



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123884
Inspection date	27 April 2006
Inspector	Cheryl Langley

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 registered in December 1998. She lives with her husband and 3 children aged 10, 8 and 5 years in West Cheshunt. The whole of the ground floor is used, except the sun room, and minded children have use of the bathroom and the second bedroom on the first floor. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 4 children and is currently minding 3 children.

There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family have 3 pet rabbits and 6 guinea pigs.

The childminder attends the local toddler group on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy activities which contribute to their health. They play in the garden and go for walks regularly to take advantage of the fresh air. Children's physical skills are enhanced and developed with a variety of activities. They play with a broad range of pushing and pulling toys, bikes and sit-on rides and climbing equipment in the garden. In the house they manipulate play-dough and use various tools and equipment to create different shapes and models, they enjoy colouring competitions and decorate boxes for Easter.

Children are cared for in a welcoming home where they understand the importance of regular cleaning routines. They learn about good hygiene and personal care through example and guidance from the childminder. Children help wash the toys in the garden so they are clean and safe to play with. They know why they must wash their hands after playing in the garden, stroking the pets or using the toilet. Children learn about keeping their bodies healthy, such as why they need to visit the dentist or the optician, through discussion and interesting books.

Children are nourished and beginning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They know which type of food is good to eat. Children are encouraged to eat a balanced diet which includes fresh fruit and vegetables. They have access to drinking water throughout the day. The childminder works closely with the parents and the children to ensure their dietary needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder minimises risks to keep the children safe. They move around freely and independently to select toys that are in a good state of repair and appropriate for their ability. This enables them to make choices about their play and activities in a safe environment. The children adhere to rules to keep themselves and their peers free from harm. They know why they need to sit still when they are eating to avoid choking, to take turns on large play equipment and to keep close to the childminder on outings. Through discussion, leading by example and sensitive reminders, the childminder helps children understand how to protect themselves from harm inside and outside of the home. Children learn to be aware of strangers, practise codes for crossing the road safely and know who to contact in an emergency. They practise the fire drill regularly to make sure they are safe in the event of a fire.

The childminder has most of the required procedures and documents in place to ensure the children's safety and welfare is promoted. For example, she has all of the required parental consents and a sound understanding of potential signs of abuse. However, child protection procedures are not in accordance with the Local

Safeguarding Children Boards, to ensure the correct steps are followed should she have any concerns about a child in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a broad variety of exciting play. Most of the activities are child-led, but some are planned to ensure children have different experiences. To give them guidance if it is needed they receive adult guidance when necessary to give them extra support if needed but their independence is promoted as much as possible. The childminder sets them challenges along with a range of stimulating play to aid their development. For example, to learn new spellings and times-tables children compete against the clock.

Children benefit from a range of activities which help develop their knowledge and skills. They learn to recognise different colours as they choose coloured plates. Children count in sequence during nursery rhymes. They learn the meaning of mathematical language weighing ingredients for cooking or to build garages with 'Lego'. Children practise matching and sequencing playing 'pairs' or completing puzzles. Visiting the library for story time and sharing books with the childminder develops their literacy skills.

Helping the childminder care for the family's pet rabbits and guinea-pigs and feeding ducks teaches them about the natural environment. Use of a good selection of creative materials such as pencils, crayons, paint, play dough and materials for junk modelling, encourages the children to represent their ideas in a variety of ways. They enjoy printing tea towels with fabric paint and making cards for special occasions. They express their feelings and experiences through role play with the home-play toys. The children enjoy making cups of tea and preparing meals in the kitchen, or scanning play food for the shop. They enjoy taking part in everyday tasks, such as shopping, to learn about different foods.

Their confidence and self-esteem is developed by the childminder who gives them frequent praise and encouragement at appropriate times. Children's sense of belonging is promoted because the childminder knows the children well, and enjoys their company. She is affectionate and attentive. Children are complimented to show that she values their achievements which she shares with parents. They make positive relationships, finding new friends when they go swimming or visit different activity centres.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a good range of activities and meaningful resources to promote a positive view of the wider world. Books, dolls and activities to celebrate festivals increases children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. The children enjoy finding out what their Chinese birth sign is and cooking

and tasting food from different countries.

The childminder is very aware of the individual needs of the children she cares for. She works hard to ensure these needs are met. All of the children are respected. They follow their daily routine which is discussed with parents. They take part in all the play and activities on offer. Children behave well. They understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age appropriate methods used by the childminder to manage behaviour. Children are developing respect for others, they are considerate, share, take turns and are polite. The childminder provides opportunities for the children to socialise which helps them make positive relationships. Realistic challenges are set, according to the child's abilities and stage of development, which helps them make progress. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem. They feel relaxed and secure and able to make independent choices and try new experiences.

Children benefit from a strong partnership between the childminder and parents who exchange information frequently. They have daily discussions and review contracts, policies and procedures regularly. The childminder and parents share a diary to record the achievements and routines of children. This helps keep both parties well informed of how the child's needs are being met and their developmental progress. However, the childminder has not put a system in place to record or share appropriate action regarding any complaints she may receive, to ensure parents' concerns are respected and acknowledged and children's welfare fully monitored.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The needs of the children are met through generally effective organisation and communication with parents. Space and equipment is prepared so that children can access resources easily and independently. This enables them to make choices about their play. A balance of child led activities and organised play ensure is provided so that children have a range of different enjoyable experiences. They benefit from routines which make them feel secure and relaxed. Children play, eat, sleep and rest as they need to.

Documentation is stored securely and information shared appropriately with parents. Most of the required policies and procedures are in place to help keep children healthy and safe. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge and experience. She is currently updating her first aid qualification and has cover for public liability. Overall, the needs of all the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to put in place a number of documents to support the care of the children. She also agreed to minimise the potential hazards caused by open drains.

A written record, signed by parents, is kept of all medication given to children to keep them healthy and minimise the risk of the incorrect medication being given. Significant issues are shared with parents through a joint diary system. This ensures they work in partnership to manage behaviour, providing consistency and clear boundaries to develop the children's understanding and promote good behaviour. An accurate daily record is kept of the children's attendance so that this information is available in an emergency or for child protection issues. The drains have covers in place to prevent children accessing them.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. 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 the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- devise a system to record complaints, and to share this information which includes any action taken, with parents.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk