



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY251865
Inspection date	21 September 2005
Inspector	Kelly Eyre

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 2003. She lives with her husband and two children aged three and twelve in the Leagrave area of Luton. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's 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 5 children at any one time and is currently minding 2 children under five during the day and 2 children over five before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group. The family has no pets.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home. They are well nourished and their physical development is promoted due to the childminder's good understanding of healthy eating. They are offered nutritious snacks which include fresh fruit, bread and yoghurts. These are well balanced as the childminder plans ahead and has carried out additional research regarding healthy diets. Children's individual dietary requirements are discussed with parents and the childminder ensures that these are respected and consistently met.

Children participate in a variety of physical activities, contributing to their good health. They are offered daily opportunities for outdoor activities, such as walks to school and the local park, and playing in the garden with ride-on toys, swings and balls, helping them develop control of their bodies and improve their physical skills. The younger children are able to participate in the activities because the childminder has a good knowledge of child development. Children's health is further promoted and they are learning about the importance of good hygiene practices as the childminder has a clear understanding of this area. She has 'Food Hygiene' and 'Health and Hygiene' certificates, enabling her to implement clear daily procedures and practices such as using disposable gloves when handling any body fluids. She talks with the children about health issues, such as the importance of washing hands before eating to prevent the spread of germs and infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. Their safety is given a high priority and the childminder is aware of risks, both in and out of the house, and has taken steps to minimise these. She ensures that all safety measures are in place, such as stair gates, socket covers and safety catches on cupboards. Children's safety is further enhanced by the carefully planned 'emergency policy' which clearly states procedures to follow in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Children are able to independently select activities from a wide range of well maintained toys and equipment. The childminder sensitively supervises the children's choice of toys and activities, ensuring that they are safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development. The children's welfare is well promoted as the childminder has all the required documents in place and has a good understanding of this area. She has attended additional training regarding child protection, increasing her knowledge of these issues and her awareness of the correct procedures to follow.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and settled within the childminder's home, happily choosing activities and play resources. They have very good relationships with the childminder and are building good relationships with each other. They also have opportunities to socialise with other children through regular attendance at the local toddler group. The children's independence is promoted as they freely make choices about toys, books and activities throughout the day. Older children are encouraged to say what they would like to do after school, thus promoting their interests and helping them to feel valued and welcome.

Children enjoy a varied range of activities including role play, crafts, reading, construction and outdoor play. Their overall development is promoted and they are encouraged to explore and learn about their environment as the childminder has a good understanding of child development. She has attended additional training with regard to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and uses this to inform her daily practice. However, younger children would further benefit from a more structured approach to the planning of their activities. They are offered activities and play opportunities that are thoughtfully adapted by the childminder so that children are sufficiently challenged but feel that they can participate: for example, when participating in a threading activity, the childminder encourages children to do as much for themselves as possible but offers more support to the younger children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. The childminder ensures that she is aware of their individual needs and meets these well. She discusses children's routines with parents and ensures that these are adhered to as much as possible. The children show care and consideration for each other, playing together and learning about sharing and turn-taking. Their behaviour is good and they are confident within the childminder's home, happily making choices about their play. This is further reinforced by the childminder's good understanding of the importance of setting consistent and appropriate boundaries for all children. There is also a behaviour management policy which is shared with parents, ensuring that they are aware of how this is handled and they are able to promote a consistent approach.

Children are learning about other cultures and ways of life. The childminder appreciates the importance of providing a range of activities and resources to promote positive images of our diverse society. Children have regular access to toys and books which give them information about other cultures and lifestyles. These include dressing-up clothes, musical instruments and both factual and fictional books. They also learn about their local community through routine outings to local parks, toddler group and school. Children benefit from the childminder's good relationship with parents. They are kept well informed of their child's progress and activities and all parents have a copy of the childminder's policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, the needs of all children who attend are met. The childminder organises all aspects of her work very well, helping the children to feel comfortable, relaxed and at home. Children are able to initiate their own play and learning as play resources are well organised and easily accessible. The individual requirements and details of the children are well documented and the childminder ensures that she has all relevant information and documentation to enable her to consistently meet their needs.

Children's overall development is well promoted because the childminder pays attention to the organisation of her daily work. This ensures that children are always offered a wide range of stimulating activities and that all are able to participate. Children's health, safety and welfare are promoted by the clear policies and procedures which are in place. This will be further improved as the childminder continues to develop these to support her practice. Children also benefit from the childminder's excellent commitment to training and improving her practice. She has attended several training sessions on a range of subjects and is currently working towards a childcare qualification.

Improvements since the last inspection

At her last inspection the childminder was asked to implement a policy regarding the exclusion of children who are ill and to request written parental permission for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. This permission is now in place and the childminder has developed a policy giving clear guidance to parents regarding the procedure for children who are unwell. These measures further improve the health and welfare of minded children.

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.
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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?
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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):

- consider developing a structured approach to the planning of activities, particularly for younger children
- continue to develop policies and procedures to support childminding practice.

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