



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	404325
Inspection date	20 June 2006
Inspector	Lindsay Hare
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 1993. She lives with her husband and two children aged 12 and 14 in Puckeridge, a village outside Ware. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and one bedroom upstairs is used for those children wishing to sleep. 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 on a part-time basis and two children over five after school. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler group. The family has two goldfish.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where good daily routines ensure children understand the need for good personal hygiene. For example, they use separate towels and flannels and recognise the need to wash their hands before helping to prepare lunch. The childminder has written parental permission to administer medication and seek emergency medical treatment if necessary. This means that she can give appropriate care if there is an accident.

Nutritious meals and snacks help children develop healthy eating habits from a young age. They learn the importance of a healthy diet, when shopping for organic produce with the childminder and helping to prepare lunch. The childminder gathers all the relevant information regarding diet, including any allergies which ensures children's individual dietary needs are met.

Children enjoy regular physical activities that keep them in good health, such as visiting the park. They use a wide range of equipment in the garden to help them develop control of their bodies. For example, pedalling bikes and using the trampoline. Children also visit several activity groups with the childminder, where they can dance and exercise to music.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a well-organised environment that allows them to move around safely. They benefit from the good range of safety measures, for example, stair gates, socket covers and a secure outdoor play area. The childminder gives high priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, children are aware of the emergency evacuation procedure in the event of a fire. Discussions with the children about road safety and not talking to strangers helps children learn to protect themselves.

Children have easy and safe access to toys and play resources that are stimulating and appropriate to their age and stage of development. Regular visual checks of toys and resources ensure there are no broken parts that could harm a child.

There are excellent systems in place for the safe arrival and departure of children. Children are well protected from possible abuse and neglect as the childminder ensures that they are never left alone with anyone who is not vetted. She has a sound knowledge of child protection issues and a clear understanding of the correct procedure to follow if she has any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the childminder's house. They enter confidently and make themselves at home. The childminder develops good relationships with the children and is aware of their

individual needs. For example, the baby is provided with a soft area where she can sit and access a small selection of age-appropriate toys for herself. The childminder adapts activities to ensure that all children can participate.

Children select from a range of resources that are easily accessible and provide stimulation as well as bringing toys from home. They concentrate well at self-chosen activities and enjoy responsibility, such as helping with the baby and preparing lunch. Children are developing good relationships and get on well with peers. They talk to the childminder about their home life and family and are keen to ask questions. The children are beginning to understand the need to share and take turns when playing together. For example, one child explained the rules of a board game to the childminder and made sure that everyone took turns.

Children acquire new knowledge and skills, such as using the arrow keys on the computer keyboard correctly and attempting to write their name. They enjoy finding items around the home for the interest table and the childminder extends their learning by following up on topics that they cover at pre-school such as going to look at tadpoles.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children form close relationships with the childminder and are confident to seek support and reassurance. They develop an awareness of their own needs and those of others through interaction with the childminder and the other children in her care. For example, one child might know she needs to wear sun cream and a hat outside, but will also remind the childminder that the baby does too.

Many resources reflect positive images of all aspects of society. This means that children learn to acknowledge and accept differences. They learn about the world through activities that introduce them to other cultures. For example, they socialise with lots of other children at the groups they attend as well as being introduced to different foods when out shopping and cooking.

Children benefit from the flexible and supportive partnership the childminder has with the parents. Parents provide appropriate and relevant information about their children which helps to ensure that the children's routine is followed and that they receive individual care and attention. The childminder gives daily feedback to parents about their child's day. This helps to provide children with consistent care between home and the childminding provision. However, there is no system in place to record or share appropriate action regarding a complaint. Therefore, parents' concerns may not be respected or acknowledged and children's welfare cannot be fully monitored.

Children behave very well and are polite. The childminder is consistent in her approach to behaviour management and uses appropriate strategies. This helps children learn right from wrong. Children learn important social skills, such as sharing and listening to each other.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a well-organised environment where they receive good adult support from the childminder to help them feel secure and confident. They feel at home and settle well into family life. The childminder uses her time well and her flexible approach allows children to make their own choices.

Written procedures guide the childminder in her daily practice. This ensures children's needs are met and all relevant information is shared with parents. A good two-way flow of information ensures continuity of care. The childminder keeps up to date with current child care issues by attending training such as child protection and healthy eating. This supports the care and learning of the children in her care. She also holds a current first aid certificate which means that she can give appropriate care if there is an accident.

All the relevant documentation is in place and is reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that the children's welfare is promoted. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the childminder has completed first aid training for infants and young children. This means that she can provide appropriate care if there is an accident.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004. 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):

- make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint.

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