



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY307166
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Maura Pigram

<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2005. She lives with her adult daughter and two children aged 15 and eight in a suburb of Watford, Hertfordshire. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends local toddler groups and takes children to the local park.

The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time and is currently minding four children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The family have no pets.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a clear understanding of good health and hygiene as they participate in daily routines to maintain this. Shoes are removed when they come indoors and the children are reminded to wash their hands following using the toilet or before meals. This means that they develop sound personal hygiene habits. They are protected from infection and are taken care of if they become ill because the childminder follows appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, an effective sickness policy is in place and this is shared with parents. There are systems in place to record any accidents and medication given to children. However, the childminder is not qualified to provide first aid. Children are able to rest or sleep according to their needs.

Children's physical development is promoted through daily exercise, either in the house or the garden. They also visit parks and indoor play areas. Drinks are available at all times so that children do not get thirsty or become dehydrated. Meals are provided by the parents and the childminder works carefully with the parents to ensure individual dietary needs are met. They learn about healthy eating through the childminder providing them with healthy snacks, such as fruit. This helps them to maintain energy levels and to build good eating habits.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and well-maintained environment. The children have sufficient and comfortable space in which to play and rest. House rules, such as not running indoors, and boundaries are clearly explained to the children. This means that they are learning to keep themselves safe. They are able to move freely around the family home because it is generally safe. Some potential hazards have been addressed through the use of smoke detectors and a stair gate. Other hazards such as the low-level storage of cleaning fluids, uncovered electrical sockets and the easy access to knives potentially hinder children's safety. Children can play safely in the garden because it is secure. The summer house is regularly used by the family for gym work. Consequently, items such as weights and uncovered sockets pose a potential safety hazard to any children accessing the area.

Children have an adequate range of stimulating toys and equipment, which, are in good condition and comply with safety standards. The childminder ensures that small pieces of equipment are kept away from babies and younger children. Therefore, the children are able to play safely with the available resources. Children's safety on outings is supported through the use of appropriate car seats. The childminder's assistant supports children's safety by ensuring they always cross roads safely. The holding of hands and listening for oncoming traffic is encouraged. Therefore, children learn how to keep themselves safe when walking from school. The childminder has a sound knowledge of child protection reporting procedures. As a result, children's welfare is maintained effectively.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle and are happy in the childminders care because she treats them as part of her family. They initiate interaction with the childminder, who listens to them and takes an interest in what they are doing. Children are able to access appropriate toys and resources which are adequately stored in the lounge and the summer house. They spend their time engaged in adult-led or child initiated activities and have ample opportunities to enjoy suitable television programmes. However, the childminder does not use early years guidance, for example, 'Birth to three matters'. Therefore, activities and experiences to enhance the development of children less than three years potentially may be missed.

The children regularly socialise with others outside the setting, attending local toddler groups and age-appropriate 'clubs'. Younger children enjoy the social experience of toddler groups and happily join in with songs and nursery rhymes. Older children enjoy the regular visits to activity clubs. Here, they are able to make decisions about the activities they wish to take a part in. For example, some children choose to make artefacts during the art and craft session and others choose to play football or ride bikes. As a result, they develop confidence and self-esteem. Children interact with each other and younger children are learning to take turns and share. This means that they are showing a respect for needs of other children around them. School-aged children are assisted with homework so that their learning and development is supported. Consequently, all children are treated with respect and their individual care needs are met.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Children's individual care needs are met because the childminder and her assistant know the children well. They develop their independence by making decisions in their play and personal needs. They develop an understanding of the wider world through their involvement with the local activity clubs. During these sessions festivals are celebrated giving the children an understanding of diversity. The childminder has some knowledge of caring for children with special educational needs and is able to provide support when necessary. This means that children are given effective opportunities to be fully involved within the setting. Children behave well because the childminder is consistent with explanations of house rules. Behaviour management for children is agreed with parents to ensure continuity with home. Praise is actively used ensuring children develop good self-esteem.

Arrangements to settle children into the childminder's care are negotiated taking into account the needs of children, parents and carers. The childminder ensures that her assistant is introduced to the children and their parents. During this time the organisation of the children's care is discussed. This results in the children feeling a sense of belonging and settling well into the flexible childminder's home. Diaries are maintained on request and daily discussions allow for a close partnership between the childminder and parents. Consequently, children's current needs are effectively met. There is a system in place to record any complaints which complies

with the National Standards. This means that parents know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about their children's welfare.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a caring family environment where they can rest, play and eat in comfort. They are provided with adequate activities to promote their development and stimulate their interest. Children's care needs are supported by the close working relationship between the childminder and her assistant. School age children are mainly collected by the childminder's assistant. She is well known to the children and their parents through her involvement within the school. Therefore, the children are happy with this arrangement.

The childminder has completed the Introduction to Childminding course. She has started to develop a portfolio which contains information on her practice and the activities she carries out with the children. However, a first aid course has not been completed. Therefore, in the event of an accident children are not able to receive appropriate emergency. Essential documents and parental consents are well-maintained, up to date and shared appropriately with parents. Therefore, this supports the care of the children. Overall children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

On the 25 September 2006 Ofsted received a complaint made to Ofsted that required the childminder to take action to meet the National Standards. This complaint related to National Standard 1: suitable person and 14: documentation.

A concern was raised that the childminder was not always present on the school run, but an unregistered childminder was collecting children on her behalf. Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit to the childminder on the 03 October 2006 to investigate. The visit showed that the childminder was working with an assistant, which Ofsted had not been notified about and not a childminder. The individual is now applying to become registered as an assistant and the childminder has requested the conditions of her registration be changed to reflect this.

The childminder was issued with three actions to comply with. These are in relation to notifying Ofsted about working with an assistant and supervising the work of an assistant. Also that all persons living or regularly present within the household undergo criminal records checks. The visit also showed that the childminder had not yet completed a first aid course, the fire blanket was not in the kitchen and that accurate registers showing children's arrival and departure times were not being kept. Ofsted issued a further three actions relating to these breaches in national standards.

Ofsted received a satisfactory response to the actions on the 30 October 2006 and the provider remains qualified for registration. 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 satisfactory. 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):

- improve the outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- access the risks to children in relation to the summer house, electrical sockets, the storage of cleaning chemicals, the access to knives and take action to minimise these
- complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)