

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY359433
Inspection date	13 August 2008
Inspector	Jill Nugent
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 registered in 2007. She lives with her husband in a house in London Colney. She uses the whole of the house for childminding and there is a secure garden for outdoor play. Children also have access to further play space in a large cabin situated in the garden.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight at any one time. Currently she is minding two children under five. She travels to local schools to take and collect children.

She 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 because the childminder has good procedures in place. She requests all the necessary medical consents and maintains her medical records appropriately. Children are protected from infection as parents are given clear information about excluding

their children if they have an infectious illness. In the event of an accident children are well taken care of as the childminder has trained in first aid and has good access to equipment. She is attentive to good hygiene practice and ensures that children are cared for in a clean environment. Children learn about the importance of handwashing to help prevent infection. These procedures contribute to children keeping healthy.

Children have an increasing awareness of a healthy lifestyle. They are offered a healthy and nutritious diet and especially enjoy fresh fruit at snack times. The menu is varied and balanced so that children are well nourished. The childminder liaises closely with parents regarding any special diets. Children have good access to drinks so that they avoid the risk of dehydration. They enjoy good opportunities for physical activity in the garden using a variety of outdoor resources. They also visit local parks and activity centres where they can explore the play equipment and develop their physical skills. Consequently, children keep fit and healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. They move freely around the downstairs areas, enjoying floor play in the living room and creative activities in the conservatory. There is good access to the back garden and cabin. Children can rest or sleep comfortably in an upstairs bedroom. The childminder has carried out a risk assessment of the premises and makes daily checks to ensure that all potential risks are minimised. She has various safety measures in place, including safety gates and locks on low-level cupboards. Children are closely supervised and so keep safe and secure in her home.

Children use a wide range of safe and suitable resources. They can choose from a selection of colourful and attractive toys, puzzles and games, which are stored so as to be easily accessible. The childminder ensures that toys with small parts are kept out of reach of younger children. She uses a monitor to check on any sleeping children. There are good fire precautions in place and children practise an evacuation plan so that they know what to do in the event of an emergency. On outings young children wear reins if necessary and learn how to cross roads safely.

The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues. She knows what to do if she has any concerns about child abuse. She talks with children about 'stranger danger' so as to increase their awareness of personal safety. She ensures that children are only collected by a known adult. She has the necessary literature to enable her to seek advice. Consequently, children are safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and happy in the childminder's care. They show much interest in the resources and activities on offer and benefit from the childminder's awareness of their individual interests. She enthuses children through her involvement in play activities and lively conversation. For example, children interested in toy trains are encouraged to participate in other activities by using the names of trains in different contexts. In this way children develop a range of skills in a variety of play situations. They enjoy activities such as painting and sticking, puzzles and construction. The childminder interacts effectively to extend their skills by asking questions that encourage them to think, extend their vocabulary and use numbers.

The childminder is very aware of young children's needs and offers much choice in order to maintain interest and take into account differing concentration spans. Children particularly enjoy her involvement in their play as they talk and explore together. She allows children to take the lead, respecting their views and supporting them in developing their own ideas. This helps to build self-confidence and also children's self-esteem as they feel valued through her interest and praise. Children's learning is promoted well through a variety of experiences. They enjoy many outings, for example, to a farm and safari park. The childminder is interested in exploring ways to record their development over time so that she can continue to plan relevant learning experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel included at all times and develop a sense of belonging. They are relaxed and confident with the childminder. They enjoy individual attention at times and develop good relationships with other children. They have an increasing awareness of a wider society through using resources which reflect diversity. The childminder meets their practical needs well and helps them develop personal independence in fun ways. Children learn to make decisions for themselves through being offered much choice and an element of control. For example, children are asked to help set up play activities and to show what they can do. The childminder has good procedures in place for supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children are aware of their boundaries within the setting. The childminder has put together a set of house rules which help children to respect each other's needs, thereby learning to share and take turns. If necessary they have time out in order to reflect. They are given the opportunity to talk about their feelings and so learn to behave responsibly. The childminder works closely with parents and carers. Her portfolio and notice board contain clear information about her policies and procedures. Parents complete written contracts and provide information about their children's individual needs. They receive guidance on helping children to settle in to the childminder's care. She communicates with them on a daily basis so as to keep them up to date with events and achievements. Parents particularly value her flexibility with regard to the type of care on offer.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder's policies and procedures work extremely well in practice to promote the outcomes for children. She has collated a set of written policies which cover every eventuality. All her paperwork is very well organised and easily accessible. She has collected much supporting information which helps her provide high quality childcare. Her attendance and visitors records are well maintained. She has an emergency action plan so that continuity of care is maintained in the event of an emergency. She requests all the necessary consents from parents. Information about children is kept in a secure place and updated regularly. Her documentation provides an excellent framework for her practice.

The childminder has completed the required childcare training since registration and is extending her knowledge through further training in Child Psychology. She has a high regard for the well-being of all children. She has purchased a wide variety of resources and set up extra play space in her cabin so that children benefit from an exceptionally stimulating environment. She works to daily routines, promoting children's health and safety at all times and ensuring they

are happy. She is proactive in researching and learning in order to continually improve her practice.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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):

- explore ways of recording children's development in a variety of learning situations.

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