



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	405258
Inspection date	17 March 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 1997. She childminds with her mother and sister, who are also registered childminders, in her mother's home. Her mother and father live at the property, which is a house in Broxbourne. She has two adult children of her own. The whole of the house is used for childminding and there is a secure garden for outdoor play. The family has a dog, two cats and two rabbits.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight at any one time, if minding on her own. When working with other childminders, she may care for a maximum of eight children under eight at any one time. Currently she and

her mother and sister are minding seven children under five, one over five and one over eight. The childminder goes to local schools to take and collect children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is promoted effectively through having good procedures in place. All the necessary permissions are obtained from parents and the medical records are well maintained. If children become ill, the childminder makes them comfortable away from others until they can be collected. Any children with contagious illnesses are excluded from her care so as to protect other children from infection. A first aid kit is easily accessible in the kitchen so that children can be treated quickly after an accident. The childminder is very attentive to hygiene. All of the pets are well looked after and fed outdoors in the garden. Children know to wash their hands when coming in from outdoor play and before eating. Young children sleep when they need to and in a place where they feel happy. The childminder wears gloves when changing nappies to prevent cross infection. These procedures contribute to children keeping healthy.

Children have a particularly healthy diet. This includes a range of home cooked foods and also fruits from the garden. They enjoy a cooked dinner every day, for example, casserole or shepherd's pie, with plenty of vegetables. They like eating together in the conservatory. This helps them to develop good social skills. At snack time they have fruit, such as apples and organic raisins. In the summer they pick apples and a variety of berries from the childminder's garden. Children eat well. They not only learn about foods which are healthy for themselves but also those which are healthy for the various pets. They only drink water as part of their healthy diet. Consequently they are very well nourished and very aware of healthy eating.

Children have exciting opportunities to take part in physical activity. The garden is laid out in a particularly attractive way for children to enjoy playing in the fresh air. They go out in all weather and have a wide variety of attractive resources at their disposal. These include several playhouses, a trampoline, slide, swings and a variety of wheeled vehicles and balls. Even in cold weather children have fun playing or chatting with the childminder while sitting on a bench. Children also enjoy visits to local parks and going for walks. Indoors they join in enthusiastically with action rhymes on their favourite videos. The childminder joins in, helping them to develop their control and co-ordination. Consequently children keep physically fit and develop skills in fun ways.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are safe and secure for children. All cleaning fluids and medicines are

kept out of reach. Children can use the downstairs toilet safely as the door has been prevented from closing tightly. A safety gate is fitted to the stairs so that children are unable to go upstairs on their own. Young children sleep safely upstairs because the childminder keeps a check through the use of a monitor. There are adequate fire precautions in place in the house. The childminder has an evacuation plan in mind, although she does not practise this regularly with children. There can be several children in the house at any one time and some may not know what to do in an emergency. Children play safely outdoors and are always well supervised in the garden. They are kept safe in buggies, or by wearing wrist straps, when out walking. Therefore, children keep safe and secure at all times whilst in the childminder's care.

Children choose from a wide range of interesting toys and games. These are sorted according to different age groups and kept tidily in order that children can access them easily. The toys are cleaned and checked for breakages so that children are able to play safely. Children are becoming aware of their own personal safety. They know that very young children must not have access to small bits in games. They learn how to play safely on the outdoor equipment. If out walking they learn how to keep safe when crossing roads. The childminder has a good knowledge of child protection issues. She has attended a training course and has the necessary information to enable her to seek advice. She keeps a record of any concerns regarding children. Consequently, children are well protected in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy a wide range of play activities in a stimulating environment. They take part in imaginative play using dolls, play food and kitchen equipment. The childminder extends their play through conversation, helping to develop their imagination. They like to talk with each other, share books and sing songs. Babies are very happy sitting on a play mat exploring a variety of colourful toys. Older children become very involved in activities and are gaining in confidence. They spend much time drawing and proudly show off their pictures. They concentrate very hard when fitting jigsaw pieces together. They particularly enjoy choosing from a selection of shiny 'bits and bobs' to make collages. They benefit from the interaction of the childminder who helps them to develop their own ideas or suggests new ideas, thereby enhancing their experience. All children are well supported, happy and developing skills. Consequently they become independent and confident members of a group.

Children are making progress in their learning through the help and encouragement of the childminder. She is keen for children to learn through their play. She makes use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to check young children's progress. She is very effective in promoting communication and co-ordination skills in very young children. She finds different ways to encourage babies who are learning to walk and talk. Older children are learning to use numbers and mathematical language during play. They develop manipulative skills when cutting shapes for their collage pictures. Children write their own names on their 'Mother's Day' cards, with help from the childminder if necessary. They have good opportunities to find out about living things.

In spring, they learn about the life cycle of frogs through watching tadpoles from the garden pond grow and develop. They discover more about the local environment on trips to farms, parks and zoos. Overall, children are engaged in many learning experiences and a wide variety of organised activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel valued and included in the setting. They have good relationships with each other and enjoy chatting together while they play. They are all given the opportunity to take part in any activities, for example, feeding the rabbits or doing jigsaw puzzles. Children benefit from the childminder working with other family members. They are extremely well supported and individual needs are met immediately. Children with special needs have their needs met appropriately because the childminder works closely with their parents. Children enjoy some one-to-one attention as each childminder will often attach herself to a different age group. Babies enjoy a cuddle at times, helping them to feel secure and content. Older children show increasing personal independence, for instance, hanging up coats after playing outdoors. Consequently children have a real sense of belonging.

Children's behaviour is very good. They have close relationships with the childminder and are very aware of the house rules. Consequently a relaxed atmosphere prevails. Children are encouraged to share, and respect others, for which they receive much praise. They are learning to negotiate when wanting a turn with a toy or game. If there is inappropriate behaviour children will have some quiet time out. These strategies help them learn to behave responsibly. The childminder has good relationships with their parents. She ensures that she has signed agreements with all parents and obtains information on children's needs. She discusses her procedures with parents at an initial visit and takes their wishes into account. Children benefit from this working partnership.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder's paperwork is well organised in files. Her attendance register is maintained appropriately and public liability insurance is in date. She has recently updated her first aid qualification. She takes it in turns with her fellow childminders to do the various jobs, organise activities and play with the children. All three work together very much as a team.

The childminder works around a daily routine and spends her time with the children. The house and garden are made especially welcoming for them, with resources set out attractively. Children play mostly in the conservatory and living room. They enjoy sitting at the low table when taking part in creative activities. They have good access to a downstairs toilet and washbasin. The childminder's use of play space contributes greatly to children's enjoyment. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the childminder was asked to obtain permission for administering medication, provide parents with Ofsted's contact details and make sure that the end of the garden, in particular a water butt, is safe for children. She was also asked to ensure that children have access to appropriate resources that reflect diversity in society.

The childminder now obtains permission from parents to administer medication and has provided them with Ofsted's contact details. She has removed the water butt from the garden and introduced books and dolls which reflect diversity. This response has contributed to children's improved care.

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 also 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):

- devise an evacuation plan and practise regularly so that all children know what to do in an emergency

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