



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	130253
Inspection date	19 March 2007
Inspector	Julie Whitelaw
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 1989. She lives with her three teenage sons in, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. Her house is situated close to shops, a park and schools. The childminder uses the ground floor of her home to care for minded children. The first floor is not included in the registration. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding four children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. She supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children participate in a wide range of activities that promote their health. They regularly walk to school and visit the park. During fine weather, they play in the garden with a variety of equipment. Children's physical skills develop when they go swimming. Indoors, children play with bean bags, balls and exercise to music. These experiences encourage children to develop a positive attitude to physical activity and ensure they make progress in their physical development

Children benefit from a clean and well organised home. Their understanding of good hygiene and independence in their personal care is developed through the daily routine. They wash their hands after using the toilet and request to wash them after completing a sticking activity, understanding why they need to do this. Children's health is promoted as the childminder has a policy in place that excludes children who are ill. The childminder has a current first aid certificate. This ensures her knowledge of first aid is up to date and enables her to appropriately deal with minor accidents or emergencies. Children's health is promoted as the childminder understands the procedure she should follow when administering medication.

Children enjoy nutritious snacks such as fruit, pumpkin and sunflower seeds. They learn about healthy eating as they are involved in cooking activities such as making fruit salad and mini pizzas. As they plant and nurture vegetables, they learn what foods are good for them. Children can independently access their drinks, which are available in appropriate beakers. This ensures they stay hydrated. Children's needs are met as information regarding dietary requirements is recorded on the contracts.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a safe and secure environment. The childminder has identified and minimised risks within her home. Stair gates, cupboard locks and socket covers are in place and allow children to move around freely and safely. In the garden, the side gate and shed are bolted. The patio and grass are on one level, allowing children to play safely and independently. The childminder has a written risk assessment in place, completes a daily visual check and monthly written checks. The precautions the childminder takes promotes the safety of the children who attend.

Toys and resources are regularly checked to ensure they are clean and safe. Children develop an understanding of personal safety when out walking, as they learn how to cross the road and the danger of speaking to strangers. The childminder teaches children to look out for potential hazards, such as glass in the playground, so they develop an understanding of how to stay safe. Children are protected as the childminder has a clear understanding of the different types of child abuse, the signs and symptoms and the procedure she should follow if she has any concerns about a child's well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of activities and learning experiences. The childminder knows the children well. They benefit from the individual attention and support she gives them. A balloon chart is displayed on the wall. This is completed with the children and details the skills they want to develop, such as learning to tell the time or counting up to ten. A star is added to the chart when children achieve their goal. This promotes their self-esteem and encourages them to make progress.

Children enjoy sticking and colouring and young children are learning to write their name and cut with scissors, supported by the childminder. They develop an understanding of shape and space as they complete complex jigsaws. They persevere at tasks and learn to share and take turns when playing games. Children can access a small range of toys that are stored in a cupboard in the living room but need to ask the childminder for help to reach toys stored high in the utility area. This potentially hinders their independence.

The childminder is led by the children's interest. She listens attentively to what they have to say and encourages language development by asking open ended questions. Children confidently build with bricks. Treading activities help to develop their fine manipulative skills. Outings to local places of interest promote children's learning. Craft activities and imaginative play ensure children have the opportunity to be creative. Children's social skills are developed when they go to toddler groups and mix with others. Therefore, children have fun, are busy and make good progress in all areas of their development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and treated as individuals. The effective settling in procedure ensures children feel secure at the childminder's home. Children develop a sense of belonging and their self-esteem is promoted when they see their work displayed in the kitchen. They learn about the wider world as they talk about places that family members have visited and then look for the countries on a map. Their understanding of different cultures is developed as they buy and taste food from around the world. A range of resources including dolls, books and small world toys promotes children's understanding of differences in society.

Children behave well and respond positively to the clear, consistent boundaries the childminder sets. The childminder uses praise and encouragement to reinforce positive behaviour. Children help to tidy away the toys and understand that there are rules for acceptable behaviour. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well because the childminder understands that they may need additional support or resources to reach their potential.

Children benefit from the open relationship that has developed between the childminder and parents. Information is verbally exchanged on a daily basis or recorded in a daily diary. Parents receive an information letter and a copy of the childminder's policies and procedures. They also receive a photo album that shows what activities children have been involved in. Her registration

certificate is clearly displayed along side a poster advising parents how to deal with complaints. This ensures parents are kept fully informed of the care she provides, the children's routine and the progress they make.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the daily routine ensures that children have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities that promote their development. Children benefit from the individual attention the childminder gives them. The childminder knows them well, has a clear understanding of what stage they are at and therefore is able to move them onto the next stage in their learning.

The childminder regularly attends training and therefore develops her knowledge and skills to benefit the children in her care. All the required documentation is in place and well organised to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. The childminder ensures that children's attendance is accurately recorded and that she never exceeds the number of children she is registered to care for. Children are protected as the childminder would never leave the children alone with persons unvetted. This promotes the safety of the children in her care. Overall children needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to ensure that the attendance register includes times of arrival and departure of children and any reasons for absence. The attendance register now accurately and clearly records children's attendance. This promotes the children's well being.

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 the 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):

- develop the organisation of resources to promote children's independence and give them free choice in their play.

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