



## Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 149656                |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 01 November 2006      |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Lynne Kathleen Talbot |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Childcare             |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](http://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 October 1992. She lives with her husband and adult daughter. The family has one cat and one rabbit. Their house is in the town of Hitchin, Hertfordshire.

The whole ground floor of the house is used for childminding, the first floor is used under supervision. There are fully enclosed gardens for outside play. There are shops, schools and pre-schools within an accessible distance. The childminder walks to local schools to collect and take minded children. She attends toddler groups with minded children.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time. There are currently eight children on roll attending varying hours.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home which is well-organised offering appropriate space for play and arranged to meet the needs of all children attending. Children are encouraged to understand about their own physical needs and learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They participate in washing and drying their hands before meals and snacks because the childminder acts as a good role model and offers clear explanations. They have access to personal cups and dishes, which prevents any cross-infection, and begin to learn about using soap and preventing germs as they discuss washing-up the crockery after use.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. Each day there are indoor and outdoor large physical activities to help them develop control of their bodies, for example as they attend activity groups in the community and play in the garden. Physical activity is enjoyed by children in three separate areas of the garden allowing younger and older children to play freely and explore their abilities in a safe manner. Children are able to utilise the garden in all weathers because the childminder keeps a range of clothing for all weather conditions at the premises.

Nutritional needs are very well met with clear agreements between the childminder and parents, supported by sample menus devised by the childminder. Children learn to select healthy snacks and have access to fruit throughout the day. Older children benefit from meals which continue their nutritional intake for the whole day because the childminder holds a copy of the rotating menus offered in school and plans her meals to complement them.

Children's medical needs are effectively supported and protected due to good attention to maintaining information, seeking training for individual needs, and reviewing the care of children with parents. Further information and understanding is required to ensure that appropriate action may be taken in the event of significant injury.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children's safety is consistently promoted and appropriate action taken in the event of illness or accident because the childminder has an organised approach to this area of care and takes steps to prevent accidents and to plan for emergencies. Children discuss and carry out emergency evacuation regularly, they have opportunities to understand that evacuation may not only be due to fire alarms but could be caused by other emergencies leading them to develop deeper understanding of personal safety.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and safe environment, accessing equipment that meets safety standards with sufficient space to explore and develop their full potential. They are learning to keep themselves safe due to clear explanations and routines. This is shown as they volunteer information when playing with a roadway telling the childminder they must not play in the road because they may get run over. This reinforces the regular road safety practice

which they carry out in the local community. Children take part in outings with the childminder, however procedures require development to take into account risks to children's safety and extend their safety when away from the home.

Children are protected because the childminder clearly understands child protection issues and the appropriate steps to follow that will support children's wellbeing.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are able to develop confidence and self-esteem because the childminder gives them opportunity to talk and values their efforts at all ages. They are encouraged to make links between family life and the care at the childminders, for instance telling her about visits to the zoo, and recalling their birthday celebrations. They discuss things they see in the home such as photographs, and spot birds and squirrels in the garden. Each child is listened to carefully and their developing language reinforced through repetition by the childminder. Children explore new words which are noted and written into children's diaries in order that parents and carers may share developmental progress.

Children explore language in everyday activities and with play materials. For example, they sing with confidence enjoying musical tapes and stories together. Children anticipate events such as home delivery from the supermarket using terms which include, 'what time will it come?', showing some development of the concept of time. From this everyday event they extend their knowledge of the world around them as they identify new fruits and vegetables, discuss which country they come from, talk about storage in the fridge or freezer, and learn about texture and taste.

Children develop and sustain interest in activities, including the childminder in their play where she uses open-ended questions to develop and deepen their understanding. They explore new language linked to themes such as farms and explore all aspects associated with the topic. Children have opportunities to take part in imaginative activities as the childminder carries out planning for activities to foster development across all areas, and shares those plans with parents and carers. Children benefit from an assessment in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework because the childminder has a thorough understanding of how young children learn.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their needs are very well met as they follow their normal daily routines as discussed with their parents. Relationships are positive and children are making early friendships with other children both in the childminder's home and at social groups. They speak about each other fondly and young children play alongside each other easily. Children thrive because their individual developmental stages are recognised and planned for by the childminder. This is supported by detailed individual books completed and shared with parents which supports close relationships and partnerships. There does need to

be some addition to the procedure for parents to raise concerns or complaints with the childminder in accordance with the most recent regulation change.

Children are beginning to understand responsible behaviour and recognise the needs of others due to consistent boundaries being maintained by the childminder. They are aware of each other's age and are supported in learning about the development of younger children. Children are learning about positive behaviour through a reward system, being used in close partnership with parents and carers. They decide, with the childminder, on the goals which include areas such as social behaviour, and earn points which lead towards a reward. This helps them to develop forward planning and think about their behaviour and its effect on others around them.

Children appreciate and understand about other cultures and ways of life because the childminder provides resources to promote conversation and interest. This includes topics and exploring the wider locality around them, taking part in social events and gatherings. Children receive appropriate support that meets their complex needs as individuals because the childminder seeks appropriate information from parents and takes positive steps to inform herself on a variety of special needs.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are secure within the surroundings where they develop a firm sense of trust in the childminder. They feel at ease in this well-organised environment leading them to confidently initiate play and explore their surroundings. Their daily comfort and enjoyment is enhanced by the quality of organisation and the attention to all details relating to their care and well-being.

Play opportunities are enhanced by the creative organisation within the home which allows freedom to access all play activities both indoors and outside. Play is effectively planned with practical experience given high emphasis. The childminder has developed a detailed purposeful portfolio which addresses all areas of care and outlines policies with parents. This adds to the professional service enjoyed by families attending.

Children have independent access to personal care facilities and develop good awareness of their personal space and care through example and routines. These include personal hygiene, care for surroundings, and responsibility for play materials and personal belongings. This clear organisation enables the children to feel confident in initiating their own play and learning.

The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of the Children Act and associated regulations. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider was asked to review procedures and documentation regarding consent from parents, attendance records and child protection.

Since that time she has continued to maintain a child protection procedure sharing information with parents and obtained detailed consent forms from parents for aspects of care. Attendance records are completed accurately and reflect clear attendance. Each of these measures maintains effective safety and care of children.

### **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):

- improve knowledge of procedures to prevent the spread of infection or notifiable disease, or in the event of significant injury to minded children. Ensure that action taken complies with relevant authority requirements
- develop procedures to include assessments for outings taking into account risks and emergency plans to protect children's safety
- improve knowledge and develop a system for the recording of complaints, in line with regulations.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)