



Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	203243
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 July 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Jill Nugent
<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 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 1996. She lives with her husband, and two adult children, in a house in Harlow. The whole of the house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. Currently she is minding twelve children, of whom, three are under five, three are over five, and six are over eight. She travels to local schools to take and collect children.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

The childminder has good procedures in place to promote children's health. She maintains a record of accidents, and medication, and ensures that she has all the necessary medical permissions. She has access to a first aid kit at all times. Parents are asked to supply information about children's health and allergies. Any children with infectious illnesses are excluded so as to protect others. If children become ill while in her care, a parent is called straight away. When children feel tired, they take a rest on the sofa. The childminder is attentive to matters of hygiene. She encourages children to wash their hands after toileting and before eating. She wears gloves when changing children's nappies. Children play in a clean and tidy environment. These procedures contribute to children staying healthy.

Children are offered a varied and balanced diet. They enjoy a snack of toast and spread during the morning. At lunchtime they have either a light meal or a fully cooked dinner. The childminder includes fruit and vegetables in the menu. She ensures that children can have a drink whenever they feel thirsty. Children with allergies and special diets eat correctly because she liaises closely with their parents. Very young children bring their own food so that they eat according to parents' wishes. Overall, children are well nourished. They have various opportunities for physical activity. They enjoy playing in the garden with a selection of outdoor toys, such as, bikes and buggies. They like to visit the local park and also the main town park, where they use the adventure playground equipment and play football. Consequently, children have plenty of fresh air and keep fit.

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

The provision is good.

The childminder ensures that her house and garden are safe for children. She keeps the kitchen cupboards locked so that children are unable to access any hazardous materials. The computer is kept neatly in a corner so that all wires are out of the way. Young children are protected from the staircase through the use of a safety gate. If parents wish, children can sleep safely upstairs in a cot, as the childminder keeps a check on them using a monitor. There are good fire precautions in place around the house. The garden is child friendly and includes a variety of surfaces so that children can play outdoors throughout the year. They are secure on the premises because the front door is locked when necessary. On outings, children keep safe in a buggy or on wrist straps. They are aware of how to keep safe near to roads and in the parks. Therefore, children are safe at all times.

Children have access to a range of resources which are suitable for all. They choose from a selection of toys stored in drawers in the living room and these are supplemented with extra resources from a toy library. The childminder ensures that the resources are always safe for children to use. She has a good knowledge and awareness of child protection issues. She has attended a training course and would seek advice if she has any concerns. She keeps parents' contact details with her wherever she goes. Consequently, children are well protected.

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

The provision is good.

Children become very involved in their play and enjoy each others' company. They have fun playing imaginatively in the garden using a tent, toys and books. They have good relationships with each other, and talk and play together. They are very confident in their relationship with the childminder and chat readily with visitors. Children particularly enjoy having story and singing times, and visiting the local library. They show much interest in the available resources and choose freely, for example, taking out a set of dolls and making space on the floor to play with them. They enjoy talking with the childminder about what they are doing and seek her help at times. Older children like to use the computer or play electronic games. Overall, children play happily and benefit from the opportunity to mix with those of different age groups.

The childminder organises various activities for children. They enjoy painting, sticking and playdoh modelling. Younger children attend toddler groups and also meet up with other childminders and their children. Therefore, they have a variety of different experiences. Children learn through their play experiences. The childminder encourages very young children to develop their communication and physical skills. However, she has not obtained a copy of the 'Birth to three matters' framework so that she can make use of this guidance to help children develop a wider range of skills. Older children have opportunities to increase their awareness of numbers, reading and writing in activities. Overall, children are making progress in their learning.

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

The provision is good.

Children have a sense of belonging. They feel included and very much at home as they move around the house and garden choosing different play activities. Some enjoy the opportunity to play independently, for instance, sitting alone with a game in the tent. Older children are very independent and look after themselves. Younger ones have a cuddle at times and are well supported in their individual needs. The childminder keeps a check on children at all times to ensure they are happy and safe. Consequently, children are content in her care.

Children's behaviour is very good. They have good manners and are aware of their boundaries. If behaving inappropriately, they sit out for a few minutes. They are helped to understand any behaviour issues. The childminder involves parents if she feels it would be of benefit to the children. Therefore, they learn to behave responsibly. The childminder has good relationships with parents. She discusses the different aspects of her practice with new parents. She talks through the day's events when parents collect their children each day. However, she does not have a complaints record in place. If parents are unable to raise a concern, children's continuity of care may be affected. Overall, children's care is enhanced through her working partnership with parents.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder's attendance register is maintained appropriately and written agreements with parents are detailed and clear. Her insurance is in date and she is aware of the requirement for all adult children living on the premises to be vetted. Her first aid qualification is renewed when necessary. However, she does not always keep up to date with changes in regulations as they occur. She liaises with other childminders so that she has cover in an emergency. Children enjoy space to play in the living room area and garden, moving freely from one to the other according to their interests. They like to relax on large comfortable chairs in the lounge. The childminder is always on hand to ensure their well-being. Overall, children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous inspection the childminder was asked to carry out regular fire drills, ensure parents are aware of her procedures for sickness and complaints, and make sure that the garden is safe for children. She practises a fire drill regularly so that children know what to do in case of an emergency. She ensures that all new parents are aware of her procedures, although her complaints procedure has not yet been updated in line with regulations. She has fitted a high lock to the garden shed so that children can play safely outdoors.

## **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):

- improve the outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- introduce a complaints record and ensure that all parents are aware of the complaints procedure.

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)