



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	105151
Inspection date	28 September 2006
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 good. 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 May 1997. The childminder lives with her husband and two children aged nine and 11 years in Luton, Bedfordshire. The whole ground floor and a bed room is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder uses her car to take and collect children from school. She takes children to the local parents and toddler group and parks.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years at any one time and is currently minding four children all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The Childminder's husband is also a registered childminder and helps with the children on a regular basis. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The family have two cats as pets.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities, which contribute to their good health. They use various range of large and small apparatus as part of their daily routine to develop their physical development. Children enjoy being active and have a positive attitude to exercise as they attend regular outdoor play and young gymnastic movement sessions with the childminder. Younger children join in the activities enthusiastically because the childminder makes good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Her understanding about appropriate types of physical activities and levels of support gives children confidence to try out new skills, set their own limits and know when to ask for help.

Children understand the importance of good hygiene and personal care through effective routines set by the childminder. Children know the importance of washing their hands before eating their meals and brushing their teeth in the morning and before sleeping. The childminder has excellent practices to maintain children's good health. She is diligent and consistent in her cleaning and food handling routines and ensures she sustains high levels of hygiene in order to minimise the risk of cross infections and to protect children's health.

Children benefit from a healthy diet, because the childminder has implemented some excellent systems to encourage children to have a balanced diet. Wherever possible, they are encouraged to share responsibility for decisions about their health and are given opportunities to independently choose from a variety of healthy snack options. Younger children are developing their confidence as they feed themselves.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment that is welcoming, child friendly and where they can independently access an excellent range of toys and equipment, which meets safety standards, both inside and outdoors. The childminder carefully monitors and supervises children's choice of toys to make sure they are safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development and provide excellent challenges for them. Space is organised effectively and safely to ensure children can play, sleep or have quiet time. The safety of the children is given high priority by the childminder, who talks to them regularly about how to keep themselves safe within the home and on the road. There are some excellent procedures in place to ensure children are safe at all times, and the childminder regularly carries out an effective risk assessment of the premises. She ensures that children are aware of the fire evacuation procedures, which are practised regularly. Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder as she has a secure knowledge of child protection issues including, how to keep children safe, which is in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Boards procedures. The childminder also ensures that parents are well informed of child protection policies and procedures as well.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and confident in the stimulating environment. They gain good levels of self-esteem and confidence in selecting what they want to play with and are happy to play together, alone or with the childminder. The childminder ensures that her timetable is flexible so that children can input their own ideas into their play time. Children benefit well from the wide range of play activities that they are able to participate in, particularly creative, imaginative play opportunities and outdoor activities. Children have a very warm relationship with the childminder, which contributes to their sense of belonging. Their behaviour is exceptional and they have a good understanding about right and wrong, reinforced by the childminder's positive attitude towards their care and development. Their day is full of experiences, which ensure they are making connections about their environment, through attending groups and regular visits to places of interest. Children are motivated and make many good links in their learning as they use their imagination in creative play.

The childminder skilfully supports children's learning by asking appropriate questions, which are suitable for their level. A close and caring relationship increases the children's sense of trust and helps them develop a strong sense of self-esteem. Early communication skills are well supported through the childminder's good quality interaction. For example, the childminder helped a child to prepare lunch during their imaginative play. She introduced some new words to children as she talked to children about the ingredients for preparing the lunch. She involves the children in counting and number songs and the colours around them.

The childminder ensures that she is fully meeting the individual needs of the children through continued training and development. She is developing the 'Birth to three matters' framework and uses elements of the Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure all children are progressing.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued, respected as individuals and are treated with equal concern, because the childminder has a good understanding about equality issues. The childminder is aware that some children may have learning difficulties and is proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified. She ensures that all children's needs are met effectively and that they have a positive attitude to others, through the use of positive images resources and activities in order to raise children's awareness of the wider world.

Children behave well and respond to the childminder's clear and consistent expectations, because the childminder respects them, gives them opportunities to voice their opinions and includes them in devising rules about how they should behave. Children learn good table manners as they all sit together on the table for their meals. For example, a one year old child waits patiently for another child to finish the lunch so that they can leave the table together. Children learn to be polite with each other as they are encouraged to say thank you and please when sharing their things. The childminder praises children for positive behaviour by telling children how proud she is of them when they do something well.

Children benefit greatly from the good partnership the childminder has established with the parents. The parents are kept well informed about most of the policies and procedures. However, parents are not informed about the up dated complaints procedure and parents' consent for taking children in the car is not obtained. There is a good system in place to inform parents of their children's progress, development and daily activities through written feedback and daily discussions. For example, the childminder has devised developmental assessment records using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. All children have their individual scrap-book for keeping samples of their art-craft activities, of which are very proud; this helps develop the children's self esteem.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel at home and at ease due to the effective organisation of space and resources, this has a positive impact on the children's learning and development. They develop confidence and self-esteem because of the well-organised play resources and activities. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximise play opportunities for children. Children independently select their activities and play resources. Most policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. They are shared regularly with parents to keep them well informed about the service and their child's activities. This contributes to the continuity in the children's care. The childminder regularly reviews her contracts with the parents. However, she does not always ensure that parents have returned their consents forms after their signatures. Children are well protected as the childminder ensures that children are supervised at all times and that people with access to the children, are suitably vetted and authorised to collect them. The childminder's commitment, enthusiasm and enjoyment of what she does, positively impacts upon the service she provides for children and their parents. Overall, all children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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 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 parents are informed about updated complaints procedure
- ensure that parents give written permission for their child to be transported in a vehicle and all parents return their appropriate written consents form back after reviewing them.

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