



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY335275
Inspection date	11 January 2007
Inspector	Gyatri Rupal
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 2006. She lives with her partner and their one-year-old child in Baldock, Hertfordshire. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group and takes children to the local library. The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time and is currently minding two children on a part-time basis. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. The family has a cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean environment, where they sleep and rest according to their home routine. They participate in a range of activities which help them to stay healthy. For example, young children play with push-along toys in the home, ride tricycles in the garden and older children walk to parks and play simple games in the garden which contribute to the development of their physical skills. The childminder follows current and appropriate health and hygiene guidelines and has policies and procedures in place to protect the children from infection and act in their best interests if they require medical attention. This impacts positively on the children's health and well-being. The childminder holds a valid first aid certificate and is confident she can administer this to protect the children's health and prevent them feeling distressed. Children are beginning to learn about a simple hygiene routine such as washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Children are nourished and have regular drinks to make sure they do not feel hungry or thirsty. They bring a packed lunch from home and enjoy fresh fruit, raisins and crackers at snack times and filter water throughout the day. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure the children's health and dietary needs are met. Young children are developing their confidence by feeding themselves.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared in a safe and secure environment as the childminder carries out daily visual risk assessments and takes appropriate steps to minimise the risks. For example, safetygates are in place to prevent children going in 'out of bound' areas. Space and resources are organised to allow the children to move around safely and independently whilst they play. Young children use suitable and safe equipment which is well maintained and meets their needs. The childminder helps children understand how to avoid accidents through sensitive reminders and regular routines, such as not climbing on furniture so they do not fall and explaining the dangerous hazards in the park and how to cross the road safely. A fire drill is in place to teach the children the dangers of fire and the importance of escaping quickly in an emergency.

Children's welfare is protected as the childminder is aware of her responsibility to protect the children in her care and has a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms to look for along with the procedures to follow if she has any concerns. All supporting documents are in place to reinforce her practice and all records are kept up to date to provide evidence of this practice to ensure children remain fully protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children are settled and happy in the welcoming environment. They develop confidence as they initiate their own play and explore an easily accessible, suitable range of play resources. They play with each other and share their toys. However, older children lack play and learning opportunities, due to limited activities and play resources available for them. Young children

are becoming strong communicators as they try to share their thoughts with each other. The childminder interacts appropriately to encourage children's learning. She encourages children to sing along to nursery songs and read simple picture books. Children regularly visit a parent and toddler group where they learn to share. They learn about colours and numbers within their daily play. Young children feel comfortable approaching the childminder for a cuddle when feeling tired, knowing the childminder will respond affectionately. A close and caring relationship increases the children's sense of trust and helps them develop a strong sense of self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected because the childminder works closely with parents. The childminder is aware that some children may have learning difficulties and is proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such children are identified. Young children enjoy activities which are suitable for their age and stages of development. Children behave well, responding positively to the appropriate expectations explained to them clearly and sensitively by the childminder. Young children feel a sense of belonging as they bring their muslin cloth from home for comfort and have a designated place in the childminder's home to keep their belongings. A worthwhile settling-in procedure helps children and parents feel secure and at ease with the childminder.

Children learn about the local community through visiting a local parent and toddler group where they learn to socialise with each other and take turns. However, there are limited opportunities and play resources for children to learn about different lifestyles, disabilities and cultural practices which means children's awareness of the wider world is not sufficiently promoted. The childminder establishes positive working relationships with parents. They exchange information frequently and review contracts, policies and procedures regularly. A complaints policy and system to record any concerns from parents has been developed to ensure an open and honest relationship can be made and to ensure prompt action can be taken on any concerns. Children's well-being is fully promoted because the childminder is committed to working in partnership with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are relaxed and feel secure due to an appropriate organisation. The childminder draws on her experience and parenting skills as a mother and with her qualification and experience of working with young children. This is evident in the calm, patient and caring manner she displays. Young children are developing their skills as they have independent access to a wide range of play resources. However, older children have limited play experience and their knowledge of diversity is hindered due to limited activities. Young children are confident when they initiate their own play. The childminder has organised a system to store records and documentation which is used in most areas to promote the care, welfare and learning of children. Records are shared with parents and they can access these at any time, this impacts positively upon the children's care. Children are protected as the childminder ensures people who have

access to the children are suitable and parents' consents are in place for the adults who may collect the children. Overall, the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. 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):

- increase the range of resources and activities available for children to broaden their awareness of equality of opportunity and diversity
- ensure that sufficient, suitable toys and play materials are available for indoor and outdoor play to enable the school age children to develop their skills.

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