



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	149348
Inspection date	29 November 2005
Inspector	Susan Ennis
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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Childminder was registered in 2001. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and five in the Great Ashby area of Stevenage. The whole of the childminder's 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 five children at any one time and is currently minding five children under five on a part time basis and one child over five before and after school. The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler

groups. The family has no pets.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and comfortable home environment. Their health is promoted due to the childminder's effective procedures and practices such as using latex gloves to change nappies and individual paper towels for drying hands and faces. Their immediate safety and welfare is promoted through procedures such as obtaining permission to seek emergency medical treatment and attaching a photograph of the child to their personal detail card in case the childminder herself is incapacitated and unable to identify the child. However, a record of medication administered is not currently maintained by the childminder and is required to ensure that evidence can be provided in the case of a query. Children are beginning to understand the importance of good health through discussions about cleaning their teeth and themed topics such as 'All about Me'.

Children enjoy a wide range of nutritious, home cooked meals and snacks such as pesto chicken with croquet potatoes and broccoli. A six week menu plan is provided taking into account seasonal variations as well as the children's likes and dislikes. One home made pasta sauce has become so popular that parents have asked for the recipe. All children's dietary requirements are fully discussed with the parents and an accurate record maintained.

Children participate in a wide range of physical activities, contributing to their good health. There are daily opportunities to enjoy such as the walk to school, visits to the local park and play areas and playing in the well equipped garden on the climbing frame or see saw. All of which promote the children's coordination and spatial awareness. They are also developing good control of their finer physical movements by using implements such as scissors, glue spreaders and pencils.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is given a high priority. Risks of accidental injury are minimised because the childminder is extremely vigilant and has thought through all details of her working day to reduce the hazards. For example, a daily hazard check is completed and recorded each morning and the emergency evacuation procedure is practised every three months. An emergency plan details the name of another registered childminder who would care for the children should an incident occur. On outings all children wear a badge detailing the childminder's contact details should they become lost. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through discussions about, for example, why it is dangerous to kick the bark in the garden and why it is not safe to climb on the furniture.

Children are able to independently select activities from a wide range of high quality

equipment. The childminder sensitively supervises the children's choices ensuring that they are safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development. For example, when a cutting activity was chosen, the older child was given a normal pair of scissors whilst the younger child was asked to use some which had rounded ends and that were not so sharp. Children's welfare is promoted because the childminder has all the relevant policies and documentation in place including a written Child Protection Procedure. She has increased her knowledge by attending child protection training which further increases the children's security whilst ensuring that they are always the main priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy the stimulating and varied range of activities provided to encourage them to develop and progress. The childminder uses her excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant guidance such as 'Birth to Three Matters' and the Foundation Stage curriculum to plan high quality care and to promote the children's learning in all areas. Themes are often used to give the activities a focus. For example, children enjoyed cutting and sticking wheels onto a paper fire engine and then looking for it on a poster containing different types of transport. This was then extended onto the children's own forms of transport and stimulated one child into thinking where his new baby brother or sister would fit into his parent's car. Children are very interested in their play and join in with enthusiasm. When music was played, a child stated 'I love music' and when playing with magnetic letters picked out two that were the same as writing on the childminder's tee shirt. 'I've got one like your tee shirt' he shouted. To which the childminder replied 'Yes you have, well done' therefore building his self esteem and confidence.

Children enjoy an extensive range of activities. These include planting Nasturtium seeds and talking about the growth from seed to plant and making refrigerator cookies. The childminder plans the resources to meet the individual needs of the children, ensuring that they spend their time purposefully. Whilst sharing a story sack a child was given a smaller version of the book to follow whilst the childminder read from the large version. A younger child was given character figures to hold. Therefore all the children were involved in the story but at their own level. The children relate very well to the childminder and each other. They are secure in their environment and don't hesitate to ask for support when it is needed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are welcomed and play an active part in the setting because the childminder values their individuality. Their behaviour is commendable and is reinforced by the childminder's sound understanding of the importance of consistent and appropriate boundaries as well as the positive praise and rewards given for completing tasks. For example, when a child used the potty correctly he was able to choose a sticker for his chart. As well as praising him, this built his confidence and

self-esteem. Children's sense of belonging is encouraged because the childminder values them and their efforts. This is demonstrated by the notice board that displays their work. Underneath is the phrase ' Things We Made and Are Proud Of'.

Children's awareness and understanding of the wider world is encouraged helping them to think of others as well as themselves. They take part in ' Operation Christmas Child' sending a shoe box of presents to a child in need as well as celebrating festivals such as Diwali and St. Andrew's Day. Positive images are promoted throughout the range of resources and equipment with, for example, music from different countries, dressing up clothes and play figures reflecting different cultures.

Children benefit from the childminder's excellent partnership with parents. She actively seeks parent's views about their child's needs and interests before the placement starts and then later about the service she provides in parent questionnaires. New parents are given a policy pack containing all the relevant information that they are likely to need enabling them to decide if their child's needs will be met. Parents are kept exceptionally well informed about their child's day and development. The childminder uses daily sheets to record drink and food, outings, activities and the child's general behaviour. She also produces a monthly newsletter with photographs of the children enjoying the activities as well as information on opening times, vacancies and up and coming events such as her Ofsted inspection.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Overall, the needs of all the children are very well met. The children's care is greatly enhanced by the childminder's exceptional organisation and meticulous attention to detail, policies and procedures. Children are very confident and can therefore initiate their own play and learning, assured that the childminder is always available to support them when needed. The children's emotional and physical development are very well promoted through the childminder's thought-out planning and organisation of her day.

The childminder uses her increased knowledge of childcare to assist her in planning a safe, stimulating environment for all the children. This also ensures that children are offered a full range of stimulating activities and opportunities and that all are able to participate.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to extend the range of resources in the main play area. The range has been increased providing more choice for the children, extending their learning and play opportunities.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004. 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):

- maintain evidence of administered medication.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk