

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY348693
Inspection date	16 May 2008
Inspector	Justine Leong
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 2007. She lives with her partner and two children aged six and eight years in Colchester, Essex. All areas of the property are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding 21 children on a part-time basis. The family has two cats and one guinea pig. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted as the childminder encourages them to follow appropriate hygiene routines. For example, children are reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating and have access to warm water and soap to facilitate this. However, children share one hand towel to dry their hands, potentially increasing the risk of cross-infection. The childminder has completed appropriate first aid training and there is a first aid box available.

Although this helps to ensure children would be cared for in the event of an emergency, written parental permissions to seek emergency medical treatment or advice are not in place for all children, potentially compromising their health.

Children are developing a good understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet as the childminder provides a variety of healthy foods at snack and meal times. They sit together to enjoy nutritious meals such as pasta and vegetables and snacks of fresh fruit, breadsticks, toast or raisins. All meals are freshly prepared by the childminder each day. Children are offered drinks of milk or water with meals and have constant access to fresh water at all times to ensure they do not become dehydrated.

Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills as they independently access the safe and secure garden. They play with bats, balls, swings and scooters, enjoying the fresh air and developing skills such as balance and coordination. The childminder encourages free-flow play between the indoor and outdoor areas as often as possible, depending on the weather. Children also visit regularly visit local parks, providing further valuable opportunities for physical activity.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a warm, bright and child-friendly environment, where they have ample space to move around and play under constant supervision. Children are kept safe as external doors are kept secure and all visitors are thoroughly vetted and have their identification checked. The childminder completes regular informal risk assessments to minimise hazards and safety equipment such as cupboard locks and plug socket covers are in place to reduce the risk of accidental injury. The childminder has carefully considered fire safety; there is a fire blanket in the kitchen and the fire drill is regularly practised with children to ensure everyone knows what to do in the event of an emergency.

Children access a broad range of developmentally appropriate toys and resources, many of which are stored to allow independent access safely. All toys are regularly checked for signs of damage and are thoroughly cleaned when required. The childminder uses daily routines effectively to increase children's understanding of safety issues, for instance, practising road safety on the journey to and from school. Children's welfare is well protected as the childminder has a good understanding of her role in child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary, according to the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of stimulating play opportunities based on the childminder's secure knowledge of child development. Activities are often planned based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and children's own interests, offering good opportunities for the development of emotional, social, physical and intellectual capabilities. The childminder interacts very well with children, supporting and extending their play through effective questioning. Children are listened to attentively and are encouraged to use speech to share their ideas. They access a broad range of interesting resources to encourage language development and imagination such as role play equipment, small world toys and dressing-up clothes. Children also thoroughly enjoy sitting together to sing familiar songs and sharing stories from the broad range of books provided.

Children have access to maths games, shape sorters and puzzles, encouraging development of mathematical abilities. They create imaginative and colourful pictures using the craft resources available, including paints, paper, coloured pencils, glue and collage materials. Children enjoy playing board games, interacting socially and learning to play co-operatively. They participate willingly in cooking activities, constantly supervised by the childminder and also explore the garden, planting seeds and learning about how plants grow.

Younger children are very well supported by the childminder and have access to the full range of resources and activities. Cause and effect toys are available and children have ample space to move around and begin to pull themselves up on the furniture. They play with a wide range of suitable resources including construction toys and musical instruments, made from a balance of natural and man-made materials to encourage exploration.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued and fully included at the setting, helping to develop a strong sense of belonging. This is further developed as the childminder works closely with parents, gaining information about each child's needs, likes and dislikes to ensure they are provided with an individual approach. Colourful displays of children's work around the home demonstrate that their efforts are valued and give children a sense of pride. Children are cared for in an environment that positively celebrates children's differences, similarities and the wider world. They play with toys and resources that are representative of diversity such as books, puzzles and small world toys. The childminder plans interesting activities to increase understanding of a wide range of countries and cultures, celebrating festivals such as Diwali, Chinese New Year, Christmas and St. Georges Day. Children enjoy tasting foods from different countries and locating the countries on a world map.

The childminder is consistently calm and polite, acting as a positive role model for behaviour. Positive behaviour strategies are used including explanation, praise and encouragement and children's behaviour is good. Children are increasingly responsible as, for instance, they are encouraged to assist with tidying away their toys when they have finished playing with them. The childminder demonstrates a very positive attitude to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and would willingly work with parents to support individual needs and promote inclusion.

Children's care is enhanced as the childminder has developed effective working relationships with parents and carers. They share information about the children's needs and daily discussions help to ensure that the childminder is kept up to date with any changes in the children's lives. Parents are kept fully informed of any significant events through the use of a daily contact book, detailing children's eating and sleeping pattern and outlining what they have been doing during the day. Parents and carers are aware of the complaints procedure at the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her home to provide a welcoming and child-friendly environment in which children take part in a range of activities to support their care, learning and play. The familiar routines ensure children feel secure and help to develop confidence. The childminder demonstrates a sound understanding of the National Standards and her responsibility to comply with these and the conditions of her registration, however, the registration certificate is not

clearly displayed. Appropriate checks have been carried out to ensure children are cared for by suitable adults and children are never left alone with any person who has not been vetted.

The childminder has attended all the required training to support her registration and has also undertaken several short training courses to increase her knowledge and understanding. All required policies and procedures are in place to support children's care. However, the childminder has not obtained written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice for all children, in order to ensure children are cared for in line with parents' wishes. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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 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):

- provide children with suitable hand drying facilities to minimise the risk of cross-infection
- obtain written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice for all minded children
- ensure the registration certificate is displayed at all times.

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