

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY289280
Inspection date	14 December 2007
Inspector	Maura Pigram
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 2004. She lives with her husband and three children aged 17, 15 and 10 years in Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. The whole of ground floor is used for childminding with a bathroom and a bedroom the first floor also used. There is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding two children on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children. The childminder attends local groups. The family have no pets.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and the Croxley Green Childminders Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's individual health needs, including possible allergies and dietary restrictions, are discussed before childminding commences. Children are offered drinks frequently and have a choice of mid morning and teatime snacks, which includes fresh fruit. Meals provided by parents are appropriately stored. Children learn about healthy eating through the childminder visiting the nearby allotments. Here, the children enjoy choosing fruit and vegetables to take home. In addition, they frequently visit the local grocers where they are able to choose fruit which they enjoy eating. An interactive game using stickers is used to enhance their understanding of healthy eating. As a result, children are well nourished.

The childminder holds a current first aid qualification, which includes training in first aid for children and infants. She has a well-stocked first aid kit, the contents of which are frequently checked and replaced as necessary. As a result, children's health, if they have an accident, is safeguarded. Children learn good hygiene routines because the childminder routinely reminds children to wash their hands after using the toilet. In addition, suitable wipes are used to clean surfaces and toddlers hands prior to them eating. Consequently, they develop good hygiene habits. Parents of young babies and those requiring nappy changes are asked to provide individual changing mats. Younger children who have fallen asleep on the return journey from children's groups are transferred to a travel cot to continue their sleep. Older children can have a nap on the sofa. However, the practice of not having their own bedding such as a pillow is a potential risk of infection.

Children are offered many opportunities to develop their physical skills. Children use the garden in fine weather and make use of the wide range of equipment, such as the sit and ride toys and the trampoline. The childminder regularly uses the broad range of play equipment in a local school playground and visits nearby parks. In addition, children are taken on outings to various age-appropriate venues including indoor activity centres. As a result, children's physical development is well fostered.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in warm and well-maintained environment. There is space for them to move around freely to play and they can access resources safely. Children use a wide range of good quality, developmentally appropriate toys and equipment. Some items such as, imaginative play items are of high quality. In addition, resources such as musical instruments borrowed from the childminding group provide further interest and stimulation. The childminder rotates the toys and equipment to suit the development needs of children attending. These are cleaned and checked frequently to make sure they are safe for children to use. All items are of suitable design and condition, very well maintained and conform to safety standards. However, the routine of visiting many groups means that potentially children are unable to maximise the use of the environment and the wide range of resources available. Effective procedures ensure that accidental injury is minimised. Safety gates, for example, are used when younger children are attending. An emergency evacuation procedure is in place which is practised with the children. This means that children know what to do in an emergency.

Children learn about road safety while they are on outings and walking to and from school. In addition, they are reminded not to touch any dogs they are unfamiliar with and simple explanations are provided. Road safety activity books are available for older children to complete. Safety straps are used to protect young children when they are on outings. Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. The childminder has a secure knowledge of child protection reporting procedures. She is very clear on procedures to follow if she had any concerns. She has developed a policy which incorporates the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Consequently, children's welfare is well protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and have positive relationships with the childminder. As a result, they settle and play with confidence. The childminder is mindful of what each child enjoys playing with. When they are at home, for example, she organises resources so that they are readily accessible. Children enjoy playing with musical instruments and are used to extend children's interest in singing and dancing. A play microphone adds to this pleasure. Children are confident in making decisions about their play. For example, a child present at the inspection confidently explores and investigates imaginative dressing up clothes and a pirate ship. The childminder sits on the floor effectively assisting and supporting this play. The childminder organises some activities at home to allow children to build on their natural curiosity as learners. For example, an interest in 'pink pigs' led to the childminder including this in her weekly theme. Visits to the library for relevant books support this.

Everyday children visit a variety of toddler and pre-school groups and a childminding drop in group. Here, they enjoy taking part in music and movement sessions as well as a wide range of art and craft activities. They regularly make pictures and paintings at the drop in sessions and take these home with them. As a result, they develop self-esteem. In addition, outings from the various groups are organised with the children enjoying trips to various age-appropriate venues. They particularly enjoy visiting Willows Farm where they can interact with animals. Cassiobury park, Ruislip Lido and the Aquadrome are also favourite venues to visit. Here, children can play on a wide range of equipment, they can build sand castles at the Lido and feed the ducks at the Aquadrome. This means that children are able to socialise with others and can confidently take part in the activities on offer. The childminder is familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and has a wide range of toys to promote the learning of younger children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and included at all times. Every opportunity is used to provide praise and encouragement. Achievements such as walking nicely to school are shared with parents. As a result, children develop self-esteem. Children are encouraged to be kind and polite to each other. The childminder uses various strategies appropriate for children's stage of development and individual level of understanding. The strategies include simple explanations and distractions, these are discussed with parents. This means that children learn to understand appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

The childminder knows the children and their families well. Arrangements to settle children are negotiated taking into account the needs of children and the requirements of parents for flexible childcare. Information about the setting is provided through a detailed portfolio and

a welcome leaflet. Past parents have written complimentary and warm references about the care that the childminder offers. A parent's notice board ensures children's parents are well informed of all procedures including the requirements concerning any complaints. In addition, dairies are used to record younger children's activities. This means that there is a continuity of care between the childminder and the children's parents.

Children learn about diversity through their play. Resources such as dolls, books, small figures and imaginative play clothes support this. Children learn about the wider world through the several visits to age-appropriate groups. In addition, one of the childminder's responsibilities within the childminders group is the organisation of activities to celebrate festivals. Consequently, children attending this group develop a strong understanding of the wider world. The childminder has some experience of working alongside children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Although, no children with these difficulties are in attendance she is happy to provide care for all children. Activities are adapted accordingly, close liaison with parents and outside agencies ensure individual needs can be met. Consequently, the childminder is committed to an inclusive practice and ensure all children develop self-esteem.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation of documentation. She has a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement which is regularly shared within the local childminding group. She is passionate about the need for good quality training such as first aid and child protection. She is proactive and ensures children's and their parent's needs are highly valued. For example, she ensures children and parents meet a childminder friend who covers for her in the case of any illness. She regularly evaluates her practice and maintains an excellent standard of records of children in her care. This includes information that is taken on outings which states that she is a childminder, and includes the children's contact details along with a small photograph of each child. This means that children's welfare is effectively promoted.

The childminder regularly evaluates her practice and is very proactive in looking for ways of improving the quality of care she provides. All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well being are in place. Comprehensive policies and procedures are used effectively to protect children, promote their well being and support all to develop their potential. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress, with information shared verbally and in writing, on a daily basis. A comprehensive portfolio and a welcome leaflet outlines all policies and procedures which underpin the children's care. In addition, she actively uses resources obtained from outside agencies, such as road safety booklets. She is extremely involved in the local childminding group and is a childminding buddy. She is an active member of the National Childminding Association and obtained high quality resources from a recent conference to enhance the children's play and development. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the childminder was asked to complete a childminding pre-registration course and to obtain literature about child protection. These have been done. The childminder has completed the necessary course. This means that she is aware of all the requirements necessary for childminding. As a result, children's welfare is promoted. She has obtained information about child protection from a relevant course. In addition, she has used this

knowledge to develop her policy and procedures. Consequently, children are appropriately safeguarded.

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

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):

- ensure each child has their own bed linen
- maximise potential use of the physical environment and the resources to provide a balanced range of activities that promotes children's learning and development.

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