

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY221950
Inspection date	07 November 2007
Inspector	Sheila Harrison
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 registered in 2002. She lives with her husband and two children aged four and seven years. They live in Tring, Hertfordshire, close to schools, parks and rural areas. The premises consist of a three bed room semi-detached house, mainly using the ground floor of the premises for childminding. There is a secure garden for outside play. The family have a pet cat.

The childminder may care for four children aged under eight years and there are ten children on a part-time basis on roll. The childminder uses her car to take the children on outings and to parent and toddler groups. She walks to local schools and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is encouraged as they are offered healthy snacks and nutritious meals which are prepared using fresh fruit and vegetables. Mealtimes are relaxed social occasions and

children sit together at the table, good manners are encouraged. Children try new tastes and they enjoy cookery activities which promotes knowledge of a healthy diet. The childminder ensures that children with allergies are kept safe. She has a secure system to ensure children do not have prohibited foods when they are at groups and parties. Young children with allergies are developing a valuable awareness of foods that they should not be in contact with.

Children are protected from becoming ill as the childminder recognises and reduces possible risks with a comprehensive process for sickness. The childminder is well informed about each child's health with thorough documentation including permission for emergency medical treatment and records of accidents. She has suitable knowledge of first aid procedures including a current first aid certificate. Detailed documentation and sufficient first aid equipment is taken on outings to ensure the children's health and safety is promoted.

Children are learning how to keep themselves healthy with simple good health and hygiene practices. They know the significance of washing their hands before eating, after coming in from the garden and after using the toilet. Children enjoy substantial amounts of worthwhile physical exercise. They have frequent trips to the park or access to the well equipped garden in the better weather. They have some fresh air each day whatever the weather with walks to the local school. Older children enjoy visiting indoor activity centres during the holidays when they can use the challenging play equipment. Children rest and sleep according to their preferred routine and they are well supervised whilst sleeping.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have sufficient amounts of space to move freely inside. They can play upstairs in the bedrooms with the permission of the childminder's own children. Great emphasis is given to making a comfortable and inviting environment where the children's coat pegs and art work are displayed at a low-level. This ensures children feel valued and respected. Children have access to an extensive range of good quality toys and games. These are stored attractively at a low-level, in good order and appropriate for their developmental needs. The childminder has a large number of games, that are out of reach but easily available, ready to extend the children's interest.

Children learn to keep themselves safe when they discuss the house rules. They practise road safety routinely during the walk to school and regular outings. Older children are aware of the emergency evacuation plan. However, the fire blanket is not easily accessible and this potentially limits children's safety in an emergency.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. The childminder has a secure understanding of child protection issues and is clear about her responsibility to report concerns. The childminder has the contact details for the local authority and a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - summary'. Parents are informed of some of the reporting procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and busy as the childminder provides a routine and activities which are of interest to them. The childminder communicates with the children warmly and with affection. They play with their favourite make-believe games with the action and technological toys. Children's speech and language skills are developed as the childminder sensitively repeats

favourite rhymes and stories. Children regularly take part in art and craft activities according to their stage of development. Younger children make and decorate salt dough spiders for Halloween and the older children design and complete complicated models of witches on broomsticks. Children play creatively with colours and various materials as they undertake large works of art in the garden. They paint trees on large pieces of paper using foot prints for the trunk, hand prints for the leaves and finger prints for the fruit. They collect large leaves whilst on their walks to do colourful leaf rubbings. Children's independence is supported as the childminder encourages the children to put on their own coats and shoes and older children enjoy doing their homework together.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are well promoted as there is an excellent partnership between the childminder and parents. The childminder provides a long term commitment to the families. There are effective communication systems to ensure parents are reassured about their children's welfare. Confidential and detailed discussions take place at the outset of the arrangement and at feedback at the end of the day which includes a daily diary. This makes a valuable contribution to the continuity of care for the children. The childminder demonstrates a clear understanding of caring for children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties.

Children are learning about the wider world as they celebrate traditional festivals and birthdays. They frequently visit local attractions including parent and toddler groups, farms and activity centres. Children are encouraged to feel valued and free from discrimination as some of the play materials reflect diversity and show positive images of boys and girls.

Children are beginning to develop friendships. They are encouraged to greet and say goodbye to each other. They are learning to respect the needs of living things as they are gently reminded of the consequences of tapping on the glass of the fish tank. The childminder identifies the types of fish and some of their attributes. The childminder is sensitive to the children's feelings. She praises and encourages them frequently. Good manners are encouraged. There are clear and realistic boundaries and children know what is expected of them. They eagerly help to tidy away the toys before getting ready to go home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's well-being is supported as the childminder is committed to her role. She develops her knowledge of good childcare practice as she has attended a recent course in child protection. The childminder evaluates her procedures for the benefit of the children. However, some aspects of recent changes to the guidance have yet to be fully implemented and this potentially impedes the safe management of children. The childminder has suitable documentation which is generally well managed. For example, contracts and contact numbers are up to date and the attendance registers are complete. Overall the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to attend suitable course, develop a portfolio for parents and extend cultural resources.

Children's welfare is promoted as the childminder has attended courses to enhance her professional development. A first aid course is booked to ensure her current certificate remains valid. A comprehensive portfolio of procedures linked to the standards has been developed to ensure parents have sufficient information on the care of their children. Suitable images of other cultures are available in books and on the television to encourage children to value and respect the differences in others.

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):

- ensure the fire blanket is attached to a firm surface to allow its correct operation
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations with regard to the organisation of a complaints log.

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