



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY309921
Inspection date	12 July 2006
Inspector	Amanda Jane Tyson

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 August 2005. She lives with her husband in a house in New Malden, Surrey. Their home is situated within walking distance of local shops, parks, schools and public transport. Kingston town centre is within short commuting distance, and there is a direct train link to London Waterloo. With the exception of the office and master bedroom, all areas of the home are available for childminding use. The conservatory is set up as the main play room. Toilet facilities are on the first floor. There is an enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The family have four exotic birds which are kept in cages.

The childminder is currently caring for two children who are aged 18 months and 15 months. The elder of the two is her grandchild.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder pays exceptionally good attention to meeting the children's individual health needs. This is achieved so well because prior to placement, she obtains particularly detailed information from parents about children's home routines, medical and emotional requirements, such as sleep, dietary and what comforts them if they are distressed. The childminder ensures a gradual settling-in period, which minimises the distress often caused to children who are separating from parents for the first time. They sleep in their own cots, surrounded by their preferred comforters, and they are reassured by her frequent displays of physical affection and animated interaction with them.

Toddlers are learning the importance of good hygiene through daily routines, for example hand washing after playing in the garden and participating in painting activities, and before eating. She takes meticulous care to prevent the spread of infection by practising good hygiene procedures herself. Bed linen is cleaned daily, she wears disposable gloves when changing nappies, and has made clear to parents that she cannot care for children if they are suffering from a contagious illness, because of the risk to other minded children.

The childminder records any health issues in the children's daily diary, for example if she has administered medication, or they have hurt themselves during play. She has obtained numerous separate written consents from parents to enable her to respond appropriately, such as to seek emergency medical treatment or advice, to apply sun protection cream, and to administer medication and first aid, for which she has completed training.

The childminder makes good use of the garden to encourage physically active play and to ensure children reap the benefits of fresh air. They explore the playhouse, ride toddler trikes and play contentedly in the sand pit. Parents provide the children's daily snacks and meals, but the childminder encourages them well in their eating habits and makes sure that they keep hydrated by providing regular drinks of water. She records their daily food intake in detail so that parents are clear about what they may need to provide later in the evening.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained, secure and particularly well presented child orientated environment. The childminder has obtained a wide variety of play and learning resources, which are regularly supplemented through her use of the local toy library and maintained in very good condition. Babies and toddlers can explore the

toys safely because the childminder makes sure that only those that are suitable for their age and stage of development, are accessible for them to explore independently. The childminder has suitable equipment and furniture to specifically meet the needs of babies and toddlers and ensure their comfort. For example, children sit at a nursery table to paint and are secured in high chairs at lunchtime.

The garden is secured with good quality perimeter fencing and the side gate is locked so that children are unable to leave unsupervised. However, the positioning of a dissembled metal climbing frame, which the childminder has thoughtfully obtained to encourage the children's future gross motor development, is stored against the garage, and because it is not secured in any way, presents a safety risk to children. Nevertheless, with the exception of this oversight, the childminder has ensured excellent procedures and precautions to keep children safe. She tests the working order of the smoke detectors regularly, practises emergency evacuation to ensure the effectiveness of her operational plan, and has wall mounted the fire blanket and extinguisher in the kitchen to ensure easy access. Child safety gates keep children out of hazardous areas, such as the stairs and kitchen, and she has implemented effective measures to enable the toddlers to walk down the two patio steps into the garden. Children's safety is assured when they are sleeping because she has installed a baby monitor, and fans to prevent overheating in hot weather and she checks them at frequent intervals.

There are good arrangements in place to ensure that children are collected by named and suitable adults at the end of the day. The childminder demonstrates a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse or neglect and is secure in her knowledge of the reporting and recording procedures if she is concerned. Children are well safeguarded in this respect. However, although existing injuries are recorded, the methods used mean that it is possible for concerns to be missed. This is because they are detailed in conjunction with other childcare issues, in the daily diary and are not clear at a glance. Nevertheless, parents are provided with a copy of her written policy, which ensures they understand her regulatory responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies and toddlers benefit greatly from the childminder's secure understanding of how children learn through play, which is additionally supported by her familiarisation with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This means that when she sets up activities, she understands the various learning opportunities available. For example, toddlers are introduced to colour and pattern as they experiment with paint. They are using early mathematical concepts as they try to balance towers of bricks, and are beginning to associate marks with meaning as they use chinks and pencils. Children are able to choose whether they play inside or outside, they frequent the play house, and become absorbed as they play in the sand pit. Music plays gently in the background which results in toddlers swaying unconsciously in time to the rhythm whilst they play. Story times are a regular feature, and the variety of lovely books is particularly impressive. In addition to the well stocked supply of man-made toys, the

