



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY304206
Inspection date	21 November 2006
Inspector	Hilary Preece
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 2005. She lives with her partner and child aged two years in Bushey, close to all local amenities. The whole of the premises is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of two children at any one time. She is currently minding two children under five on a part-time basis. The childminder does not drive but lives within walking distance of local schools and shops. She uses public transport with the children. The family has a tortoise.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She attends a local group for babies and toddlers.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children lead healthy and active lifestyles. They learn about healthy living through daily routines such as hand washing and by using individual flannels and towels to prevent the spread of germs. They have many varied opportunities to enjoy physical activity. These range from regular walks in the fresh air to explore the local environment to developing strength and confidence as they complete assault courses in the garden. Children can rest and sleep according to their needs in order to feel refreshed. Their emotional well-being is nurtured as they snuggle happily in bed with their favourite toy or comfort blanket.

Children are well-nourished. They benefit from freshly cooked meals and healthy snacks that provide them with a balanced diet, and drinks are readily available. Children with fussy appetites are encouraged to try new foods and individual dietary needs are discussed readily with parents.

Children stay fit and healthy because the childminder has a well-documented sickness policy that protects children from the spread of infections and ensures they receive appropriate care if they are hurt or fall ill. Parents are kept well-informed of any health issues as these are clearly recorded. They are further protected because the childminder follows appropriate hygiene procedures around the home and when preparing food.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming home that is safe and secure. All reasonable measures have been taken to minimise risks so that children can move around and play safely. An effective risk assessment is used to ensure that the environment and equipment remains safe and suitable. Effective procedures ensure children are protected in an emergency. There is a clear evacuation procedure, fire appliances are on hand and potential fire hazards have been minimised.

Children use a good range of safe and suitable equipment. This meets safety standards for their stage of development and is organised so that they have easy access to what they need. Further storage is well-organised. Children have plenty of versatile space in which to play and explore safely as resources have been arranged thoughtfully.

Children are kept safe when out and about as the childminder ensures she always carries a phone and emergency supplies. Children wear a wrist band with a contact number on that ensures they can be safely reunited should they become separated. Children learn to keep themselves safe from a young age as the childminder uses effective ways of teaching them how to behave safely, such as holding hands when walking, recognising road crossing symbols and sitting still on the bus.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder follows appropriate child protection procedures in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. This ensures that any child who may potentially be at risk is monitored and appropriate referral made.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children make very positive relationships, are highly confident and respond warmly to the childminder's interest in all that they do. They relate well to each other and are beginning to distinguish right from wrong from an early age. They recognise if they have been unkind by immediately saying sorry and offering a hug. Children are becoming independent as they practise undressing and feeding themselves.

Children gain new knowledge and skills by taking part in a broad range of stimulating activities and play opportunities. They enjoy regular walks to the local nature reserve to feed ducks and horses and develop their social skills when playing with others at a toddler group. They explore with interest a range of unusual creative experiences such as playing with cornflour, colouring rice and bubble painting.

Children rapidly develop good communication skills and express themselves confidently. Everything they say is listened to with interest, which develops their confidence in using language, and young children are encouraged to listen to instruction very carefully to help them understand. Children choose their favourite story books and enjoy snuggling up with the childminder. They show interest in the story and delight in recognising their favourite characters. Children are very enthusiastic in their play and are able to follow their own interests, for example repeating a particularly enjoyable activity that they remembered from the day before. This allows them to consolidate their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children quickly settle and feel part of the setting. Older children contribute in positive ways by drawing pictures to illustrate the 'golden rules' to be displayed on the wall and writing a Christmas story for the younger children. This develops their self-esteem by giving them a sense of self-worth and belonging. Children develop growing confidence as they are praised and encouraged in everything they do. They proudly talk about their paintings displayed on the wall or in scrap books, which helps foster their sense of belonging. Children receive equal chances and respect. They develop awareness of diversity and the wider society by using some thoughtful resources that include books, dressing-up clothes and musical instruments from around the world.

Children show respect and are aware of the needs of others. They learn to be kind and caring through delightful practical experiences. For example, young children carefully wash their dolls in the baby bath in preparation for the arrival of a new baby. They learn to share resources and are generally very considerate and affectionate towards one another. Children learn how to resolve conflict and manage their behaviour well as the childminder uses highly effective strategies and is very consistent in reinforcing boundaries.

Children are cared for well and their individual needs are met because the childminder works closely with parents and carers. They are kept well-informed about day-to-day care through regular discussion or daily diaries, and confidentiality is always respected. Parents receive clear

information about the setting's policies and procedures. However, there is no complaints procedure to follow should there be any concerns, which means parents may not know how to resolve any problems.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a well-organised setting where the childminder shows a high regard for the children's overall care and development. Space, time and resources are used effectively to enhance the experiences for children both within the home and in the local community. Children's welfare, care and learning are promoted by some clear policies and procedures with most documentation being well-maintained and up-to-date.

The childminder is proactive in developing her practice. She shows regard for the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum, which helps her provide enriched experiences for children. She has completed the Introduction to Childminding Practice certificate and is currently in the process of updating her first aid skills, which will ensure children continue to receive appropriate care.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was advised to improve the safety of the environment by assessing the risks to children, and to obtain written permission from parents to administer medication and take children on outings. Since then the childminder has moved to another address. She has carried out a thorough risk assessment of the premises that ensures children can play in a safe and secure environment. The partnership with parents has improved as they now give written permission for a full range of activities or situations as part of the written agreement.

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

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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):

- improve knowledge and develop systems for the recording of complaints, in line with regulations.

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