

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY357254
Inspection date	29 April 2008
Inspector	Lynn Amelia Hartigan

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 has been registered since 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged two and six years. They live in a residential area of Tiptree, Essex. The whole house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time and is currently caring for nine children who attend both full and part-time. The childminder works with a co-minder and when working together can care for eight children aged under eight years. Both childminders have joint responsibility for the childminding practice. The childminder attends a parent and carer toddler group and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well as the childminder follows her sound and consistent procedures. Children are protected from illness and accidents as the childminder has good

informative health and sickness policies in place, these are reviewed regularly and followed to ensure the children's health is not compromised. Policies are provided for all parents.

Well documented accident and medication books ensures the children's health is not compromised and parents are fully informed of any incidents that occur. Children's needs are well managed should they have an accident as a well stocked first aid kit is within easy reach in the kitchen and the childminder has completed an appropriate first aid training course. Written parental consents are also in place to ensure the children's health is never compromised and sound procedures are followed in the event of an emergency. A good nappy changing procedure further ensures children are protected from cross-infection. Children learn about keeping themselves healthy, for example, they are encouraged to wash their hands before snack, after using the toilet and playing in the garden. Baby wipes are used for younger children and babies.

Children learn about their bodies and how to stay healthy as they are encouraged to exercise to music, dance and have fun. Children are able to access good resources to develop their physical skills, within the garden, such as ride-on toys, climbing frames, trampoline, balls, skipping ropes. The childminder reinforces the importance of staying healthy through the topic work that is provided for the children, such as, 'ourselves'. Children are able to discuss the weather and the effects on their bodies as they use a daily calendar and weather chart. Children's routines are well catered for. They are able to sleep in quiet well ventilated bedrooms upstairs. A monitor is used and in addition the childminder regularly checks on them. Clean sheets and blankets are supplied for each child. When children wake from their sleep they are happy and excited to see the childminder and enjoy cuddles on the sofa and are offered drinks.

Care is taken to ensure the children enjoy healthy nutritious snacks and meals. Healthy options such as milk, fresh juice and water are offered and available throughout the day. The children are provided with their own named beaker with their photograph on along with a placemat for mealtimes. Meals and snacks are prepared in a clean, organised kitchen. The childminder has a good understanding of food preparation and has completed a food hygiene training course. The childminder ensures that food is stored appropriately when children bring their own packed lunches. Discussions with parents prior to a child starting ensure their children's dietary requirements are met. A sample menu is available for parents if hot meals are requested.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm welcoming environment that is safe and well maintained. The childminder ensures that children and their parents are made welcome. For example, the children have their own coat pegs with their name and photograph and storage for personal belongings. Certificates and some notices are displayed for parents in the hallway. The lounge where the children play is very child friendly with toys and activities set up ready for their arrival. This enables the children to feel welcome and have a sense of belonging.

Children's individual needs are met as appropriate and well-maintained resources and equipment are provided. The wide selection of toys both indoors and outdoors and their accessibility, ensures the children can independently make choices and self-select. All toys are stored in low-level boxes and shelving or within low cupboards in an upstairs bedroom, they are labelled and photographs on the boxes enables the children to select with ease. Low wooden tables are provided so that children can set up their train tracks in comfort.

Children are able to play in a clean, safe environment as the childminder gives priority to protecting children. She ensures the home is risk assessed regularly. Although children are supervised at all times in the garden, precaution with regard to the garden pond is not adequate and children's safety could be compromised. The childminder has given fire safety consideration and practises regular fire drills with the children. Smoke alarms and a fire blanket are also easily accessible.

Children's understanding of road safety and potential dangers when out is promoted as the childminder discusses these issues with them when out walking. Appropriate equipment such as buggies and reins are used. The children have their own fun back pack if out walking and this has a safety strap that can be used if required. Priority is given to ensure the safety of children when using the car, the childminder's policy that parents provide their own car seats of their choice ensures the parents are comfortable with safety issues regarding the car. Parental consents regarding transporting children and most car documents are available. Car seats are available and in place in the event of an emergency.

