

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY347439
Inspection date	16 July 2007
Inspector	Gail Groves
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 registered in 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged one year and four-years-old in Watford, Hertfordshire. The whole of the childminder's house is 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 one child who attends on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group, takes children to the local library and to the local park.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill because the childminder follows current and appropriate environmental health and

hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, children with infectious illnesses are excluded for appropriate periods of time to prevent cross-infection, they use their own individual towel when drying their hands and the childminder ensures that the garden is not contaminated by animal faeces before children are allowed out to play. In addition children learn to understand simple, good health and hygiene practices. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating and learn to put dirty tissues in the bin after they have wiped their nose. As a result, they are developing appropriate hygiene routines for later life.

Children are appropriately nourished and their health and dietary needs are discussed with their parents before they begin to attend so that these can be suitably met. Children are encouraged to taste different foods and are praised when they do so. They choose what they would like to eat from a variety of fruit at snack time and are allowed to enjoy eating this at their own pace. Drinks are always readily available for children to access independently in their own cups so that they do not become dehydrated. Children have some opportunities to learn about healthy eating. For example, they learn to call fruit and vegetables 'sports candy' and know that these foods provide them with energy when they are being active. As a result, they are beginning to develop an understanding of what is required to maintain good health.

Children take part in regular physical activity both indoors and outdoors and are therefore developing good muscle skills and coordination. For example, in the garden they use swings, slides, bikes and a trampoline. They visit the park to play ball games and use the large scale equipment such as the climbing frame, roundabout and slides. Daily walks to and from school encourage children to develop stamina and enjoy the fresh air. Music and movement sessions and visits to indoor play areas also extend the children's physical skills. Active play is balanced by less energetic play and children rest and sleep according to their needs so that they do not become overtired.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment in which the risks to their safety have been minimised. As a result, they can move around and access resources safely and independently. For example, the corners of the dining table are fitted with plastic bumpers to prevent children banging their heads, toys are safely available in low-level boxes and the childminder regularly tests and records that the smoke alarms are in full working order. In addition, children use good quality, well maintained suitable and safe equipment which meets their differing needs. Consequently, they are able to play and take part in activities safely.

Appropriate procedures help to keep children safe on outings. Young children are strapped into a buggy and older children walk holding each other's hands or the side of the buggy. They are not allowed to run and must always hold hands when crossing the road. Children have some opportunities to learn to keep themselves safe through practical experiences during their daily routine. For example, they have practised the emergency evacuation procedure so that they know what to do in the event of a fire and when they are out walking with the childminder they discuss road safety rules and learn that they must press the button and look for the green man before using the pedestrian crossing.

The childminder has some understanding of her role in child protection and is able to put some appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. However her ability to recognise the

signs and symptoms of abuse and her knowledge of how to deal with possible child protection issues is limited. As a result, children's welfare is potentially not fully protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well and are very happy in the setting. Consequently, they readily join in with all of the play and learning opportunities provided for them and develop confidence and self-esteem. They are given frequent opportunities to make decisions and eagerly explore and investigate their environment. For example, they decide whether they wish to play inside or outside and can independently select what they wish to do from a range of resources. This allows them to pursue their own individual interests and provides them with opportunities to extend their thinking and learning. The childminder knows and understands the children well and provides appropriate support to meet their individual needs so that they are able to make progress in their development. She is always interested in what they do and say and listens carefully to their views and ideas. As a result, children relate well to others and are developing good communication and social skills.

Children are involved in a broad range of interesting planned activities and spontaneous events, which support all areas of their development and learning. For example, they develop small muscle skills as they cut with scissors, draw with pencils and learn to thread cereal hoops onto liquorice laces to make necklaces. They develop their imagination as they play with cars, dolls and home corner equipment or devise their own role play scenarios such as lying on the floor and groaning as they pretend to be ill in bed. They explore what they can do with paint, glue and boxes as they make junk models and use playdough, crayons and pens to extend their creative skills. They visit parent and toddler groups to mix with other children and develop social skills and they learn about the world around them during outings to the farm. Listening to stories and looking at books as well as talking to the childminder and to each other supports the development of good language and vocabulary skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and included and feel a strong sense of belonging because they are treated as part of the family. As a result, they work harmoniously together and willingly help with tasks such as laying the table at meal times or tidying away the toys before lunch. They are confident and well behaved and clearly understand what is required of them. The childminder's house rules emphasise the value she places on politeness and showing respect to other people and she shares these with parents to ensure that children have continuity and consistency. Children are expected to apologise if they hurt someone and are helped to share and take turns with resources. Consequently, they are becoming aware of their own needs and are learning to respect the needs of others. They respond well to these high expectations for their behaviour and show well developed social skills.

Children have their individual needs met because the childminder works in close partnership with parents and carers. She gives parents copies of all of her written policies and procedures so that they are fully informed about the care she provides and she talks to them on a daily basis about their children's progress. In addition she provides a written daily diary for the parents of children under two-years-old in which she records what they have eaten, how long they have slept and how many dirty nappies they have had. She is aware of the requirement

for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to be offered appropriate help and would liaise closely with their parents in order to meet their children's particular needs.

Children make choices and take decisions throughout their daily routine. For example, they decide what filling they would like in their sandwich, choose what flavour yoghurt they would like to eat and decide what activities they would like to take part in. They are encouraged to show independence in self-care skills such as washing and drying their hands, making their own sandwiches at lunch time and putting on their own shoes with the minimum of support. As a result, they show high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Children benefit from some activities and resources which reflect positive images of culture, gender, and disability. However these are limited and as a result children are not fully able to appreciate and value diversity or develop a positive awareness of the differences and similarities between people.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of all children and shows a commitment to improvement. For example, she has recently attended a training course to enhance her skills when working with parents. She has a range of written policies and procedures which work in practice to promote positive outcomes for children and all of the necessary documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place. Record keeping systems are used well to meet children's needs.

The childminder's efficient and well planned use of her time and the available space contributes to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. For example, she is careful to ensure that any resources required for planned activities are gathered together in advance so that children do not become bored or lose interest whilst she prepares them. She also organises and prepares the food for children's meals before they arrive so that she has more time available to play and interact with them. In addition, the premises and resources are well organised and the indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximise play opportunities for children.

Overall 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 knowledge and understanding of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and how concerns are reported in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures
- increase the opportunities for children to develop their understanding and appreciation of the diversity within society.

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