



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY268764
Inspection date	17 March 2006
Inspector	Kerry Freshwater

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 outstanding. 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 three children aged 12, 9 and 4 years in Hertford. The ground and first floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five all day. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She childminder attends the local childminder and toddler groups. The family has a pet gold fish.

The childminder welcomes children with special educational needs. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is a Support Childminder for the NCMA.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because the childminder has a highly effective approach to health and hygiene. Thorough procedures and documents are in place to ensure that children's individual needs are very well met. Accident and medication records are in place, appropriate treatment given and parent's signatures and consents have been obtained. The childminder reduces the risk of cross infection by ensuring that her home is always clean and well maintained. Children learn about the importance of being healthy through the childminder's skilful support and guidance. For example, they know to wash their hands after using the toilet, before food and cookery activities and they learn about germs as they talk about keeping themselves clean. Children use individual towels, liquid soap and are gently reminded about hand washing by the child-centred signs that are displayed in the bathroom.

Physical activity is highly regarded and children are able to develop their physical skills in a wide range of activities on a daily basis. They enjoy daily walks and play in the garden on the slide and bikes. They use various climbing apparatus at local parks and have fun dancing to music and balancing with bean bags. This helps to develop their coordination and physical abilities. Children are able to rest and sleep as they need to.

Children are clearly aware of good nutrition and understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They carry out interesting activities using stickers and books relating to healthy eating and the recommended five fruit and vegetables per day. Children enjoy regular drinks and an excellent range of healthy snacks such as fruits, savoury biscuits, cereal bars, toast, bread sticks and cheese. The childminder is happy and confident to meet individual dietary requirements of which she has obtained clear information from parents. She works closely with the parents to ensure that these requirements are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a safe, warm and welcoming environment. The childminder has an excellent understanding of safety issues, children have space to move around safely and freely as she has minimised risks to keep them free from harm. Children learn about danger as the childminder helps them to understand how to keep themselves safe. Children know not to jump on furniture, never to touch the cooker and not to throw toys in case they hurt themselves or others. They practise fire evacuation and learn about road safety as they cross the road. Through discussion children learn about stranger danger and what to do if they ever get lost. They

participate in various activities to promote the safety message such as 'Safety on the railways' with Thomas The Tank Engine.

All children have access to a superb range of quality toys and resources which are suitable for their ages and stages of development. Resources have been carefully chosen to support children's play and are regularly checked for hygiene and safety. All children readily help themselves from the highly organised selection of interesting play equipment so they can follow their own interests. They enjoy playing with the themed equipment that the childminder has collected such as the 'hospital' box and the exciting story sacks that the childminder has produced.

All required documents and procedures are in place and are consistently maintained to safeguard children's welfare. Children are very well protected as the childminder has a clear understanding of child protection, she has covered this subject within her various training courses and has booked to attend a specific child protection course in May 2006 to update her knowledge further and inform her practice. Children are closely monitored at all times and the childminder gives top priority to their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has a exceptional understanding of child development which enables her to offer flexible, high quality care, which is suited to each child. Children enjoy an extensive range of activities, which contributes to their creativity and imagination. They create a puppet theatre from boxes, make Chinese wreaths and lanterns, produce valentine collage pictures, complete hand and finger printing, make bread and cakes, enjoy hospital and shop role play and play traffic jams. Children enjoy exciting new textures as they explore cooked spaghetti, gloop and coloured rice and find out about everyday items as they investigate the treasure basket.

Children display high levels of confidence in their daily activities and are developing very good independence skills, as they busy themselves and become absorbed in their activities. Their early communication skills are extremely well supported through effective interaction with the childminder as they enthusiastically discuss their activities and what they are doing. For example they discuss the changes to the mixture as water is added to flour, talking about the texture and how it feels on their hands. Children are well motivated as they enjoy a wide range of books and props put together by the childminder into innovative story sacks which bring the stories alive. For example, 'Handa's Surprise', 'The tiger who came to tea' and 'The three little pigs'. Their mathematical development is extended as children learn about weight and measure when they weigh ingredients, play number games, match shapes and produce symmetry pictures. Children make positive relationships, they play exceptionally well and enjoy the company of other children at local toddler groups and the park.

The childminder is skilful in encouraging children to make very good progress in all areas of development. For example, children extend their knowledge as they participate in a wide range of activities and themes such as insects, music, the seasons, colour and shape. Children learn about Chinese New Year and have fun

eating different Chinese foods with chopsticks. They are able to demonstrate what they know as the childminder uses skilful questioning to make them think. The childminder finds out about the children's skills, interests and needs and builds on this information effectively to help children to fulfil their potential. Children's progress and development is observed and monitored as the childminder carries out a variety of formal observations to enable her to address their individual needs in her activity planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs and characters are clearly understood and respected by the childminder. All children are welcomed and included in the provision. The childminder provides a meaningful range of activities and resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and to help children understand differences and similarities. For example, children use a wide range of books and play with characters from different cultures, they acknowledge different festivals like Chinese New Year and Divali. They taste different foods, make pizzas and practise using chopsticks. Children learn to value differences through sensitive discussions, stories and the use of developmentally appropriate resources. They are receptive to the childminder's inspiring role modelling.

Children's behaviour is exceptional. The childminder has a positive, clear and consistent approach to behaviour management, which means children know what is expected of them and they feel secure. Children learn about how they should behave through discussion, gentle reminders and constant praise and encouragement for good behaviour and achievements. Children play very happily together in the childminder's care, they learn to share and take turns as the childminder uses her effective skills to encourage and help them develop their relationships.

The excellent partnerships with parents and carers contributes significantly to the children's care and well-being. The childminder provides detailed information about the service that she provides including her clear, well written policies, daily routines, family details and written information to show how she is meeting the National Standards and related outcomes. Daily report sheets are completed to inform parents about what children have done during the day. Parents have the opportunity to comment and add additional information to ensure a two way communication system is in place. Parent questionnaires have been devised and completed to enable the childminder to reflect upon and review her practise. This ensures that children's care, well-being and development is greatly enhanced.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is enriched by the childminder's enthusiasm, her highly effective organisation of time, space and resources and her committed approach. Consistent routines and effective support ensure children feel a sense of belonging and are part

of a bigger family. The childminder is highly motivated and actively seeks and attends regular training opportunities. This ensures she is well informed and able to implement new ideas and childcare practices within the childminding setting. The childminder has completed the Introduction to Childminding Practice (ICP), the Developing Childminding Practice (DCP) and Extending Childminding Practice (ECP) qualifications. She has just completed the Herts Quality Standards (HQS) award and holds a current first aid certificate.

Children benefit from the childminder's sound and secure knowledge of child development. All required documentation is in place and regularly reviewed, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being. The high quality policies and procedures are shared with parents, which means they clearly know about the provision and the care their child receives. The childminder meets the needs of the range of the children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure that all required signatures are obtained in the medication record book. Medication consents are now obtained and administration recorded appropriately.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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