

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY356597
Inspection date	26 June 2008
Inspector	Susan Parker
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 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged six and four in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire.

The childminder is registered to care for no more than 4 children under 8 years. She is currently caring for three children under eight.

The ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder drops off and collects children at the local pre-school. She attends the local childminder group and takes children to the library, local farm and nearby parks.

The childminder has a cat and two Guinea Pigs.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted as the childminder ensures that she has a valid first aid certificate and a suitably stocked first aid kit, which will ensure that children who have accidents are treated efficiently and effectively. Children who are unwell or on medication will benefit from the childminder's good practice, policies and procedures.

Children's knowledge and understanding of being healthy is actively encouraged through provision of healthy eating menus, meals and snacks. They are learning about the importance of why they need to wash their hands before meals and after touching the pets or messy activities. The children's dietary needs are met as the childminder provides parents with a menu planner and will also discuss any individual requirements with parents, and keeps a record of these, ensuring that any special diets are observed.

Children have regular access to a secure garden. They have regular physical exercise as they explore the local woodland area, regularly visit local farms and use a wide variety of equipment. Children visit local playgrounds regularly to experience using large physical play equipment. This actively promotes children's opportunities to develop their body skills and explore a wide range of physical movements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is adequately promoted as the childminder has an awareness of possible risks and takes steps to minimise these. For example, she uses a lock on the front door, which prevents the children from exiting the home, unsupervised. Children are beginning to learn about keeping themselves safe as the childminder discusses and practises fire safety and evacuation procedures with them. However, the childminder does not have working smoke alarms on each level of her home.

Children are supervised at all times and accompanied in the garden and upstairs to the bathroom. However, there are a couple of protruding screws on the Guinea Pig run and on the handrail on the playhouse, which could cause injury to a child.

Children benefit from a warm and child-centred environment where they have access to a very good range of exciting toys and activities, suitable child sized furniture and resources, which promotes a welcoming atmosphere for children.

Children's welfare is protected as the childminder has an understanding of child protection procedures and has the required contact telephone numbers and documentation in place. She has attended a recent safeguarding children course, which has ensured that she is up to date with current legislation and procedures to promote the safety of any children in her care. However, only the children's contracted times of attendance are recorded, not the actual times. This does not fully support good practice in the protection of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled within the home, where they are given a good choice of developmentally appropriate toys and activities. For example, the children enjoy nature rambles in the local woodland and visit a local farm on a regular basis. This promotes children's understanding of nature and the world around them. They have a regularly rotated choice of well-maintained toys and equipment, which engages their interest. They are encouraged to try new things. This effectively provides challenge to the children and aids their developing confidence and self-esteem. Children are happy and relate well to others. The childminder encourages and builds on children's confidence and vocabulary through praise and recognition of achievement. Good conversations and open-ended questions from the childminder, promotes children's developing communication and language skills.

Children's social skills are developing as they mix regularly with other adults and children at local childminding groups and the local libraries' story time. They are able to independently choose and access for themselves, a wide choice of equipment, toys and activities within the home. This effectively promotes the positive development of the children's independence.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected as individuals and the childminder ensures that she is aware of their individual needs and backgrounds. All children are given equal access in all aspects of the childminding including play activities and outings.

There are a good selection of written policies and procedures in place, which underpins the good care provided for the children. The children's behaviour is good. They are praised for kind deeds, achievements and good behaviour. The childminder sets consistent boundaries so that the children know what is expected of them.

The children's awareness of society and other cultures is well promoted. Children mix socially with other children on a regular basis. This promotes their understanding of each other's similarities and differences. They also have access to play resources, such as dolls, figures and books, which depict positive images of people and cultures around the world. Children are encouraged, by the childminder, to show respect for each other and people and pets around them.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. The children's individual needs are confidentially documented and met. The childminder ensures that information on meals, sleep patterns, toileting and activities are effectively shared in a daily diary, with parents and carers each day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the childcare is good. The childminder has completed relevant training courses which enables her to provide well-balanced activities for the children in her care. She efficiently organises her time, resources and equipment which enables children to have regular access to a good range of suitable activities. The individual needs of children are met as the childminder ensures that all necessary information about the children is recorded and shared

confidentially. The children's overall welfare is promoted as all of the required documentation is in place.

The childminder has a good understanding of her role regarding the National Standards and associated regulations. She has ensured that she has provided and shared policies and procedures in place which underpin the good organisation of her childminding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not Applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain certain 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):

- ensure that there is a working smoke detector on each floor of the home
- ensure that children are not exposed to possible risk in the garden, this refers to the protruding screws on the playhouse and the Guinea Pig run
- ensure that the children's actual time of arrival and departure are recorded.

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