



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	160093
Inspection date	18 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 2000. She lives with her partner and two children aged seven and 12 years, in Royston, 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 is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding three children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also minds children over eight years. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the childminder's toddler group. The family has a pet dog and a rabbit.

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, walk to and from school 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 playing with balls, hoops, the slide, trampoline and ride-on toys in the garden. In the house they enthusiastically complete puzzles, sort shapes 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 using the toilet and before lunch. They learn about washing the germs away before eating their food. Children learn about keeping their bodies healthy through discussion.

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 enjoy fresh fruit as part of their daily snacks. 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 indoors in case they fall and hurt themselves and not to touch the cooker as it may be hot. 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 practise crossing the road safely and wear wrist bands on outings showing the childminder's contact number in case they get separated. Fire fighting equipment is in place and an emergency escape plan has been devised and practised.

A broad range of safe, developmentally appropriate resources are stored 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. She has attended training in this area and has all the relevant documentation in place.

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 complete colouring sheets and are learning to write their names and sound out letters.

They benefit from a range of activities which help develop their knowledge and skills. For example, children learn their colours when they choose coloured bricks or sort shapes, they begin to recognise different letters as they complete alphabet puzzles. They use numbers as they count everyday objects during their play or sing nursery rhymes. Children learn about the natural environment through discussion and local outings to the park. Regular use of creative materials such as pencils, crayons, paint and play dough encourages the children to represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. Children enjoy making cards for different occasions such as Easter, Christmas and Mother's Day. They participate in simple food handling activities such as icing cakes and biscuits.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is developed by the childminder who gives them frequent praise and encouragement at appropriate times. Their 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.

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, dressing up clothes and discussion 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 in other parts of the world, they use chopsticks as they play and discuss different foods and where they originate.

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 share, take turns and are 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. 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 about the children and what they have been doing. 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 positive and complimentary comments on the questionnaire that has been devised.

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 however, she has not carried out any recent training and therefore may not be up-to-date with new and current practises or ideas. Overall, the range of children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure the kitchen floor, play room step and garden area are safe and to ensure that appropriate car insurance is in place to any vehicle used by minded children.

The edge of the play room step has been rounded off to remove the potential hazard, laminate flooring has been installed to the kitchen, there is now no step in this area and a safety gate is in place. A garden shed has been installed and hazardous items locked away and car insurance is in place with records available for inspection.

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):

- consider further training in order to continue to develop the childminding practise

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