



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY222056
Inspection date	06 June 2005
Inspector	Jill Nugent

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 2002. She lives with her husband and two daughters, aged 13 and 20 in a house in London Colney. The whole of the house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight and is currently minding five children under five. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and has a Hertfordshire Quality Standards Award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are kept healthy through the appropriate use of medical records. They benefit from the detailed medical information made available to the childminder by parents. She ensures that the sickness policy is adhered to so that children can avoid cross infection. Children with allergies are looked after carefully. The childminder has recently had training in the use of an epi-pen. However, her first aid qualification has expired and she is waiting to renew it. Younger children are able to have routine sleeps during the day so that they avoid becoming overtired.

Children are beginning to understand good hygiene practices. They are cared for in a clean and tidy environment. They know when they need to wash their hands and they use cleaning gel on outings. Children are well nourished. They eat healthy snacks and meals. They discuss healthy aspects of their meals with the childminder. Drinking water is always available. They have good opportunities for physical activities in the local park and enjoy outdoor play in a well-kept garden.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment. Toys and equipment are checked regularly for safety. Children are protected from harm by the minimising of hazards in the house. They feel secure and are supervised closely at all times. The doors are kept locked and the childminder has a written evacuation plan for emergencies. Children benefit from the childminder carrying out risk assessments on her home. They are learning to keep themselves safe during play, for example, they talk about the dangers of throwing toys.

On outings they are kept safe through the appropriate use of reins and wrist straps. They enjoy sharing a book with the childminder about keeping safe when they go out. They are further protected because the childminder takes extra precautions when going out, such as, carrying contact telephone numbers and a spare first aid kit. She has a good understanding of child protection issues and would like to attend further training to improve her knowledge. Her child protection statement is shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a variety of different experiences. They attend various toddler groups and like to visit the local farm. During school holidays they go further afield to zoos and museums. They particularly enjoy story times at a local bookshop. Children acquire new skills when involved in activities in the home. They are developing confidence and make choices from a good range of available resources. They

concentrate for a long time when building models with construction equipment. Their communication skills are improving through good interaction from the childminder. She encourages quieter children to join in conversation and promotes the use of mathematical language.

Children take part in creative activities, such as, painting, sticking and drawing. They often play with each other, for example, when sharing a card game. They respond well to a challenge, as when asked to find all the matching cards. When on their own they enjoy a close relationship with the childminder, sharing books and talking about the pictures. Children have good opportunities to play with extra resources borrowed from the local childminding group. They recently enjoyed exploring a set of musical instruments. The childminder makes use of the Birth to Three framework and is about to start using the Foundation Stage Curriculum to help improve her provision for older children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are learning to play co-operatively. They are encouraged to share toys and use good manners. They are very co-operative and tidy up willingly. They enjoy the attention of the childminder who divides her time effectively between them. They are learning respect for others and are given support when upset. Their behaviour is good. They are helped in this respect by much praise from the childminder. They make decisions for themselves, for example, when and how to play their instruments during a music session. They have good relationships with each other and like to sing and dance together.

Children benefit from a good working partnership with parents. An attractive welcome pack provides parents with information about the childminder's practice. Children are helped to feel a sense of belonging through the sharing of information with parents at the end of the day. Their self esteem is boosted by the childminder collecting files of their artwork for presentation to their parents. Children are becoming aware of a wider society when playing with a variety of resources that reflect diversity.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy the use of a purpose-built conservatory which provides them with comfortable seating and floor space in which to play. It is made welcoming with colourful posters. Toys are easily accessible and children's nappies and bibs are stored in individual baskets. The childminder makes good use of her time and children are happy in her care. Overall children's needs are met well.

The childminder has recently achieved a quality standards award. Her paperwork is extremely well organised. Children's care is enhanced by the attention she pays to detail in her documentation. She takes care to keep Ofsted informed of any changes and keeps to her ratios, while maintaining flexible arrangements.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain written permission from parents for transporting children in a vehicle and also for seeking emergency medical treatment. These permissions have been obtained from all parents. She also agreed to make cleaning fluids upstairs inaccessible to children. These fluids are now kept elsewhere in the house.

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):

- extend knowledge of child protection issues
- renew first aid qualification

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