



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	203142
Inspection date	18 May 2006
Inspector	Barbara Ann Bush
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 1996. She lives with her husband and three children aged 14 years, 12 years and seven years in a village near Ongar. The whole of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family has one cat, two guinea pigs, one rabbit and birds.

The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time. Currently there are three children on the register who all attend on a part time basis. The childminder supports children with disabilities. She belongs to the National Childminding Association and regularly attends meetings with other childminders.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a clean and well maintained home. Care is concentrated on the older child who can rest on a sofa or spend time quietly looking at books if required. Children learn about personal hygiene routines, washing their hands after outside play, touching the pets or using messy materials. Children are independent and take control for themselves. They are able to express their needs easily and take their lead from the good example set by their childminder.

Children benefit from the experience gained by the childminder when dealing with illness or any emergencies that may arise. Procedures have been put in place verbally with parents and the childminder is confident about her abilities to manage any situation concerning the children's welfare. Children are protected by the agreement between parents and carer about seeking emergency advice, knowledge of children's individual needs and the updating of contact information.

Children are offered regular meals, snacks and drinks during their time at the childminder's home. Drinks are freely available and children are encouraged to take in fluids. The childminder is aware of children's preferences and any allergies that may affect them. Children enjoy main meals and snacks that are nutritionally balanced. They also pick herbs and fruit from the garden; understanding the growing and cooking process. Children are aware of the need for good table manners and how to behave when eating together.

Children have opportunities for outside play in the garden and at the park. They also attend a variety of after school clubs that encourage active participation. Children are developing an awareness of their physical growth and general well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children can make choices in an environment that is kept safe by the childminder who knows there is a balance between freedom and safe limits. The childminder organises the home to be child friendly and checks the premises to minimise potential hazards. However, extra vigilance is required as older children can access all areas of the home, for example a wine rack that contains bottles with screw tops.

Children enjoy the use of an extensive range of equipment that provides them with challenging, fun activities. The childminder ensures that resources are easily within reach of the children, this allows them to use their own initiative when organising games. Children can play safely with the toys and materials as the childminder monitors the condition of the equipment regularly.

Children are encouraged to keep themselves safe. Children understand the childminder road safety instructions and can negotiate traffic with confidence. They know there are house rules

regarding running, climbing and jumping in the home. They are encouraged to keep the floor tidy to prevent trips and falls.

The childminder is aware of the current information regarding child protection which ensures she acts in the best interests of the children. Verbal procedures are shared with parents. The childminder has attended recent training and knows about the changes that have taken place within the service.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children easily demonstrate the ability to share, take turns and cooperate with others. Their play opportunities broadens in line with their developmental needs; materials and resources are aimed at the older aged child. Their play is imaginative, vibrant and lively. Children's language skills are extended through questions and the childminder's interest in their well-being. Children access a wide range of books, craft activities and colourful resources that capture their imaginations.

Children experience a varied time with the childminder which includes free play and trips outside of the home. They attend many after school clubs as well as their time together in the home. The childminder does not formally plan each day but takes her lead from the children, consequently there is spontaneity in their play. Children were engrossed in making individual containers for growing cress seeds, drawing animal faces on the pots. Children's interest is stimulated by placing toys at their level to catch their eye and motivate their play. Children enjoy books; floor toys, craft work and the freedom of the garden. The games they play initiates laughter, fun and conversation.

Children are given praise for their existing achievements and they are urged to play with a variety of materials. They have developed a bond with their carer, are reassured by her presence and display confidence when meeting strangers. Children receive consistent care as minder and parents work closely to ensure there is a united approach.

The childminder is not caring for children under the age of three years at the moment. However, she has the 'Birth to three matters' framework and will use the information if younger children are minded.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a clear behaviour policy agreed by the childminder and parents. Limits are set and they are fully in agreement with the house rules and boundaries. Children's good behaviour is recognised and praised. They demonstrate courtesy and kindness towards each other, an awareness of each other's needs and an eagerness to make each other happy.

Children are able to access a range of toys and materials reflecting other cultures and people with disabilities. The childminder has an understanding of the issues and feels confident about answering the children's questions and interest. They also learn to recognise their own needs

effectively. Children have developed independence when organising their play, supported by the childminder's arrangement of the materials and equipment. Children are enabled to try new things and gain self confidence.

The childminder values good communication with parents to ensure that children's needs are met. She offers them regular feedback about the children's progress, making time to speak with the parents each day. The childminder has not incorporated the new complaints procedure into her documentation. These guidelines will ensure that any concerns affecting the care of the children can be resolved quickly.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is a motivated carer and has completed additional child care courses to increase her expertise on the subject. She is interested and enthusiastic about her work with the children.

The day is organised to give children the opportunity to experience a range of activities, both inside and outside of the home. Time is made to take walks, play in the park and socialise with other adults and children. The childminder ensures that the children attend all their extra curricular clubs, fitting in all of their needs into her routine.

Ratios are maintained which enables the childminder to give individual attention to the children. Documentation is well organised and the childminder has an efficient method of recording and storing her records. Paperwork is kept confidential but can be accessed by parents. Children and parents benefit from a range of information the childminder has gathered from her courses.

The childminder concentrates her work, at present, on the older aged child. She has a dedicated playroom that is well equipped with resources that interest and stimulate the children's imaginations.

Overall, the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was required to devise and practise a fire drill with the children. This has been completed and children are now familiar with the routine and would evacuate the home quickly should an emergency arise.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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):

- check and minimise hazards within the premises
- respond promptly to complaints in line with guidance issued in October 2005.

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