

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY358045
Inspection date	20 August 2008
Inspector	Ann Marie Cozzi
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 is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. When working alongside a co-minder or assistant she is registered to care for a maximum of nine children at any one time. She is currently caring for eight children under eight years, who attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder works alongside a co-minder and an assistant; they share responsibility for care of all the children.

The childminder lives with her husband and three grown-up children in Brentwood, Essex. The whole of the property is used for childminding except the basement room. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene. From a young age the childminder encourages them to wash their hands after going to the toilet. Health related documentation

is in place and updated as required. Children are effectively protected from the risk of cross-infection. This is because the childminder implements a clear written sick child policy which excludes children until they are well again. Appropriate care and attention is given to children in the event of an accident, as the childminder has completed relevant first aid training. Any accidents occurring on the premises are recorded and parents are kept informed.

The childminder takes positive steps to promote children's health. She provides a wide range of healthy options for snack or meals and works closely with the parents to ensure all meals meet children's individual needs with regard to allergies and personal preferences. The childminder also ensures that the meals are well balanced to provide sufficient carbohydrates, vitamins and proteins. Children develop their own knowledge and understanding about where foods come from, which ones are good for you and those which are not so good. The childminder organises activities which include helping to care for her growing fruit and vegetables, such as strawberries, tomatoes and beans until they are ready to harvest. They then learn about preparing these for snack or as part of a meal. The childminder provides home cooked healthy options, for example, cottage pie. Children have access to drinking water at all times and the food and fluid intake of all children is encouraged.

Children enjoy good opportunities to experience physical activity and get plenty of fresh air. The childminder provides a wide range of activities which enables children to build on their existing confidence to use play equipment that provides challenge and develops co-ordination and spatial awareness. All children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and well cared for in premises that are suitable for their purpose. The childminder ensures that the environment gives children access to a wide range of activities and resources which promote their independent development and imagination. The childminder provides furniture, equipment and toys which are appropriate for their purpose. They are suitable in design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

There are informal risk assessments in place and daily safety checks are undertaken. This helps the childminder to provide a safe environment for the children. Equipment, such as safety gates, door slams, socket covers, smoke alarms and a fire blanket, enable the children to play and learn in safety. However, there is a weakness in systems to ensure that an area of the rear garden and sleeping arrangements for babies are fully considered. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as they practise road safety whilst out and about and are encouraged to take responsibility for tidying toys away after use which, reduces the risk of tripping hazards. Toys which have small pieces are stored out of reach of young children to prevent choking hazards. There is a clear and appropriate child collection policy in place and the childminder never lets children leave with unidentified adults. Visitor identification is checked prior to entry and the children are always within sight or hearing of the childminder.

The childminder places high importance on the protection of children in her care. There is a clear safeguarding children policy in place which is shared with parents. The childminder has a clear understanding of what to do if she is worried about a child in her care. This ensures that children are protected from harm and their welfare remains paramount.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are actively encouraged to explore and investigate in a wide range of spontaneous and planned activities. There is a good range of child-height storage which promotes children's ability to select resources which interest them. As a result, children are making some independent choices about their own play and learning. The co-childminder takes the lead in organising activities which are based on her knowledge of what children know and can do. This is then implemented in practice by the childminder and contributes towards building on children's previous learning and in turn promotes their development. In addition to the exciting range of indoor activities, the childminder plans regular outings. This enables children to learn about their local environment and socialise with others. Children become confident and independent and develop their self-esteem. Younger children are encouraged to become vocal through, for example, imitation and they begin to use appropriate language and gestures to communicate their needs.

Children have lots of fun as they access various musical instruments; songs and rhymes. They enjoy exploring sounds as they listen to the different noises made by the triangle, tambourine and shaker created from dried pasta shapes and a plastic bottle. Children are able to concentrate for prolonged periods of time and actively take part in activities such as story time, with exciting discussions such as 'what is a blister?' and 'why do giraffes have long necks?'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of equal opportunities. Children benefit from access to activities and resources which help them value diversity. For example, walks around the local community, have discussions about similarities and differences amongst people, have access to reference books and celebrate festivals from around the world. The childminder promotes daily verbally information sharing with parents and carers which assists in meeting children's individual needs.

The childminder does not currently have any children on roll with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are strategies in place to support children and their families which her co-childminder has devised.

Discussions with parents prior to placement provide the childminder with relevant background information about each child this is used to good effect to meet their individual needs. Children form close and caring relationships with each other, the childminder and her co-childminder. The childminder is consistent in her approach with regards to behaviour management and she supports children as they begin to learn about boundaries and respecting each other. As a result children learn to care, share, take turns and help each other, for example, when using musical instruments. Consistent positive praise and encouragement helps to increase and develop children's self-esteem.

Handover times provide opportunities for verbal and sometimes written observations made by the childminder. This provides opportunities for parents and carers to learn about their children's progress and experiences with the childminder. The childminder ensures that all policies and procedures which have been devised by her co-minder are shared with parents prior to placement. There are written agreements with parents which set out the expectations of both parties as to the care of the child, some of the activities provided and the business arrangements

which are in place. A clear written complaints procedure has been developed by the co-childminder; this ensures any issues that affect the care of children are resolved quickly and efficiently.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder understands the importance of Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks to ensure the continued protection of children. She has received all appropriate training and continues to attend further training to support and develop positive practice. Registers are well maintained and include the children's hours of attendance. This ensures that all children can be safely accounted for at all times. The organisation of the setting provides children with access to toys and resources and space to move around freely, making their own selections and choices.

The childminder ensures that all parents and carers have access to the wide range of written policies and procedures which have been devised by her co-childminder. These are implemented by her in practice to promote the smooth management of the setting. All consents and permissions are in place including permission enabling the childminder to seek emergency medical advice or treatment, so children can have swift access to appropriate care should they become ill or have an accident. A system devised by the co-childminder is in place for addressing complaints. All documents are securely stored and confidentiality is maintained. Overall the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable first inspection.

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

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):

- promote safety further within the setting and ensure proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents; this refers to sleeping arrangements for babies and children's access to the pond in the rear garden.

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