Children's well-being is protected as the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues. A comprehensive written policy in place for parents, is consistently reviewed, both childminders support each other well but understand their own responsibilities as individuals with regard to child protection. Confidentiality, anti-bullying, uncollected child and lost child policies are also available to ensure children are safeguarded at all times. The childminder has secured a place on a safeguarding children training course to ensure she is up-to-date with current policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have opportunities for many play experiences as there is a good selection of quality toys and resources available to them within the lounge and garden. The childminder has made good use of the space within her home and the house is welcoming and child friendly, as a result, the children feel comfortable and secure. They are able to select toys with ease and confidence as they are organised and easily accessible within the lounge. The childminder has a good understanding of children's development and along with her co-minder ensures activities and toys are appropriate for their developmental age. As a result, children are learning and having fun. The childminder has started to develop panning, activity sheets, differentiation and evaluates activities provided. The childminder is supported by her co-minder but takes overall responsibility in producing the written activity sheets. Both minders observe and document the children's development.

Children have plenty of opportunities for creative play as two organised messy activities are provided daily. For example, children enjoy using clay, dough and painting. Younger children have great fun playing with treasure baskets and shredded paper and boxes. Children benefit from an organised childminder who works very well with a co-childminder. Flexible timetables are in place, form some structure to the day. However, children and their individual routines clearly dictate what they want to do and are supported well.

Children experience many play opportunities outside of the home, for example, the childminder ensures visits to the library, park, zoo and farm are regularly planned.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder offers good quality care and is effective in helping children make a positive contribution. Children are well cared for as the childminder is committed to provide a quality service and dedicates time to get to know them and their family backgrounds. She encourages parents to settle their children and share information with her so that she can best meet and support the children's individual needs. A written equal opportunities policy is in place, this ensures the inclusion of all the children and that individual needs are met and supported.

Children's knowledge and understanding of a wider world is encouraged through conversation, planned themes and resources available that reflect diversity. The childminder hires multi-cultural resources from the toy library to compliment her own. Activities are planned around celebrations and traditional days to help children learn about diversity. For example, children celebrate Christmas, Halloween and Chinese New year.

As children's needs are discussed and detailed the childminder can effectively support and protect them. Accessibility of good resources and the organisation of the home ensures inclusion. An informative policy with regard to learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in place and both the childminder and her co-minder are experienced in caring for children who require additional support. The childminder has completed a 'Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators' training course.

Children feel valued and respected as the childminder is a calm role model for what is appropriate and acceptable behaviour. Discussion and time is given to reflect on unacceptable behaviour as detailed within the behaviour management policy. Children attending receive good attention and care and are praised for their efforts. Older children have helped write their own rules and these are displayed within the home to remind them.

Emphasis is put on welcoming the parents into the home and this ensures a good working relationship and exchange of information to help the childminder develop and support the children in her care. This is achieved as the childminder has created an information file that supports her practice. Copies of the policies are offered to parents who sign to confirm they have received them. The childminder works closely with her co-minder developing the policies but has overall responsibility to ensure they are regularly reviewed. However, the complaints policy and procedure is inaccurate. Good relationships between the childminder and the parents ensures they are fully informed about their children's activities. Daily diaries and scrapbooks of the children's work and photographs provide parents with a good record of their child's time with the childminder. Written references from parents detail their complete satisfaction with all aspects of the care provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for well as the childminder is an experienced practitioner. The childminder is committed to training. Since registration the childminder has completed her first aid training and the 'Introduction to Childminding Practice' course. The childminder is also working towards accreditation along with her co-minder.

Children are protected well as the childminder has a good understanding of the vetting procedures. A well-documented register is in place and the childminder has a good procedure

to ensure children are returned to a known adult. The childminder's ability along with her co-minder to evaluate the care they provide and commitment to continuing improvement is good and as a result, children's individual needs are well supported.

Children's care is enhanced as the childminder manages her day well and is organised. The childminder is thorough when ensuring children's individual needs are well documented and although she is very supported by her co-minder, has overall responsibility of most of the paperwork. All appropriate documents such as, personal detail sheets and contracts are very well maintained. These are stored appropriately to ensure security and confidentiality at all times.

Overall, the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

First inspection since registration.

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 complaint 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 the pond is made safe or inaccessible to children
- ensure the complaints procedure for parents is updated.

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