



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	124048
Inspection date	19 April 2006
Inspector	Jill Nugent

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 1995. She lives with her husband and four children in a house in Hoddesdon. She has three adult children and one 12 year old child. The whole of the ground floor of the house is used for childminding and also the upstairs bathroom. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family has two pet cats, a hamster and various fish.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. Currently she is minding eight children part-time, three of whom are under five and five of whom are over five. She walks to local schools to take and collect children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder has good procedures in place to promote children's health. She requests all the necessary medical permissions from parents and records any treatment given to children. Her first aid kit is easily accessible so that children can be treated quickly if they have an accident. If children become ill they are looked after appropriately. Parents are made aware of exclusion times for sickness so that children are protected from infection. The childminder is attentive to hygiene. She ensures that the environment is clean. Children learn to wash their hands before eating and after toileting. They rest when feeling tired, in a place where they feel comfortable. Consequently, children stay healthy while in the childminder's care.

Children have a generally healthy diet. They eat according to their parents' wishes and bring their own packed lunches. The childminder ensures that any children having special diets eat appropriate foods. Children have drinks available at all times. They have good opportunities for physical activity. They enjoy playing in the garden with a range of toys, for example, a slide, balls and different wheeled vehicles. They like to use the play equipment in the local parks and also go for walks by the river. Therefore children have plenty of fresh air and keep fit.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises which are safe and secure. They are unable to access any hazardous materials or electrical sockets. There are good fire precautions in place and children know what to do in an emergency. The childminder keeps the playroom door shut so that young children can not go near the staircase. If using the bathroom they are accompanied by the childminder. They play safely in the garden as the large garage is kept locked. On outings children are kept safe in a buggy or on a harness. They learn to cross roads safely, holding hands with the childminder. Therefore, children keep safe at all times.

The childminder ensures that her resources are safe and suitable for children to use. All equipment is checked regularly for safety. Children have plenty of choice. They have good access to toys, books and games which are stored in containers and drawers. The childminder keeps a set of special resources which children can ask for if they wish. She is aware of child protection issues and has information available to enable her to seek advice. Children are not allowed to leave the premises with an unknown adult. Therefore they are adequately protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children show interest in the play activities and are developing a close relationship

with the childminder. They enjoy her involvement in imaginative play with toy trains, cars and a fire engine. They like to construct models using large bricks. They are gaining in confidence and beginning to choose independently, for example, taking out a doctor's kit and pretending to make people better. Older children particularly enjoy computer games and dressing up. They make very imaginative models using lego. Children have good opportunities for outings in the local area. They enjoy visits to the library and a weekly playgroup. Consequently, they have a range of different experiences.

Children are acquiring skills through their play. The childminder tries to make learning fun, helping them to become more aware of numbers, shapes and letters. Children enjoy drawing and are learning to write letters and words. The childminder makes use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework for very young children. She helps them learn to communicate through modelling words and also makes use of her knowledge of Makaton sign language. They very much enjoy sharing books and talking about the pictures. She helps older children with their homework, including reading, phonics and spelling tasks. Therefore, children make good progress in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel special and valued. The childminder shares her time between them and responds to their interests. Their self-esteem is boosted when celebrating their birthdays, which are marked on a large calendar in the playroom. Children have good relationships with each other. Older ones help younger ones and this helps them to develop a sense of belonging. Children are well supported and feel secure with the childminder. They often enjoy a cuddle. Older children like having some one-to-one attention when others are sleeping. New children are helped to settle as the childminder meets their needs effectively. Therefore, children gain confidence and independence.

Children are aware of their boundaries. They behave well and demonstrate good manners. The childminder has effective strategies in place to manage their behaviour. Consequently, they learn to behave responsibly. The childminder has good relationships with parents. Parents provide details of their children's routines so that she can help them feel content in her care. They are kept informed through daily diaries or conversation at the end of the day. She has recently begun to keep a photographic record of children involved in activities, for example, using candles to make pictures of Easter eggs. Parents have not yet been made aware of the new complaints procedures as the childminder did not receive the relevant information. They are highly satisfied with the care she offers and very much appreciate her flexibility and commitment to their children's care. Overall, children benefit from this good working partnership.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder's paperwork is well organised. Her policies are clear and readily available to parents. She ensures that her public liability insurance and first aid qualification are both renewed when necessary. Her attendance register is well maintained. She has made alternative arrangements for the children in case of an emergency. Her documentation provides a good framework for the children's health, safety and enjoyment.

Children have plenty of space to play and relax. They enjoy the provision of a play area where they can set out their chosen toys on the floor and play together. They have good access to the back garden, which is kept neat and tidy. Children are accompanied upstairs if needing a toilet. The childminder spends her time involved with the children and this enhances their care. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the childminder was asked to increase the range of resources which promote equality of opportunity and to site the fire blanket appropriately. She has purchased dolls and books which reflect diversity in society. The fire blanket is now attached to the wall in the kitchen. These changes have contributed to improving safety and choice for children.

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

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The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.
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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 that parents are informed about the new complaints procedures.

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