

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY356245
Inspection date	25 February 2008
Inspector	Elizabeth Anne Coffey

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 was registered in 2007. She lives with her husband and their two children aged 22 months and 10 years old. They live in a three bed roomed third floor flat in Catford, in the London borough of Lewisham. The living room and the main bedroom are used for childminding. There is no garden at the premises. There are no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for three children under eight years. She is currently caring for four children on a part time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder takes care to identify individual children's dietary needs and likes and dislikes. She prepares and serves food and drink which the parents provide. Young children can eat at low table and chairs which encourages their independence and self help skills. Babies sit on the childminder's lap whilst drinking their bottles, enjoying a close bond with the childminder. Bottled water is freely available to the children throughout the day. The childminder has

attended food hygiene training which helps to underpin her knowledge and practice with regards to safe food and drink storage and preparation.

Satisfactory hygiene practices help to promote the health of children and minimise cross infection. There are suitable nappy changing facilities in place and the childminder ensures that all bodily fluids are dealt with in a safe hygienic manner. Children learn the importance of personal hygiene as they are reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet and before mealtimes.

Children have very few opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise during the day. Although there is a communal playground with an interesting range of fixed climbing and play equipment at the rear of the property, little or no use is made of this. Children tend to spend all of their day indoors with the childminder. This does not promote children's health and development

There are appropriate record keeping systems in place for the recording of accidents and medication, should the need arise. However, written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is not held. This compromises the health and welfare of children. The childminder holds a valid first aid certificate.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play mainly in the lounge. This is suitably furnished with a range of seating and soft furnishings which help children feel relaxed and at home. The second bedroom is used if children need a sleep and there is a travel cot available for this purpose. Security measures are sound. There is an intercom system in place for when visitors arrive at the main communal entrance and the childminder ensures that her own front door is locked after any arrival or departure.

Children benefit from close adult supervision, as they select from a range of toys and equipment, which meet safety standards. The childminder takes care to ensure children play with toys that are suitable for their age and stage of development. For example, she ensures that younger children are not at risk of hazards such as toys with detachable parts which they could choke on. Children learn how to behave in a manner that ensures their own and other's safety. For example, the childminder reminds children not to climb on the furniture in case they fall and hurt themselves or others.

The childminder has taken appropriate steps to identify and deal with most hazards in the home. This includes use of radiator covers, safety socket and appropriate storage of hazardous materials. However, the locks on the toilet and bathroom doors are not safe and there is a danger that children could get locked inside. The childminder is keen to address this hazard and intends to have the locks made safe in order to protect children. Suitable fire fighting and detection equipment is in place. However, the childminder has not devised or practised an emergency evacuation plan. This compromises children's safety.

Children are protected from harm by the childminder who has a satisfactory knowledge of child protection and understands her responsibilities in following correct procedures in the event of a concern. Appropriate contact numbers in the event of a child protection concern are readily available.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a good relationship with the childminder. Babies snuggle comfortably into her as she carries them around. She ensure that all children are given equal attention and care and balances the needs of different age groups well. For example, when sitting holding a baby on her lap she uses her free hand to help a toddler turn the pages of a storybook they are sharing.

The childminder sits on the floor and joins in the children's play. She uses brightly coloured posters and interactive CDs to help young children identify and name colours, shapes and the letters of the alphabet. A selection of interactive toys with lights, sound and music encourage the children to push, twist and turn the buttons and dials developing their dexterity and hand eye coordination.

Furniture is arranged to allow babies and toddlers to move about freely and develop their early mobility skills. A small sturdy plastic slide in the lounge encourages them to explore and pull themselves up. This increases children's confidence and encourages them to develop new skills.

Children have very limited opportunities for art and craft activities or messy play. Such activities are not offered in the home and the childminder fails to make use of local community resources such as Surestart centres or toddler groups. This means that children do not experience activities such as sand or water play or have a chance to explore different malleable materials. This restricts children's learning and development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are all treated with equal concern and their individual needs are identified and met. The childminder occasionally prays with the children or encourages them to follow their own act of worship according to the wishes of parents. This encourages children to be aware of and respect different religions and lifestyles.

There are no children currently attending with learning disabilities and/or difficulties. The childminder has no previous experience in this area. However, she understands the importance of working closely with parents and other agencies to help and support children to ensure their needs are met.

Children's behaviour is good and they are learning to be kind and considerate to their peers. They are routinely praised and encouraged in what they do, which increases their confidence and self-esteem. They are learning to negotiate and to give and take, for example, children who both want the same toy are encouraged to each take a turn. This helps develop children's awareness of fairness and cooperation.

The childminder ensures that she receives appropriate information from parents about their child's individual needs. She uses written contracts with parents and discusses with them when they drop their child off when the next feed or sleep is due. Parents are given verbal feedback, when they collect their child, about how their day has been. The registration certificate is displayed for parents to see. However, a complaints log is not made available to parents, as required by regulation. This means that parents do not have access to information about previous complaints and any action that was taken.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her daily routine around the children's needs. The day is planned to children's rest, play and mealtimes. They benefit from an environment where they receive appropriate adult support to help them feel secure and confident.

The childminder is suitably qualified and experienced. She has attended a basic introductory childminding course and holds valid first aid and food hygiene certificates. Most required documentation and systems for recording are in place. Where weaknesses in the systems are identified she is keen to address these to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. Information is treated in a sensitive and confidential manner.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been one complaint since registration.

In November 2007 Ofsted were advised of several concerns relating to National Standard 1; Suitable Person, National Standard 3; Care, Learning and Play, National Standard 4; Physical Environment, National Standard 6; Safety and National Standard 7; Health.

Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit to the setting. As a result of this visit further concerns were raised in relation to National Standard 1: Suitable Person; National Standard 5: Equipment and National Standard 6: Safety. Given these concerns Ofsted decided to suspend the registration of the childminder.

Ofsted carried out a monitoring visit and found that the childminder was meeting the requirements of the National Standards. Ofsted lifted the suspension as a result.

The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- request written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment
- ensure children have regular opportunities for outdoor play and exercise
- improve children's safety when using the toilet and bathroom (child safe locks)
- devise and practise an emergency evacuation plan
- maintain a complaints log that is available to parents on request
- ensure children have opportunities to explore a range of natural and malleable materials

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