



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY317099
Inspection date	20 April 2006
Inspector	Kim Wailling

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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2005. She lives with her husband and one child aged 14 months in Sandridge, St Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house and one bedroom upstairs is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding five children under five all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder walks to local pre-school groups to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler groups and takes children to the

local park. The family have no pets. The childminder is an accredited member of National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because the childminder has in place good procedures which meet the health and nutritional needs of all children who attend. For example, the childminder asks parents to complete individual profile sheets which indicate children's specific health and dietary needs. Children's health is further protected as the childminder follows good hygiene practices, such as when changing children's nappies.

Children have a choice of foods for snack which includes fresh fruit. Drinks are offered on a frequent basis, each child having their own individual beaker. Children are helped to understand about food preparation as the childminder involves them in cookery sessions. The childminder works very closely with parents when caring for infants to ensure that their individual routines and preferences are fully met.

Children rest or sleep according to their needs as the day is organised to fit in with their individual requirements. Children take part in exercise on a regular basis as the childminder makes use of the nearby park. The rear garden is available for children to play in. There is a small range of equipment for children to use, such as a see-saw, as well as being involved in planned activities such as gardening and planting sunflower seeds. This means that children physical wellbeing is well fostered.

Children's health is adequately protected if they have an accident as the childminder holds a current first aid qualification and keeps a first aid box for childminding purposes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a very clean and well maintained environment. They can move around freely in the house as the childminder has arranged furniture and the storage of toys to create uncluttered spaces. The childminder is aware of the need to be vigilant and makes adaptations where necessary taking into account children's ages. For example, keeping toys with small pieces out of reach when infants are present. Children can use the garden when weather permits as it is secure and orderly. This means that there are satisfactory systems in place to keep children safe.

Children's welfare is adequately protected because the childminder has appropriate documentation in place. For example, an up to date attendance register that records children's arrival and departure times accurately. Written emergency evacuation procedures are in place but are not practised with the children, which impacts on its

effectiveness. The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and the procedure to follow if she had any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children show interest in the many toys and activities on offer. They benefit from having access to the garden and from being taken on outings to the local park. Children initiate their own play as the setting is well organised to do this. Opportunities are given for sustained play so that children can create their own games, such as elaborate tea parties. Toys are rotated on a regular basis to provide challenge and to stimulate interest. Favourite toys, books and story tapes are always available to children which help them feel comfortable within the setting.

Children's learning is well promoted. The childminder plays with the children, engages them in conversation and takes a genuine interest in what they have to say. She is aware of the developmental needs of infant, younger and older children and plans activities, such as making a number chart, which children happily participate in. Overall, all children are offered a good range of activities and experiences to promote their learning and enjoyment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals. The childminder is well informed about children's current interests and uses this information to help children settle into her care. Her home is comfortable and well organised. This means that children are able to find their favourite toys, such as board games, and play happily. The childminder gently encourages the children to manage their own behaviour well. She has attended recent training to help children under five develop social skills.

Children are helped to gain an understanding of the wider community as the childminder is aware of the importance of promoting an understanding of this. There are many books and toys available for children to use which promotes an understanding of the wider community.

Children benefit from the friendly relationship that the childminder has established with their parents. Children are helped to settle into the care of the childminder well as procedures which take into account the needs of children and the requirements of parents for flexible childcare are in place. For example, recently the childminder, accompanied by her daughter, made a 'home visit' to meet a younger child to help ease the transition into her care. Information about the setting, including a procedure to record compliments and complaints, is well written and shared with parents prior to childminding commencing. Consequently, partnership with parents is effective which enhances the welfare, care and learning of children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, the needs of the children are met. The childminder organises her time very well. For example, the daily routine includes time for unhurried play, snacks, rest, taking and collecting children promptly from pre-school groups. This means that children are given a sense of security within a familiar pattern.

In addition, the childminder has established a comprehensive portfolio which includes policies and procedures that are necessary for the efficient and safe management of the setting and to promote the welfare and care of children. She is committed to improving the service she offers to children and their families. For example, she has identified areas, such as outdoor play, which she hopes to extend and has drafted an action plan to help her achieve her aim.

The childminder has an employment background in childcare and as a result has attended many training courses, such as child protection, which are relevant to her current role as a childminder. In her new capacity she has undertaken a local authority approved childminding pre-registration course, however does not as yet hold a certificate of completion. Further training is planned to ensure that children's needs are continued to be 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

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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):

- practise emergency evacuation procedures
- review procedures for gaining parents permission for photographs of their children to be taken
- provide evidence of completion of a local authority approved pre-registration course.

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