



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY221379
Inspection date	17 August 2005
Inspector	Christine Pettitt

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 July 2001. The childminder lives with her husband and 2 young children, aged 3 and 5 years. They live in a four bedroomed terraced house in Tring. There are schools, parks and shops in the locality. The childminding mainly takes place on the ground floor of the property and in a play room on the first floor. There are bedrooms available for children to sleep. There is a securely fenced garden available for outside play, this includes decking and grassed areas.

The childminder may care for up to 4 children, under 8 years, at any one time. She currently cares for six children, on a part time basis. Some children attend for after

school care. The childminder has attended the initial childminding course. She has completed the Herts. Quality Care Assessment scheme. She has a current first aid certificate. The childminder attends local toddler groups with the children and takes them to the library and music groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are warmly welcomed into a friendly, caring and homely environment. The home is hygienic and well maintained. Children are learning effective hygiene practices. For example, they routinely engage in personal care, washing their hands after using the toilet, garden play and before preparing and eating food. Children know to wash their hands before a cooking activity. Children are also learning through observations of the childminder's home and her conscientious hygiene practice.

Children are learning what constitutes a healthy diet. They enjoy snacks containing healthy foods. For example, children enjoy eating the cakes they helped to make, but also have apples for a snack. Drinks are available for children to access independently and are provided at snack times. Children listen to stories which make them aware of the need for a healthy eating life style and which foods are unhealthy. Children's individual dietary requirements and allergies are known to the childminder.

Children's health is monitored by the childminder. There is a sickness policy and parents are advised if their child becomes unwell. If children have accidents, the first aid resources are available and the childminder has a current first aid certificate. The relevant documentation for recording accidents is available.

Children engage in daily exercise and they walk to schools and parks. Children enjoy using outdoor play equipment in the garden and in a safe area in front of the house. They use a selection of wheeled toys, have races such as egg and spoon and play ball games to encourage their hand-eye coordination skills. Children use play equipment in parks to encourage skills such as balancing, using steps to the slide. Children use jigsaws, interactive toys and construction play to encourage their fine motor skills. Children have quiet times according to their individual needs. This contributes to their well being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a safe, relaxed and calm atmosphere. They play in areas where safety precautions are evident. For example, stair gates and plug sockets are in place, fire exits are clear and medicines and hazardous materials are in locked cupboards. A safety checklist includes issues which are checked on a monthly basis. There is a brief mention of safety issues in the health and safety policy.

Children are learning how to keep themselves safe. For example, to climb down steps safely, not to touch hot food and asking for help to get down from chairs. Safe play on park equipment and bikes is promoted. Children are supervised well. They are warned if their actions are potentially

dangerous and reminded of possible consequences of their actions. Children are kept safe on outings. The childminder is conscientious and ensures outings take place when the number and ages of children present are such that children can be safely taken to the park. There is a written child collection policy.

Children's well being is supported by childminder's understanding of child protection issues. The policy indicates that the childminder understands that protection of children is her first priority. She knows it is her duty to act on any concerns. It is her intention to attend a child protection course to refresh her knowledge.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and arrive eagerly to attend the provision. They are relaxed in the welcoming environment. Children engage happily in a range of stimulating, varied activities.

Children experience a balanced routine. They engage in free play and adult led activities in the home. For example, creative activities, stories and cooking. Children have access to a delightful, bright, child orientated play room. An excellent selection of play equipment is easily accessible in storage boxes and on shelving. These promote opportunity for children to engage in varied types of play experiences. Children's art work is displayed. This helps children to feel valued by displaying their achievements. Children enjoy outings to local toddler groups, the library, music group, the park and for walks.

Children are learning through meaningful play. For example, children show excitement at the prospect of a cooking activity. They confidently use numbers when using spoons to weigh out ingredients. They understand that writing is for a purpose when attempting to read instructions on the packet. Children are absorbed and ask questions as a result of the childminder encouraging their thought processes. Children show their knowledge obtained in previous cooking activities. For example, that the cakes will grow bigger in the oven. Children show a sustained interest in books. They greatly enjoy listening to stories and choose the stories they prefer. Children initiate and organise imaginative play in the garden, pretending they are dogs.

Children attending after school, enjoy a relaxed, happy and welcoming environment. They enjoy outside activities after school, either walking to the park or to feed the ducks. Children sometimes play in the garden or in a safe area at the front of the house, on bikes, play football, cricket or have races. Children engage in their preferred play and choose from a variety of play resources.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are behaving very well. They are learning to share, take turns, to be helpful and polite. This is encouraged by children being engaged in adult led activities together. For example, taking turns to mix the cake and the icing in a cooking activity. Older children are kind to the youngest child, they help her and include her in their play. Children are aware of behaviour boundaries. If they display unwanted behaviour they receive explanations as to why the behaviour is unacceptable. Any continuing concerns about a child's behaviour are discussed with the parents. This provides continuity for the child. Acceptable behaviour is reinforced through constant and genuine praise.

Children's well being is encouraged through the childminder's effective communication with parents. Discussion regarding the child and the childminding arrangements take place with the parents initially at the commencement of the childminding and is ongoing. Verbal information is provided for parents of their child's day. There is a portfolio containing brief policies and information for the parents providing an overview of the childminder's child care practice.

Children's individual characters, preferred play and needs are known to the childminder. The childminder's sensitive approach ensures children know they are valued and cared for. They confide in the childminder, telling her how they are feeling. They respond to her warmly and approach her confidently with their requests and concerns. Children are made aware of different cultures through play resources, visits to the library and discussion during play.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is well organised. This ensures efficient and safe management of the provision and promotes the welfare of the children. Children play safely in the home. The areas for play include a lounge, dining room and a child orientated play room. The play room is organised to provide maximum floor space and easily accessible resources. Children's stages of development are recognised and individual needs provided for in the provision of play resources and activities. The childminder uses Birth to three matters information for reference and child care magazines for ideas for activities. Children's developmental progress is considered and activities planned to help their progress. There are no records of activities completed or children's progress.

The required documentation is available, completed and organised. Parents can view the portfolio which includes certificates, policies, weekly activities, play equipment inventory and menu. Parents receive daily verbal information of the child's day. The childminder is aware of confidentiality issues and keeps documentation secure.

Children's well-being and developmental progress is supported by the professional approach of the childminder. She has completed the Herts Quality Standards

assessment and has attended running a child care business work shops. She has identified further courses to attend, these include food hygiene, child protection and creative activities for under fives. She is booked on to a first aid course. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the previous report the childminder was requested to revise the wording in the behaviour management and confidentiality policies. This has been completed.

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):

- keep records of children with regard to progress and activities completed.
- extend and enhance information for parents - including safety policy.

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