

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY359192
Inspection date	29 April 2008
Inspector	Tina Kelly
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 two children aged eight and eleven years. They live in London Colney, a village near St Albans in Hertfordshire. The family home is close to the out of town shopping centre near the M25. Children access the main lounge. They do not generally access upstairs as there is a downstairs cloakroom. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family keeps two rabbits and two cats.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and at the time of inspection one child aged four years was being cared for. The childminder has several arrangements in place for out of school care throughout the week. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and welcoming environment. Their health is monitored as the childminder is fully aware of their individual needs, these are recorded and met in full. Children

learn the importance of hand washing procedures before eating and when they have handled the family pets. The childminder ensures they understand the importance of using soap and washing their hands properly. Each child has their own hand towel, this ensures children are protected from cross contamination.

Children learn about healthy eating through being offered a nutritional diet. Parents are kept informed with a sample menu that includes vegetarian options. The different after school care food arrangements are well managed. Children may have a quick healthy snack or a cooked tea depending on the family requirements and the time the children are collected.

Children have good opportunities for regular physical play. They enjoy plenty of fresh air as they walk to and from school each day. Children are taken to play areas and parks to run, climb and explore new environments.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-managed and secure environment. Appropriate measures are in place around the family home and garden to maintain children's safety. Children are encouraged to make independent choices about their play. They have easy access to a wide range of toys and resources. These are age-appropriate and readily available.

Children learn about their own personal safety in the home as they are reminded to put toys away and not to tread on equipment that may cause them to slip or fall. Children enjoy using the large trampoline that has safety net in place that is set out in the garden. Their safety is monitored by the childminder who watches them as they play, giving advice and support when needed to ensure the children's safety at all times.

The childminder has a good understanding of road safety as she has attended sessions provided by the Hertfordshire County Road Safety Unit at the local school. She encourages the school age children to make safe decisions, they talk about their options and learn about general safety when out in the community.

Children are safeguarded as the childminder has the relevant leaflets provided by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and she covered this important aspect of childcare on training. A statement in the portfolio explains to parents about the childminder's commitment to child protection but the detail is muddled with reference to accident records. Parents are not informed of the procedures that are in place to protect their children in the event of child protection concerns being raised.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. They enjoy her company and chat readily about their play and events from home. Photographs show children of all ages taking part in a wide range of activities and outings. Children are confident in talking about these events, they are able to recall important aspects of their time with the childminder and their friends.

Children enjoy taking part in creative art activities. The large easel provides a good base for children to extend and explore their creative ideas. The childminder encourages the children

to express themselves freely. They pull out the roll of paper from the top of the easel and print from the paint patterns created by the paint on the back board. Children are delighted with their art work. They become engrossed in the activity, managing to paint and to manoeuvre the paper with great skill. They are exceptionally pleased with their own ideas and exclaim 'this is going to really work, this is really beautiful'. They receive excellent support from the childminder who extends their understanding of how the printing works on the back of the paper. She offers to put the child's name on their work and watches as the child paints a large capital letter on their own art work. Children's learning is well supported by a childminder who gives good support but does not direct or limit their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued and included in all aspects of the activities and routines. The childminder has a calm approach to working with children and they have developed a strong sense of belonging. She offers good support in all aspects of the children's routines and care. The childminder has routines and procedures in place to help all children reach their full potential. These strategies cater for learning difficulties and physical disabilities. She would seek advice and discuss issues with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met.

Young children learn about diversity in society through a range of toys, resources and books. Older children do not have the same opportunities to extend their knowledge as the resources are aimed at the lower age range. They are not able to access age-appropriate resources that will promote their understanding of different cultures and the wider world.

The childminder has developed a behaviour management policy that she shares with parents to outline what is acceptable behaviour in her home. She is clear with the children about the boundaries that are in place to ensure their safety and to enhance the children's good manners. She gives straightforward instructions that supports the simple rules that are in place for children to sit down when they eat their lunch and that they need to sit until they have finished and they may then go and play. Children are well managed and are learning good social skills in a calm and effective manner. The childminder is a good role model so children learn to distinguish between right and wrong.

A strong relationship has developed with parents which enhances the children's experiences at the childminders. They are informed about the day to day routines and procedures that are in place as they have access to the childminder's portfolio. They are aware of how to raise a concern if they feel it is necessary. Children benefit from this close working relationship.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder organises her week around various part-time and out of school arrangements. She plans her time to ensure the family home is well prepared and activities are accessible when the children come into her home.

The document toolkit provided by the National Childminding Association ensures appropriate records are maintained for the smooth running of the childminding service. The childminder's policies and procedures work well to promote the care and welfare of the children in her care. The registration portfolio contains all relevant documents and records are in place for the efficient and safe management of the provision.

The childminder is aware of the local support networks, she has attended workshop sessions to extend her knowledge of care and education framework such as the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has the information on display and is working towards adapting her practice in line with strategies that will improve and promote children's care and learning. 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:

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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 parents are aware of the Local Safeguarding Children Board information and the referral procedures
- review practice to ensure children (over 5's) have access to a range of resources that extends and develops their understanding of the wider world.

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