

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123368
Inspection date	08 May 2007
Inspector	Sheila Harrison

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 satisfactory. 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 1995. She lives with her husband and two children aged 13 and 16 years in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor, first floor bathroom and second bedroom of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five, whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to take children to local toddler groups and to collect from school. The childminder travels by bus on outings. The family has no pets.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are suitably nourished as parents provide meals for them. Mealtimes are social occasions where the children sit together. The childminder encourages children to eat their fruit and offers them healthy snacks and biscuits at snack time. Drinks are frequently offered and children

are beginning to express their needs and ask for a particular drink. The childminder is fully aware of the parent's preferences and any of the children's allergies.

Children are protected in an emergency. The childminder has recently undertaken an appropriate first aid course and has a well-stocked first aid kit. Parents are fully informed of accidents with appropriate documentation although the childminder does not keep details of the action taken after an accident; this potentially limits the children's welfare. Suitable precautions are used on outings as the childminder carries the parents contact details and a suitable small first aid kit.

Children are protected from the spread of infection as the childminder informs parents of her sickness procedures. She reminds children to wash their hands after using the toilet and ensures hands and faces are clean before and after meals.

Children enjoy worthwhile physical exercise. They walk home from school or the toddler groups each day and frequently visit the local park. They can play in the garden with a range of balls, sit and ride toys and small slide which are suitably graded for the children's stage of their development. Children can rest and sleep according to their needs as the childminder is well organised to meet individual sleep patterns. Sleeping children are monitored with a listening device and frequent checks are made to ensure their safety. Children bring their bedding to ensure they are comfortable and feel secure with the scents of home.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a comfortable and inviting environment where they have sufficient space to move freely and play on the ground floor and in the garden. They choose from an ample range of resources kept in good order and displayed at a low level. Toys are appropriate for their developmental needs and rotated to extend their interests.

Children are suitably protected as most risks are identified and minimised. This is linked to their stage of development. For example, the childminder moves the table to ensure children do not run into it. However, children do not fully understand the dangers of the trampoline and this potentially puts them at risk of an accident. Suitable safety equipment is easily available with corners fitted to the glass table and a fire blanket in the kitchen. Wires are tucked at the back of electrical equipment and stair gates are appropriately placed. Children's security is defended as the childminder has sound collection procedures and ensures each child has a specific password.

Children are developing an awareness of how to keep themselves safe as they follow the house rules. They are learning to cross roads safely by practising 'stop, look and listen' while on walks to the park and school. The childminder ensures children learn how to manage steps and stairs safely by coming down backwards or on their bottoms. The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of child protection issues with the required documentation. This ensures the children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and busy as the childminder provides a wide range of resources which are of interest to the children. They enjoy the threading beads, showing pride in their completed

necklaces. There are suitable opportunities for children to draw using large paper and stumpy crayons. The childminder is helping children to achieve and take the next steps in their learning as she encourages them to undertake suitable challenges through the more difficult puzzles. Young children's emerging speech is well supported through favourite rhymes and story books. They make animal sounds as they pull the flaps and uncover the pictures of animals in the book. They express excitement as they predict the picture on the next page. Their pronunciation is encouraged as the childminder sensitively repeats mispronounced words correctly. Children's vocabulary is expanded as the childminder describes the pictures on the puzzle. Children count the bricks as they build a tall tower and the childminder encourages them to count again together.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel settled and secure as there is a strong and positive partnership between the childminder and parents. The childminder provides a long term commitment to the families. There are effective communication systems to ensure parents are reassured about their children's welfare. Confidential and detailed discussions take place at the outset of the arrangement and feedback at the end of the day. This makes a valuable contribution to the continuity of care for the children.

Children are learning about the wider world with a few multi-cultural resources. They celebrate their birthdays and other traditional festivals with the childminder. Their individual needs and preferences are suitably supported. They have valuable chances to talk about their families and life at home. Children's confidence expands as they enjoy visits into town on the bus. They frequently visit parks, adventure playgrounds and carer and toddler groups giving them the chance to mix socially. They behave appropriately as they are taken out for lunch in a restaurant and ice cream parlour. Children are beginning to respect others as they are encouraged to greet and say goodbye to each other. Parents comment on how their children are developing valuable friendships with others. Young children are beginning to share and take turns and they help in tidying away the toys before getting out others.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children feel at ease as they receive consistent care to maintain their comfort and security. The childminder has adequate documentation which is suitably managed. For example, contracts and contact numbers are up to date and the attendance registers are complete. Children's well-being is supported as the childminder is committed to her role. She undertakes some training in child care and meets regularly with other childminders to update her knowledge. Children are overseen by experienced and trusted adults. Overall the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to complete an appropriate first aid course and to ensure that people living in the house are suitably vetted.

The childminder has completed a suitable first aid course and this protects the children in an emergency. Procedures are in place to ensure adults are suitably vetted and this protects the safety of the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 satisfactory. 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):

- record the action taken after an accident
- access and minimise the risks associated with the trampoline.

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