



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY315931
Inspection date	27 September 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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder registered in October 2005. She lives with her husband in a house in Cheshunt. All of the property is used for childminding including the garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding two children at various times. The family have some fish in a garden pond. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of resources and interesting activities which contribute to their good health and enhance their physical skills. They play in the garden, walk from school and visit local parks regularly to benefit from the fresh air. Children use small equipment to master

their hand and eye co-ordination and larger equipment to balance and move their whole body. For example, they have fun playing football, skipping and moving over the climbing frames in the park. Using an extensive array of art and craft materials and construction sets they create pictures and models, such as, space crafts and aliens by joining magnetic shapes. They are adept at using different utensils to prepare their food for snack or scissors to cut pictures out of paper.

Children are aware of the importance of good hygiene and personal care to keep them healthy. They take part in regular routines and understand why these need to be followed. For example, they wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Children learn about the benefits of following a healthy lifestyle through discussion as well as stimulating books, posters and planned activities. All of the required documents and procedures are in place to enable the childminder to act in the children's best interest if they are unwell or require medical attention. For example, parental consent has been obtained to seek emergency medical treatment or advice if required and the first aid box is kept up to date and to hand at all times.

Children are nourished and eat a balanced diet. They know what type of foods are good to have, to keep them healthy, such as, eating at least five fruit and vegetables each day. Children drink regularly so they do not feel thirsty, helping themselves as and when they need to. The childminder works closely with parents to provide a varied menu that appeals to the children as well as taking their wishes into account.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is a high priority. The childminder carries out regular risk assessments to identify any hazards and remove them to keep the children free from harm both inside and outside of her home. The areas used for childminding are organised for children to move around to play and make choices from an excellent range of resources safely and independently. They are made to feel welcome in a brightly coloured playroom with low level furniture and coat hooks which help to promote self care and a sense of belonging.

Children learn to protect themselves. They follow safety codes to cross the road, are aware to keep close to the childminder and take turns on large play equipment to prevent accidents. Children share interesting books, follow the childminders examples and join in with discussions during play which reinforce safety messages. They practise the fire drill regularly and are aware of the dangers of fire and the need to escape quickly in an emergency.

The childminder has the required procedures and documents to ensure the children's safety and welfare are safeguarded and promoted. For example, all of the required parental consents have been obtained and she has a good understanding of Child Protection issues. The childminder has attended training in this area and has all the relevant details to hand should she have any concerns about the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are keen to initiate play from an exciting range of resources or join in with stimulating and challenging activities organised by the childminder. She joins in with the children, offering guidance and prompting them with questions to extend their play and thinking and give them encouragement. They receive extra support if it is needed to help their development, but their independence is promoted as much as possible. For example, children freely explore, using trial and error to make models with different types of construction sets.

Children develop their knowledge and skills. For example, they read books to the childminder, matching sounds to letters to read difficult words. They use mathematical language and solve problems to create two-dimensional and three-dimensional models. For example, they balance the weight of magnetic links to make necklaces and bracelets or build a run for balls to roll through without stopping. Children name the different shapes in the construction sets, such as "triangle" and "square". They match and sequence patterns and pictures in puzzles, jigsaws and activity games.

Observing the wildlife in the garden teaches children about the natural environment. They watch the fish and insects in and around the pond. Regular use of an extensive range of materials to express themselves creatively, allows the children to represent their ideas and use their imaginations in a variety of ways. For example, they create pictures of space ships and aliens and compare the differences between their own and their peers examples. They make up stories about their pictures to bring them to life. Through role play they express their experiences and feelings, such as dressing up to become different characters. They have fun listening to music, joining in with the songs or playing musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder is attentive. She listens and talks to the children, offering appropriate praise during play and discussions which makes them feel valued and respected. Realistic challenges are set to help the children develop. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem. They feel relaxed and secure in her care and able to make independent choices and try new experiences. Children are polite and behave well, remembering to say please and thank you. They are increasingly able to find solutions to conflict and show respect for the needs of others. Meaningful resources and planned activities promote a positive view of the wider world. Children are aware of diversity and celebrate a variety of festivals and share books, puzzles, dolls and play figures which increase their understanding of people of differing backgrounds and abilities.

Steps are in place to make sure the children receive continuity in the care provided by the childminder and parents. They have a strong partnership, exchanging both written and verbal information frequently. The individual routine and needs of each child are established with parents at the outset so that the childminder can make them feel at ease and comfortable in the setting. The childminder and parents have daily discussions and review contracts, policies and procedures regularly. She also makes a note on their reading record each day. This helps keep parents well informed of how their child's needs are being met and their developmental

progress. However, the complaints procedure, which is shared with parents, lacks some detail. Parents have not been informed that their concerns will be responded to within 28 days and that a record of all complaints will be kept which they may have sight of upon their request. This is to ensure parents' concerns are respected and acknowledged and the children's welfare fully monitored.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder's knowledge and understanding of childcare, combined with effective organisation and good communication with parents ensures the children's individual needs are met. Space, toys and equipment are prepared so that children can access resources easily and independently. This makes them feel welcome and enables them to make choices about their play and care. A good balance of child-led and planned activities ensure children have a range of different enjoyable experiences whilst they are with the childminder. They enjoy their time with her and benefit from routines which make them feel secure and relaxed. Children play, rest and eat as they need to.

Documentation is stored securely and information shared appropriately with parents. Most of the required policies and procedures are in place to help keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. The children's care and development are promoted because of the childminder's experience and understanding of child development which she continues to update with relevant training. She has a Level 3 Certificate in Childminding Practice and a current first aid qualification. Overall, the needs of all the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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):

- update the complaints procedure to ensure complainants are aware that they will be notified of the outcome within 28 days and that a record of all complaints is maintained and appropriate information from that record is shared with parents on request.

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