



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY100807
Inspection date	01 August 2005
Inspector	Gail Groves

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 satisfactory. 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 registered in 2002. She lives with her partner and 2 children aged 6 and 4 in Hatfield, 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 3 children at any one time and is currently minding 5 children all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group, takes children to the local library and takes children to the local park. The family has a Jack Russell dog as well as a cat, a goldfish and some birds which are kept in an aviary outside.

The childminder supports children with special educational needs and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a clean and healthy environment in which they are beginning to understand simple, good health and hygiene practices. For example, children wash their hands after using the toilet and often before eating. Sometimes these routines are not consistently carried out. As a result, children run the risk of infection and are not developing appropriate hygiene habits for later life. Children enjoy a healthy diet which promotes their development and growth and have ready access to drinks throughout the day. They learn about healthy eating through discussions with the childminder. She talks to them about the importance of eating fruit and vegetables every day and avoiding sweets. She also works with parents to ensure that she can accommodate and meet children's dietary needs within the normal range of menus she provides.

Children have regular opportunities to enjoy physical play and fresh air, which encourages them to develop healthy lifestyles. They visit local parks, walk in the woods and use a variety of physical play equipment. This includes a swing, a slide and a trampoline in the childminder's garden. Their needs for rest and sleep are met within their daily routine. For example, after lunch children sit quietly and watch television. This ensures that they do not become over tired and have adequate opportunities to regain their energy levels.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment, in which well-implemented procedures minimise the risks to their safety. They use suitable and safe equipment that is appropriate for their differing ages and needs and which the childminder maintains in good condition. This ensures that children can play and take part in activities safely. There are clear procedures for outings to minimise risks and so children begin to learn to keep themselves safe. For example, the childminder discusses road safety and why they should not talk to strangers. She also keeps children involved and interested by talking to them about what they can see and hear as they walk, so that they are not tempted to run ahead and become lost. Sometimes, the childminder does not give children sufficient explanation as to why it could be dangerous for them to do something. For example, playing on the stairs. This means that they do not have the opportunity to fully understand the danger and generalise it to other situations.

Children are well protected because the childminder has a clear understanding of her role in child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice if

necessary. For example, there is a written child protection policy in place which all parents must read and sign and she records any existing injuries to children in order to monitor their welfare. The childminder attends training courses and regularly seeks information from the internet to ensure that she has the relevant experience, knowledge and skills to promote children's developmental needs.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem because the childminder recognises and praises their achievements. They are involved and interested in the activities she provides and with a little encouragement use their initiative to work together to develop and organise their play. For example, at the childminder's suggestion, children set up an obstacle course in the garden. They then decide where items will go and how they will play. Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong because the childminder uses appropriate strategies to help them learn to manage their behaviour. As a result they make positive relationships and interact confidently with each other and with adults.

Children confidently ask questions to seek information and through play and practical experiences such as visits to a farm or the local parent and toddler group begin to acquire new knowledge and skills. With support, some children are beginning to respond to challenge and to develop skills such as feeding themselves or putting on their shoes. Working with their parents ensures that the childminder is able to understand and meet children's individual needs and provide the appropriate level of challenge.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel a sense of belonging and are comfortable in the setting. This means that they can confidently access the play and learning experiences which are on offer. With encouragement, they are beginning to understand responsible behaviour and learn social skills, such as not talking with their mouth full and saying please and thank you. Because the childminder provides a good role model for children, they learn to become aware both of their own needs and of the needs of others. For example, they understand turn taking and sharing and negotiate with each other in order to do so successfully. This means that they work harmoniously with each other and need little support to decide on rules when playing group games.

Children make choices and take decisions which encourage their self-esteem and independence. For example, they decide what they want in their sandwiches at lunch time, what they have to drink or whether they wish to play inside or outside. The childminder is careful to work with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensures that all children are fully included and receive appropriate support. For example, when a child with poor coordination is painting, she covers the floor and other surfaces so that he can take part without feeling concerned that he is making a

mess. Opportunities and resources which help children to become aware of diversity and the wider society are limited. This means that they are less likely to be able to develop a positive understanding of the differences between people.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children receive appropriate support and attention because the childminder limits the number of children for whom she cares. This means that she is able to spend more time playing and interacting with them to support their care, learning and play and can more easily meet their individual needs.

They are well protected and cared for because the childminder has the relevant knowledge & understanding of child development to enable her to monitor and support their progress. Most of her policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. The information she keeps about the children is relevant and helps to promote their welfare but the records of medication administered to children are not always signed by parents. This could put children at risk of being overdosed if parents are not always alerted that medication has been given by the childminder.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection the childminder has improved children's health and safety. She has updated her first aid training by attending a course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children and now seeks written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. These measures ensure that children can be given correct and speedy treatment if they become ill or suffer injury. She has also increased her knowledge and understanding of child protection issues by attending training and has completed a local authority approved childminder's course. Children are therefore well protected by someone who has the relevant experience, knowledge and skills to keep them safe.

The childminder has also improved the range of activities and resources she provides which support children's awareness of equality of opportunity. She now uses books from the library and resources borrowed through her local childminding support group and has increased her range of puzzles and dolls to reflect some cultural differences. The opportunities for children to become more fully aware of diversity remain limited.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- increase the opportunities for children to learn about and become aware of the diversity within society
- ensure that hygiene procedures with regard to hand washing are consistently carried out
- ensure all records of medication administered to children are signed by parents.

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