



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	149443
Inspection date	17 August 2005
Inspector	Susan Marriott

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 1993. She lives with her husband and grown-up son in their bungalow in Baldock. There are shops, schools and pre-schools within walking distance. She will now be registered to provide care for 6 children under 8 years, and is currently caring for 8 children of varying ages on a part-time flexible basis. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outside play. The family has a cat and some fish. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. The childminder regularly attends the local children's music group and the childminder network playgroup. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Their clear understanding of why they must wash their hands after using the toilet and before handling food, reduces the risk of cross contamination. Young children are able to sleep according to their needs in a suitable quiet area of the house. Children stay healthy because the childminder controls the spread of infection by excluding those who become sick or unwell. Accidents and medication are suitably recorded. Children receive appropriate emergency treatment because the childminder holds a suitable first aid qualification.

Children enjoy a suitable range of activities that contribute to their good health. Each day there are outdoor activities in all weathers. Children learn about healthy living; for example, they know that they get good exercise when they walk to school rather than drive in the car. Children enjoy playing in the local playground on the way home from school. Daily play in the garden supports the development and improvement of children's physical skills.

Children are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle because the childminder provides healthy snacks and promotes age appropriate discussion about good foods. Children begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet as they enjoy daily fruit snacks. Children have access to regular drinks throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted within a welcoming and secure home environment. The childminder uses her many years of childminding experience to provide a stimulating environment for children. She thoughtfully prepares her home before the children arrive, for example, by ensuring that attractively presented toy boxes are available. Children independently select activities from a broad range of easily accessible and challenging resources, which are in a good state of repair and are age appropriate. The childminder carefully monitors and supervises children's choice of toys, to ensure they are appropriate for their age and stage of development. For example, the computer software selected by an older child is carefully checked before use.

Children are able to move around and play safely, freely and independently because the childminder implements thorough safety measures. For example, a stair gate ensures that a mobile baby cannot gain access to the kitchen area. Children learn to keep themselves safe because the childminder has clear rules and sets age appropriate, safe limits in order to maintain their safety inside and outside the home. For example, children actively learn the Green Cross Code for road safety and discuss aspects of Stranger Danger with the childminder. The childminder safeguards children's welfare and has all the required policies and documents in

place. Children are safe with the childminder, who has attended recent training and has a secure understanding of child protection in line with the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children spend their time purposefully because the childminder shows interest in what they do and talks with them. The childminder offers a daily messy activity such as sponge painting and respects the child's decision to accept or decline the suggestion. Children are able to choose from a suitable variety of toys and equipment, which are all stored within easy reach. Children therefore develop confidence and self-esteem as they make independent choices in their play. The childminder gently develops children's learning from their chosen play. For example, a young child chooses to build a tower with stacking beakers and enjoys knocking them down. The childminder makes the most of the everyday experience to help the child talk about size and colour of the beakers. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from the childminder for their achievements. For example, a newly mobile baby shows great delight when praised for walking along the furniture for support. Children relate well to each other and show patience and tolerance towards others. For example, an older child plays happily alongside a younger child whilst they explore the contents of a toy box. The childminder ensures that the daily walk to collect children from school is used to learn about numbers and letters in the local environment. Children have a balanced programme of activities throughout the day and the childminder devotes her time and attention to them. She has begun to make a flexible outline plan of potential activities, but does not retain samples, photographs or other evidence to demonstrate the range of these. The flexible nature of this childminding service means that each child is able to have individual attention at some time during the week.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children make themselves at home, confidently expressing their decisions about what they want to do. They have time to relax as well as be active and this ensures that their individual needs are being met. Children are valued and respected as individuals. The childminder meets their needs through the daily routine as discussed with their parents. The childminder gives the utmost respect to the wishes of the parents. Children are developing a positive attitude to others and gain an understanding of their community as they walk to and from school. They have access to a selection of play resources which show positive images of diversity in the wider world.

Children behave well. They are beginning to understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age appropriate methods which the childminder uses to manage behaviour, including explanation and time out. The childminder works with the parents to provide continuity with behaviour management

and the children have a clear understanding of what the childminder expects of them. The children are happy to share the activities and the attention of the childminder, acknowledging that others also need to take their turn and have some one-to-one attention. Parent friendly documentation and daily discussion about the service provided keeps parents well informed about their child's day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is confident in her childcare practice. She uses her childcare knowledge and her maternal experience in combination with her effective organisation to promote positive outcomes for children. Children feel very much at home and are comfortable in the well-organised and homely environment. The childminder is able to enrich their care, learning and play through her constant interaction and enthusiasm. All of the children receive individual attention at some time during the week and benefit from social interaction with children of varying ages and backgrounds. Children's welfare is effectively supported through the childminder's clear use of procedures and routines which cover the national standards. All written parental permissions are in place and the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to make sure that the kitchen drawer containing knives is inaccessible to children. Knives have been removed from accessible drawers which ensures that children are kept safe. The childminder was also asked to obtain written permissions from parents before administering medication to children and for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. All appropriate permissions are now in place which ensures that children are able to receive emergency treatment should the need arise and that any medication is administered in accordance with requirements.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?
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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 further your information sharing with parents and carers, for example, with details of the activities you plan for the children

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