their community, learning important social skills such as how to manage their own behaviour and how to build friendships and respect others.

The childminder's record keeping and documentation generally underpins her service. She demonstrates an appropriate understanding of privacy and confidentiality issues and provides a secure place to store confidential records.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to develop her knowledge and understanding of child protection and obtain a copy of the ACPC. There has been a significant improvement of the childminder's knowledge, however this continues to be an area of development. This means that children are generally safeguarded.

She also agreed to develop her knowledge and understanding of special needs issues. There has been a significant improvement of the childminder's knowledge. This ensures that children are not disadvantaged in any way and their individual needs are supported.

In addition she agreed to review accessibility of toys and equipment so children can help themselves, and improve presentation to make the environment interesting and stimulating. There has been a significant improvement in the availability and presentation of play equipment. This means that children have good access to play opportunities.

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

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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):

- ensure parents permission is sought to take children in the childminders car, ensure that the vehicle is road worthy and documentation is available for inspection.
- provide a complaints procedure in line with changes in regulation since October 2005
- continue to develop knowledge and understanding of child protection
- provide an evacuation procedure and practise evacuation with children

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