



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	149452
Inspection date	28 September 2005
Inspector	Sarah Catherine Jex

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 was registered in 2000. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and 11 years in the town of Baldock, Hertfordshire.

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 two children under eight on various days/hours of the week. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder

attends local parent/toddler group and takes the children to the local library and park.

The family have a pet rabbit.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a friendly, warm and clean home environment. They are able to learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care through daily routines and through good role modelling by the childminder. Children understand how and why they should wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating snacks and after touching the pets. The childminder employs suitable strategies to prevent infections spreading because she is well informed, this impacts positively on the children's health.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. Children are offered nutritious and healthy snacks and light meals according to their dietary needs and preferences. They play an active part in learning about healthy foods as they are encouraged to try new tastes and experiences as they can participate in their own food preparation and cooking activities, such as sandwiches and various fruit and vegetables. Children have access to drinks at all times as they have an allocated cup which is regularly refilled throughout the day. The childminder takes into account the wishes of the parents and children's choices to provide nutritious meals and snacks.

Children enjoy an appropriate range of physical activities which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They develop self confidence in their physical skills as they use a wide range of indoor and outdoor toys and equipment. Children learn to listen to their bodies and are able to act according to their needs. For example, when they become hot, tired or thirsty. Younger children are able to rest as required and are stimulated according to their needs.

The majority of the required records are in place to promote children's health. However, written parental permission for emergency medical treatment/advice for children needs to be obtained.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe environment where risks have been identified and minimised. Children are able to move around freely, independently and are able to take risks and express themselves during play within this safe environment. Children show an understanding of boundaries and responded positively to sensitive reminders. For example, requesting to pick up toys from the floor to prevent someone tripping over, increases children's awareness of everyday safety in the setting. Children learn about keeping safe as they walk to and from school and the park. Children develop increasing independence as they choose from a range of suitable,

maintained toys and equipment. Children's choice of toys and activities are monitored and supervised by the childminder to ensure they are safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect. The childminder has a clear understanding of the procedures to follow with any concerns. She is aware of the types of abuse and signs to look for. However, she needs to obtain the booklet 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused - Summary' which would enable her to consolidate her practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are well settled and happy at the childminder's home. They access a variety of age and developmentally appropriate activities and play opportunities which are incorporated within their daily routine. They expand their knowledge and overall development through an assortment of play experiences. Children are encouraged to develop imaginative play, to act out familiar scenarios, as well as developing their creative skills in music and art and craft activities. For example, imitating making the 'tea' and feeding humpty dumpty with a spoon. However, extending current practice by demonstrating that play opportunities are planned and evaluated would enhance her practice and the children would benefit from having access to a wider and more challenging variety of activities.

Warm relationships between the children and childminder have been fostered. Children are encouraged by the childminder who is interacting at their level. They approach her for physical comfort and reassurance which contributes to their sense of belonging. They have opportunities to think for themselves, express their ideas and thoughts and interact with others by being encouraged to take turns, share and explore their environment and wider surroundings either individually or with each other.

Younger children benefit from the childminder having knowledge and working with 'Birth to three matters' framework. Individual children's routines are respected which promotes children's well-being and contributes to them making progress at their own pace.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are accepted and valued as individuals. They are able to develop a positive attitude to others and gain an understanding about the wider world through activities, discussion, books and other resources which show positive images of gender, culture and special needs. Children develop self confidence as they explore the environment. They make choices and test their own abilities under the careful supervision and support of the childminder. Children's individual needs are met by the adaptation of existing resources. All children have been involved in

understanding why some people's needs are different to theirs, and the importance of being valued and respected as an individual.

Children behave well. They have a good awareness of what is not acceptable behaviour through consistent boundaries. Praise, encouragement and age appropriate strategies are used to manage behaviour including distraction and explaining. This leads the children to understand right from wrong and develop their self-esteem and confidence.

Secure relationships have been developed with parents. This has had a positive impact on the children's sense of belonging, trust and confidence. The childminder has time for each parent to discuss their child's day and progress. If any problems arise regarding the child's care, progress or behaviour she will discuss the problem confidentially later on the phone with the parent. This exchange of information contributes to the children's health, safety and development. Parents are provided with information about the childminder's practice both written and verbally.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are relaxed and feel secure and comfortable in the well organised environment. The space, resources and daily routine are organised appropriately. Children are confident when organising their own play and when sharing and extending this to others, they seek adult support when needed.

Documentation is maintained in line with the National Standards. It is well organised and is used effectively in most areas to promote the care and welfare of each child. Records are shared with parents and they can access them at any time. Verbal information is exchanged on a regular basis about their child's progress, achievements and participation with the activities. This contributes to continuity and a trusting relationship which impacts positively on the children. Overall the childminder meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- request written parental permission for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment
- obtain the booklet 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused - Summary'
- extend current practice by demonstrating that activities and play opportunities are planned and evaluated.

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