



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	124027
Inspection date	23 March 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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder registered in May 1997. She lives with her husband and 2 children aged 6 and 11 years in a house in Cheshunt. The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of 5 children at any one time and is currently caring for 4 children at various times, 2 of whom are over 8 years of age. All of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder attends various toddler groups and childminder groups on a regular basis and helps to run two of the groups.

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 for walks and visit local parks regularly to benefit from the fresh air. Children experience different types of play to enhance and develop their physical skills. For example, they enjoy banging, tapping and shaking musical instruments, making patterns with pegs, creating pictures and shapes with corn flour or manipulating play dough. They have fun balancing and co-ordinating their bodies on the large playing equipment in the park and sit-on rides in the garden.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They are made to feel welcome in a clean home where they understand the advantages of regular routines to keep them healthy. They have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands after playing in the garden or using the toilet. Children learn about keeping their bodies fit and healthy through discussion, interesting books and play.

Children are beginning to understand the benefits of a nutritious diet. They know which type of food is good to eat. Children have access to drinks throughout the day and are encouraged to drink more in hot weather and after physical play so that they do not dehydrate. They eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables as part of a balanced diet. The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents and works with them closely to provide snacks and 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 good.

The childminder has all of the required documentation and procedures in place to make sure the children are free from harm. A good range of safe, developmentally appropriate resources are stored around the rooms at child height for easy access. This enables the children to select their play and activities safely. The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues to safeguard and promote the children's welfare. She has attended training in this area and has all the relevant information to hand.

The children learn to keep themselves safe. They adhere to house rules and are aware of strategies to protect themselves. They sit still when they are eating to avoid choking and take turns on large play equipment to prevent accidents. Children know that they need to be wary of strangers and practise codes for crossing the road. They take part in the fire drill to ensure their safety in the event of a fire.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a broad variety of exciting play. They choose their own activities or play which is planned and organised by the childminder. Children receive adult guidance to give them extra support if needed but their independence is promoted as much as possible. They are motivated and interested in purposeful and developmentally stimulating experiences.

Children develop their knowledge and skills. For example, they recognise different colours as they choose dressing up clothes or musical instruments. Children count in sequence to pick out toys during play or when they sing simple songs and nursery rhymes. They learn mathematical language and problem solving. They compare big and small to see if clothes will fit. Weighing ingredients for cooking introduces them to measure. Children enhance their matching and sequencing skills with card games and puzzles. Literacy and communication are developed through social games and sharing exciting books.

Visits to working farms and zoos, or walks to the park teaches children about the natural environment. Use of creative materials such as pencils, crayons, paint, glueing and play dough, encourages the children to represent their ideas in a variety of ways. They enjoy colouring pictures of flowers and teddies to share with their parents. They express their feelings and experiences through imaginary play. Children enjoy dressing up and pretending to care for the childminder at the doctors. They are encouraged to learn through everyday routines, such as helping the childminder with her shopping and picking out the correct items of food.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected. The childminder works hard to meet their individual needs as they follow their daily routine which is discussed with parents. Children are well behaved. They understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age appropriate methods used to manage behaviour. Children are considerate, share, take turns and are polite, remembering to say please and thank you. They make positive relationships with others. Realistic challenges are set by the childminder to help the children develop. She compliments them for their achievements which she shares with parents. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem. They feel relaxed and secure enough to make independent choices and try new things.

Children benefit from a very strong partnership between the childminder and parents who exchange information frequently. They have daily discussions and review contracts, policies and procedures regularly. This helps keep parents well informed of how their child's needs are being met and their developmental progress. The childminder values feedback from parents to support her provision and has received positive and complimentary comments.

There are a range of meaningful resources available to promote a positive view of the wider world. These include books, dolls and puzzles. But, activities to develop this further and increase the children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others is limited.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All of the required policies and procedures are in place to help keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Documentation is stored securely and information shared appropriately with parents. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge and experience which she continues to update with relevant training. She has a Level 3 Certificate in Childminding Practice and a current first aid qualification.

The children's needs are met through effective organisation and good 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 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. Overall, the needs of all the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure the electric heaters did not pose a hazard to children and to inform Ofsted of any significant changes to the premises. The children do not have access to the electric heaters when they are in use. This removes the possibility of children being burnt. The childminder is aware to notify Ofsted of any significant changes to the premises so that the safety and care of the children can be monitored.

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

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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):

- extend the opportunities to increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others.

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