childminder has collected a variety of household items and recyclable packaging which inspires their natural impulse to investigate. For example, a young toddler sits for nearly twenty minutes experimenting with a magnifier tool, and opening and closing the lid off a plastic bottle.

The childminder well understands the limits toddlers have in relation to concentration, and she responds to their requests for activity changes throughout the day. They are happy and content because the day is well planned to provide exciting and stimulating experiences, and time for them to have sufficient rest. The opportunities for play and learning are outstanding, which is ensuring their rapid development. However, the systems for monitoring children's progress and development through record keeping are not yet fully established.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder understands the concept of equal opportunities exceptionally well. Children are treated very much as individuals, which means that her expectations are based on her sound knowledge of their age and stage of development, personalities, and likes and dislikes. Activities and routines are then adapted accordingly. Toys and books depict positive images of disability and differences in race, gender and lifestyle. Babies and toddlers are therefore provided with an early introduction to the wider world. The childminder demonstrates a strong commitment towards the inclusion of children with learning and physical disabilities. She has already attended two training courses since registration, and is particularly interested in issues relating to speech and language.

The childminder ensures high levels of communication with parents which means that children receive consistent care. She has devised a number of written policies and procedures which provides parents with a clear picture of her operational practice. For example, they are clear about the methods she uses in relation to behaviour management. The childminder keeps a daily record of children's care routines and disposition which equips them with the knowledge to respond accordingly in the evenings. Parents are very satisfied with the care provided by the childminder and highlight her levels of interaction with children, and attention to accommodating their sleep needs, as key strengths.

Toddlers behave delightfully well. They are easily distracted from potential squabbles because they are usually related to sharing issues and the childminder skilfully re-directs them to something which is of equal interest. The familiar routines and the childminder's calm and consistent approach is ensuring their developing awareness of her expectations, such as 'not climbing on the furniture'. The children's high level of self esteem is undoubtedly being so well fostered by her consistent use of praise to acknowledge their efforts and achievements. They are beginning to attempt new challenges, such as painting their hands, and their strong sense of belonging is very apparent by the way in which they explore the play resources independently.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder's home is well organised to meet the needs of children. Space is clearly defined for different purposes, such as sleep, play and creative activities and a range of play resources are arranged so that children can help themselves. Her flexibility is of particular benefit to the constantly changing needs of babies and toddlers. The childminder's commitment towards continual improvement is well demonstrated by the amount of training she has undertaken since becoming registered. She reads weekly childcare publications and is a member of the National Child Minding Association which keeps her up to date on developing child care issues.

The childminder completed her Introduction to Childminding Practice and first aid training within the required timescales. She has devised a wide range of well written policies and procedures which underpin her operational practice. The childminder's certificate of registration is prominently displayed, she maintains a register of children's daily attendance that includes the times of arrival and departure, and her public liability insurance is valid. Required records, such as children's personal health information, and written agreements detailing the care arrangements are maintained to a high standard and ensure the efficient and safe care of the children. However, the methods used to record certain incidents or procedures as a monitoring tool, such as those relating to behaviour, accidents or administered medication are not so well organised. They do not provide a clear picture, which may be useful in the future.

The childminder's knowledge of her regulatory responsibilities, in relation to dealing with complaints is clearly evident by the steps she has taken to ensure parents understand the procedure to follow, but she has not yet implemented a recording system. Nevertheless, the childminder is highly committed towards continual improvement, and most aspects of her practice produce exceptionally good outcomes for children. As a result, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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

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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):

- make sure that the storage of the climbing frame in the garden does not pose a risk to children
- improve recording methods to provide a more efficient form of monitoring; pay particular attention to accidents, existing injuries, administered medication, and incidents relating to behaviour. Have in place a system to record any complaints made by parents.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk