



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123714
Inspection date	27 September 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 and two children aged six and 12 years in Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding six children under eight years, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also cares for children over eight years. The childminder drives to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group.

The childminder 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 activities which contribute to their good health. They play in the garden and visit local parks 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 bouncing on the trampoline, riding on wheeled toys, enjoy the swings and paddling pool in the garden. In the house they enthusiastically construct tunnels for trains, complete puzzles and build with various construction toys.

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. They have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands after playing outside or using the toilet. They know to wash their hands and remove their shoes when they return from school and use individual flannels to prevent the spread of infection. Children learn about keeping their bodies healthy through discussion. Parental consents have not been obtained for emergency medical treatment and therefore children's health and safety is potentially jeopardised in emergency situations.

Children are beginning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They know which type of food is good to eat. Children have access to regular drinks throughout the day and eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents and works with them closely to provide nutritious snacks and 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 around indoors in case they slip and hurt themselves, not to climb on furniture or answer the front door. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves free from harm inside and outside the home using interesting books, discussion and leading by example. Children know what to do should they get separated from the childminder on outings. They learn to be aware of strangers, how to cross the road safely and follow the childminder's safety rules when using the trampoline. Fire fighting equipment is in place and fire evacuation has been considered and practised.

A broad range of safe, developmentally appropriate resources are stored around the room at child height for easy access. Other toys and equipment are stored in organised boxes in the play room and can be identified and requested by children. 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.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a 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 sets them challenges along with a range of stimulating play to aid their development. For example, children play word games with the childminder and complete puzzles of varying levels. Their language skills are extended by the excellent interaction from the childminder who talks to children constantly and asks them open-ended questions to make them think.

Children benefit from a range of activities which help develop their knowledge and skills. For example, they learn to recognise different colours when they choose coloured bricks or sort shapes. They count as they play with the wooden trains and read books together. Children learn about the natural environment through discussion with the childminder, for example, talking about Harvest and scarecrows. Regular use of creative materials such as pencils, crayons, paint and glue encourages the children to represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. They are encouraged to take part in everyday routines to learn about their local community, for example, the nurse, lollypop lady and a grandparent.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is developed by the childminder who gives them frequent praise and encouragement at appropriate times. Children's sense of belonging is promoted by the childminder who knows them well and values their achievements. They make positive relationships, finding new friends on outings.

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, small figures and discussion increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. The children enjoy story time when they read about different people and play with different figures depicting culture and ability.

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, share, take turns and are polite, remembering to say please and thank you and to consider the feelings of others. The childminder provides a range of opportunities for the children to socialise which helps them make positive relationships with others. For example as they play in the park and spend time with other childminders and children. 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 daily diaries 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 through recent references has received positive and complimentary comments about the service provided. There are presently no systems to document or manage parental complaints made to the provision. Therefore parents' concerns may not be respected or acknowledged and children's welfare cannot be fully monitored.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

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. However, the format for recording accidents and incidents does not always respect confidentiality and therefore details about individual children may be unintentionally shared with others.

Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge and experience which she continues to update with relevant training. She has recently attended training relating to the 'Birth to three matters' framework to enhance her care of children under three years of age. The childminder holds a current first aid qualification. Overall, the range of children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to improve fire safety by ensuring that a fire blanket, which conforms to BS EN standards, is accessible in the kitchen. A fire blanket is now fixed in place in the playroom adjacent to the kitchen.

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

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):

- obtain parental consents for emergency medical treatment
- ensure that accident records respect confidentiality at all times.

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