



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	124030
Inspection date	27 March 2006
Inspector	Kerry Freshwater

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 2000. She lives with her husband and two children aged thirteen and ten years in Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and the upstairs bathroom. 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 three children under five and three children over five before and after school. The childminder also minds children over eight. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children.

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 play in the garden, go out for walks and visit local open spaces regularly to benefit from the fresh air. Children experience a variety of physical activities using both large and small equipment. For example, they have fun on the climbing apparatus at the local park, use bikes, balls and play with sand in the garden. In the house they enjoy building with bricks, manipulating play dough and completing puzzles.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They are cared for in a welcoming, clean home where they understand the importance of regular cleaning routines to keep them safe and healthy. Children have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands before food or using the toilet and have discussions with the childminder about washing the germs away.

Children are beginning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They know which type of food is good to eat and will help them grow up big and strong. They enjoy a varied range of meals and healthy snacks such as fruit, breadsticks and yogurts. Children have access to regular drinks throughout the day. Younger children are provided with opportunities to feed themselves using spoons and their fingers. The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents. She works with them closely to provide nutritious meals that appeal to the children as well as meeting their dietary needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is a high priority and they are cared for in a home where risks are identified and minimised. They move around safely, freely and independently and adhere to house rules to keep them safe. Children know not to climb on furniture so they do not fall and hurt themselves or others and not to go beyond the kitchen door when the childminder is cooking. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves free from harm inside and outside of the home through discussion and leading by example. Children learn how to cross the road safely, they use the local subway where possible and understand about the lollypop lady. Children have not practised evacuating the house in an emergency and therefore may not be aware of the procedure in the event of a fire.

There is a wide range of safe developmentally appropriate resources placed around the room at child height for easy access. This enables the children to independently select their play and activities safely. Resources are safe, clean and well maintained.

The childminder has the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. For example, she has a good understanding of Child Protection issues and has most of the relevant information to

hand. The childminder is not familiar with the Local Authority guidelines in accordance with the Area Child Protection Committee and this could put children at risk should concerns be raised.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a very broad variety of exciting play and activities which are child-led or planned and organised by the childminder. They receive adult guidance 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.

They benefit from a range of activities which help develop their knowledge and skills. For example, children begin to know different colours when they build with bricks, look at cars on outings and choose implements for drawing. They count as they sing songs and nursery rhymes and they begin to recognise different shapes as they play with the shape sorter. Sharing books helps to develop their language and reading skills. Access to toys and equipment for differing abilities encourages the children's progress. They become confident and adept at completing puzzles and jigsaws and using fine pens and pencils for drawing. Regular use of creative materials such as pencils, crayons, play dough and Hamma beads encourages the children to represent their ideas in a variety of ways. They enthusiastically draw around their hands as they experiment with drawing materials. They have a number of opportunities to express their feelings and experiences through imaginative play with dolls and play kitchen equipment.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is developed with frequent praise and encouragement which is given at appropriate times. Children's sense of belonging is promoted by the childminder who knows them well and values their achievements which she shares with parents. They make positive relationships together and find new friends on outings.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides meaningful resources to promote a positive view of the wider world. Children enjoy books, dolls, puzzles and participate in discussion initiated by things or people that children have seen when out and about or on television. For example Children learn about different people and where foods like rice and pasta originate.

Children are valued and respected. Their individual needs are met as they follow their daily routine which is discussed with parents. Children behave very well. They understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age appropriate methods used by the childminder to manage behaviour. Children are considerate, share, take turns and are polite, remembering to say please and thank

you. The childminder provides a range of opportunities for the children to socialise which helps them make positive relationships with others. Realistic challenges are set by the childminder to help the children develop. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem. They feel relaxed and secure and able to make independent choices about what they want to do.

Children benefit from a very strong partnership between the childminder and parents who exchange information frequently. They have daily discussions about the children, their achievements and what they have been doing. This helps provide consistency in the children's care and keep parents well informed of how their child's needs are being met.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children's needs are met through very sound organisation and good communication with parents. Space and equipment is prepared so that children can access resources easily and independently which enables them to make choices about their play. A balance of child-led activities and organised play ensure children have a range of different enjoyable experiences whilst they are with the childminder. 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. All of the required policies and procedures are in place to help keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge of early years childcare and development however, she has not attended any recent childcare training and may therefore not be fully informed of new practices or information. The Childminder holds a current first aid qualification. Overall, the needs of all the children who attend are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to obtain a copy of the Area Child Protection Committee procedures (ACPC) and the government booklet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – summary'

She has now obtained the government booklet but is yet to obtain the ACPC procedures.

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 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):

- familiarise yourself with the local authority Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures
- consider further training to continue to develop your childcare practice
- devise and practise an emergency escape plan to ensure children know what to do in the event of a fire.

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