



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123348
Inspection date	05 February 2007
Inspector	Tina Kelly
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 has been registered since 1994, she lives with her husband and two adult children. The family live in the Mile House estate in St Albans. The property is close to local shops, schools and amenities. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. Children do not access upstairs, there is a downstairs cloakroom. There is an enclosed garden for outside play. There are no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under the age of eight years. At the time of inspection two children aged two years were being cared for. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. Their health is monitored as the childminder keeps appropriate records in line with the National Standards. Children are learning about good personal hygiene through their daily routines. They are encouraged to wash their hands after using the cloakroom.

Children's nutritional needs are met. When families provide meals from home their diet is supplemented with healthy snacks by the childminder. Children enjoy trying new fruits, they are offered mango and pineapple which develops their tastes and introduces them to new food experiences.

Children enjoy a range of outings and experiences that promote healthy living. They walk out to the local shops and play areas where they can explore age-appropriate swings and climbing apparatus. Their physical skills, stamina and confidence are well developed with the use of sporting equipment suitable for younger children, this may be used by individuals or in planned group games.

Children's health is maintained as the childminder ensures she is aware of their individual needs, she discusses issues with parents on a regular basis.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure environment. Appropriate measures are in place to ensure the safety of the children. A range of quality toys are readily available and suitable for the ages cared for. Children learn about keeping themselves safe as they are reminded not to tread on toys and to make sure they have the space to play. Children are becoming aware of the space around them and how their play impacts on others if they are too close.

When walking out in the community the children are becoming aware of their own safety as they learn simple rules that will keep them safe such as holding hands, waiting and looking for traffic at the kerb side. Young children who bring their bikes to the childminder's home use safety helmets. Their use is praised and items are shown to visitors and other children. This reinforces the importance of wearing safety equipment when out bike riding.

Children's well-being is maintained as the childminder keeps appropriate records with regards to accidents and incidents. The childminder has a sound understanding of child protection issues as she has attended training on this important aspect of child care. Relevant leaflets and referral information provided by the Local Safeguarding Children Board is readily available in the registration portfolio.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have opportunities to use a selection of toys which are stored at low level so they can make independent choices about their play. The childminder is aware of the children's varied skills, she adapts games to extend different aspects of their play and learning.

Children show great concentration as they sort and thread beads. They show their finished strands to their carer with great delight. Children's early learning skills are developing well. Their language is extended as the childminder asks them about colour, shape and what they are doing with the toys that are available to them.

Children enjoy walks out in the community, this is a regular event in their weekly routine. Their experiences are extended as they are taken into the nearby town of St Albans on the bus and take picnics to the park.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are respected and valued within the setting. The childminder is aware of the different needs of the children that she cares for. Young children play well together, they are learning to take turns and to share with gentle reminders from their carer.

Children are becoming aware of their own needs and those of others. Resources such as story and reference books and small world people are provided to extend the young children's understanding of the wider world. The childminder has routines and documents in place to help all children reach their full potential and to meet their needs including cultural or special needs.

A good relationship has developed between the childminder and the families she cares for. At the time of inspection parents expressed their confidence and satisfaction with the care and service provided by the childminder to the child care inspector. The childminder makes use of the document toolkit provided by the National Childminding Association. This ensures personal details and contractual agreements are in place which enables her to meet the children's individual needs.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder currently organises her week around part time care arrangements. She is aware of the importance of planning routines around the individual needs of the children. She makes sure there is time for young children to play and to rest when they need to.

Appropriate documents and records are in place to maintain the smooth running of the childcare arrangements. The childminder has recently taken appropriate action to ensure the required checks are completed for members of the household. A system is in place to ensure the checks are completed in a satisfactory manner.

The registration certificate is on display and a portfolio contains documents linked to the registration and care of the children. However, parents are not fully informed about the courses and training the childminder has attended, detail of the registration or the childminding service provided.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the childminder was given two recommendations; to ensure children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice; to keep a detailed and accurate written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children.

The childminder has reviewed the resources that are available to children to ensure equality of opportunity and anti discriminatory practice. Toys, books and resources are now readily available that develops the children's understanding of the wider world.

Children are protected as documents are now in place to ensure accurate written records are in place with regards to medication.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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 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):

- ensure members of the household over the age of 16 years have relevant background checks in place
- develop information for parents to ensure they are fully aware of the childminding service offered

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