



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY299318
Inspection date	10 May 2005
Inspector	Gail Groves

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 2004. He lives with his wife, who is also a registered childminder and their two children aged seven and six years in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor and three first floor bedrooms are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time or ten when working with another childminder. In partnership with his wife he is currently minding 13 children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. He attends the local parent/toddler

group, takes children to the local library and to near by parks. The family has a pet cat.

The childminder supports children with special educational needs.

There were four children aged 8mths, 13mths, 3yrs and 4yrs years old present at the time of inspection.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's well planned policies and procedures which protect them from infection. The use of individual towels, flannels and bedding and consistent routines such as washing their hands at meal times or after messy activities or using the toilet means that even the youngest children learn the importance of good hygiene practices.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm, homely environment where their individual sleeping and eating routines and preferences are respected. They begin to understand a healthy diet because they are given nutritious options for their meals and snacks, some of which they themselves may have helped to make. The childminder is careful to respect the wishes of parents and gives children choices when eating. He seeks information from parents regarding their child's individual dietary needs and takes these into account when providing food and drinks.

Frequent opportunities for outside play both in the garden and in local parks means that children have regular access to fresh air and physical play and are encouraged to have a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment in which children can move around easily and be as independent as possible. They select activities from a wide range of well maintained, good quality toys which are safe and age appropriate such as trikes with parent poles, non toxic paints and safety scissors. Children learn the importance of fire safety and regularly practice escape drills and listen to what the smoke alarm sounds like. Visits to the Fire Station and follow on creative work extends their knowledge and understanding still further.

The childminder promotes children's welfare and safety by having the necessary documentation and procedures in place. For example he records visitors in his diary and has attended recent Child Protection training to enable him to monitor and protect children from abuse. When on outings and walks children learn to stay within sight and to follow safety rules such as going no further than certain marker points along the route.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are involved and interested in the activities provided and develop good relationships with each other and with the adults who care for them. They are settled, confident and independent but are not afraid to ask for help and support when this is needed. They have opportunities to experience a wide variety of play experiences but creative activities are particularly well planned and stimulating. Children have regular chances to experiment with paint and glue and to create imaginative 3D models using a variety of interesting materials and techniques including a potters wheel. These activities are structured so that all children can take part whatever their level of development although sometimes the childminder particularly links the activity to the school curriculum of the older children. Recently this has been painting pyramids and making Tudor nosegays. Activities such as cooking are carried out in teams of children of mixed ages so that the older children can help and socialise with the younger ones.

Babies and children under 3 enjoy a wide variety of appropriate play and learning activities. The childminder has recently attended an introductory session to the Birth to three matters framework and hopes to use it to help develop his planning for children of this age.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a range of activities and resources which help children to recognise the diversity within society and become aware of the community in which they live. For example they regularly go on trips to the park and the library and have made specific outings to the Fire Station and to a local recycling centre to select material for creative activities.

Children are treated as individuals and the childminder's close liaison with parents ensures that their needs and routines are always fully understood and met. The childminder supports children with special needs and has purchased new resources which will particularly interest and involve them.

All the children make choices and take decisions whenever appropriate. They take an active part in the drawing up of house rules through discussion with both the childminder and each other. This means that they are able to feel that their views are valued and sought.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder's policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Working in partnership with his wife means that children receive a lot of support and

attention. Everyday routines and interactions with the children are shared and organised so that time is used efficiently to the benefit of the children's learning and development. Because he and his wife provide part-time care alongside other childminders for some children he is careful to liaise with them through a common daily diary to ensure the children have continuity and stability.

When either the childminder or his wife have attended training, they share their learning in order to increase their own skills. Consequently the children are then given the correct support to make progress in all areas of their development.

Overall the childminder meets the needs of the range of the children for whom he provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable. This is the childminder's first inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- monitor the developmental needs to help plan activities for children under 3, for example by using the Birth to three framework.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk