



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222767
Inspection date	22 July 2006
Inspector	Kerry Freshwater

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 was registered in 1997. She lives with her husband who is also a registered childminder, and three children aged 3, 7 and 9 years in Melbourne, Hertfordshire. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and two upstairs bedrooms for sleep purposes. 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 eight years. The childminder also cares for children over eight years. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local childminder group. The family has a pet dog and a bearded lizard.

The childminder welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminder Association.

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 and visit local open spaces regularly to benefit from the fresh air. Children experience a variety of physical activities using both large and small equipment. For example, they have fun on the climbing apparatus at the local park, ride on wheeled toys, play football, bounce on the trampoline and participate in obstacle courses. In the house they enjoy building with bricks, completing puzzles and constructing the wooden castle.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They are cared for in a welcoming, clean home where they understand the importance of regular cleaning routines to keep them safe and healthy. Children have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands before and after food and after using the toilet and are encouraged to cover their faces when they cough or sneeze.

Children are beginning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They know which type of food is good to eat and will help them grow up big and strong. They enjoy a range of fresh fruit for snacks and salad vegetables along with meat or cheese as part of their lunch. Food provision is shared with parents and children sometimes enjoy meals prepared for the childminder's family such as shepherd's pie with vegetables or cauliflower cheese. Children have access to drinks throughout the day and are encouraged to take drink breaks as they play. The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents. She works with them closely to provide nutritious 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.

Children's safety is a high priority and they are cared for in a home where risks are identified and minimised. They move around safely, freely and independently and adhere to house rules to keep them safe. Children know not to run indoors in case they fall and hurt themselves and not to leave items on the stairs in case somebody falls over them. They are aware that they must not touch or put things inside the air conditioning unit. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves free from harm inside and outside of the home through discussion and leading by example. Children learn to cross the road safely and practise evacuating the house to stay safe in the event of a fire or emergency situation.

There is a wide range of safe developmentally appropriate resources placed around the room at child height for easy access. This enables the children to independently select their play and activities safely. The childminder has the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. For example, she has a good understanding of Child Protection issues, has carried out recent training and has all the relevant information to hand.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a very broad variety of exciting play and activities which are child-led or planned and organised by the childminder. They receive adult guidance to give them extra support if needed but their independence is promoted as much as possible. The childminder provides a range of stimulating play to aid their development. She links some of her play and activities to the 'Birth to three matters' framework to help the children make progress in their learning.

Children benefit from a range of activities which help develop their knowledge and skills. For example, children begin to know different colours when they pick out cars in the street. They count as they sing songs and nursery rhymes. Sharing books helps to develop their language and reading skills and learn the correct way to read books as the childminder points to the words as they are read. They become confident at completing puzzles and using fine paint brushes and pens for drawing. Regular use of creative materials such as pencils, crayons, paint, play dough and glue, encourages the children to represent their ideas in a variety of ways. They thread pasta, make sticker pictures and print with their hands and feet to make fairy Christmas pictures. They have a number of opportunities to express their feelings and experiences through imaginative play, role play and a large collection of home toys.

Their confidence and self esteem is developed with frequent praise and encouragement which is given at appropriate times. Children's sense of belonging is promoted by the childminder who knows them well and values their achievements which she shares with parents. They make positive relationships, finding new friends on outings to local parks, when meeting with other childminders and at the different toddler groups that they attend.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a good range of activities and meaningful resources to promote a positive view of the wider world. Books, dolls and activities to celebrate a variety of festivals increases children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. The children enjoy story time when they read about different people and how they live. They make dragons, calendars and decorations for Chinese New Year and look at the globe and world map poster to find out where other countries are located.

Children are valued and respected. Their individual needs are well met as they follow their daily routine which is discussed with parents. Children behave very well. They understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age appropriate methods used by the childminder to manage behaviour. Children are considerate, they are learning to share, take turns and be polite, remembering to say please and thank you. The childminder provides a range of opportunities for the children to socialise which helps them make positive relationships with others. For example as they attend the local toddler and childminder groups, visit the park and soft play areas. Realistic challenges are set by the childminder to help the children develop. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem. They feel relaxed and secure and able to make independent choices about what they want to do.

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. The childminder keeps a diary to record the achievements and routines of younger children. 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 written references from parents which are both positive and complimentary.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

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 which 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.

Documentation is stored securely and information shared appropriately with parents. All of the required policies and procedures are in place to help keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge and experience which she continues to update with relevant training. She is currently working towards the Developing Childminding Practise (DCP) training course, has attended various short courses and holds a current first aid qualification.

However, The childminder is currently in breach of her registration requirements relating to the number of minded children under five years. This means that children's safety is jeopardised and insurance cover invalid. Overall, the needs of all the children who attend are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain full details of all minded children prior to them being looked after, ensure that the fire blanket is fixed in an appropriate place, ensure that the minded children are supervised in the garden by a registered childminder at all times, obtain written permission from parents for their children to travel in a car, to complete an approved First Aid course which is valid for three years, ensure that the kitchen is safe for young children and to inform Ofsted once the actions were met.

Record forms are in place for all children minded, the kitchen is safe for children and the fire blanket is fixed in place. Children are closely supervised in the garden area and a separate, secure decked area is available to enable children to play freely and safely. Parental consents have been obtained for transportation and an approved first aid course has been completed. Ofsted have been kept informed of the changes.

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 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):

- ensure that registration conditions are complied with at all times, this relates to numbers of children minded.

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