



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY311294
Inspection date	25 January 2006
Inspector	Susan Ennis

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 husband, grown daughter and two foster children aged twelve and sixteen years in Stevenage. The whole of the ground floor and one bedroom of the childminder's house is used for childminding. The garden is not currently suitable for use.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children and currently cares for two children under five on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group. The family has one dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and comfortable home environment. They are well nourished and their health is promoted due to the childminder's good understanding of healthy eating. They are offered nutritious meals and snacks recorded on a weekly menu plan. All dietary requirements are fully discussed with the parents and an accurate record maintained. Children's health is promoted by the childminder's paperwork which documents all of the necessary policies and permissions.

Children participate in a wide range of physical activities, contributing to their good health. The childminder ensures that there are daily opportunities for physical activities such as walking and running in the park, dancing to action rhymes and using the sit and ride toys at Childminder Group, all of which encourages the children's coordination and spatial awareness. The children are beginning to understand good health and hygiene procedures, for example they know to wash their hands before eating. They are also able to rest and be active according to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment in which they are able to move around independently and freely. The childminder is mostly aware of the risks and carries out daily checks of the hazards, for example, electric sockets are covered and safety gates closed. Children are learning about keeping themselves safe through the childminder discussing issues such as 'Stranger Danger' and 'The Green Cross Code'. However, the lock on the cloakroom door cannot be opened from the outside and is accessible to children therefore compromising their safety.

Children are able to independently select activities from a wide range of quality 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 learning. Children's welfare is promoted because the childminder has an effective understanding of child protection procedures. However, she does not have all the relevant publications in place which could jeopardise the process if concerns arose.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled, confidently choosing activities and resources to play with. They relate very well to the childminder who extends their play and learning experiences through asking open ended questions such as 'What colour is the duck?' and 'What noise does it make?' The children can participate because activities are adapted to meet their individual needs. The childminder prepares the activities beforehand so

that the children are stimulated and their limited concentration maintained.

Children are interested in their play because the childminder uses her sound knowledge of child development to plan activities that promote their learning. The children enjoy watching the birds eat from the bird table in the garden increasing their knowledge and understanding of the natural world. They also enjoy contributing to the colour table bringing in items from home in the appropriate weekly colour.

Children are able to access resources because they are stored at the children's level and are clearly labelled. The children make positive relationships with the childminder responding well when asked to do something and coming to her for a cuddle when they need one.

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 each child's individual needs and meets them effectively. A new child was encouraged to settle by having a months settling in period with various visits taking place over the month. When the placement eventually started he settled very quickly and happily. The children show affection for the childminder, looking to her for security and praise when having completed an activity. Behaviour is good and is reinforced by the childminder's sound understanding of the importance of consistent and appropriate boundaries for all children.

The children are becoming aware of the wider society because the childminder promotes positive images by providing a range of activities and resources including dolls and books. The children also celebrate Chinese New Year and Australia Day together with visits into the local community such as the library.

The children's needs are verbally discussed with parents and recorded in more depth in their daily diaries. This keeps the childminder and parents up to date with any new stages of development or concerns. An investigation log is not currently in place. This could lead to misunderstandings between the parents and childminder and have an unsettling affect on the children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her work effectively, helping the children feel comfortable, relaxed and secure. The individual needs of all children are met by the childminder through her procedures and policies, ensuring that all relevant information is in place. Children's safety could be compromised because the childminder does not hold a current first aid certificate.

The childminder uses her child care knowledge to assist her in planning a safe, stimulating and caring environment for the children. She ensures that the children are offered a wide range of stimulating activities that all are able to participate in. Overall,

the needs of all children are well met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration. 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):

- obtain a current first aid certificate
- obtain a copy of 'What to do if you think a child is being abused.'
- devise an investigation log

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