



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	158939
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Lynne Kathleen Talbot
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 registered in May 1993. She lives with her husband and son aged 19 years. Their house is in the town of Letchworth, Hertfordshire. The whole ground floor of the house is used for childminding, the first floor is used under supervision. There is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play. There are shops, schools and pre-schools within an accessible distance.

The childminder walks to local schools to collect and take minded children. She attends toddler groups with minded children. The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time. There are currently three children on roll.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they are learning the importance of hygiene and personal care. Children are beginning to take responsibility for their own needs, because the childminder acts as a positive role model and offers clear explanations and supportive reminders. This is demonstrated as children access drinks when thirsty, seek tissues and wipes, and help to tidy away toys and play materials before moving onto new activities. Children follow routines which maintain hygiene in the home such as removing shoes when coming indoors and placing them in a cupboard. This supports their sense of belonging and reinforces regular routines for hygiene.

Children's well-being is promoted as the daily routine supports children's individual needs, and helps them maintain health, through appropriate physically active and resting periods. They have regular access to outdoor play in local parks and playgrounds, as well as regular use of the well-equipped rear garden. Children enjoy play in the garden in all weathers because it has a large covered gazebo which provides both shade and shelter. This helps them develop their physical abilities and extend their confidence in their play. Children are appropriately nourished and encouraged to enjoy a broad range of healthy foods. Information is shared with parents and carers through daily exchange of information.

Children's immediate health and safety is protected because the childminder is informed of current health guidelines and requirements of the National Standards, for example through clear sickness procedures. However, a lack of knowledge about communicable diseases potentially prevents appropriate action being taken to protect children's health. Children's health and medical needs are supported due to the childminder's attention to maintaining accurate information and reviewing the care of children with parents.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children's safety is consistently promoted and appropriate action taken in the event of illness because the childminder has an organised approach to this area of care and takes steps to plan for emergencies. Children benefit from plans made for emergency cover through signed agreements with supporting care of named assistants. This ensures that the care is stable and meets the needs of all children. Children are protected by plans made for emergency evacuation but as it has not been practised this compromises their safety.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and safe environment, accessing equipment that meets safety standards with sufficient space to explore and develop their full potential. They are learning to keep themselves safe due to clear explanations and routines. This is reinforced by the regular road safety practice which they carry out in the local community. Children take part in outings with the childminder where procedures have been developed to take into account risks to children's wellbeing and extend their safety when away from the home. Children are

protected because the childminder clearly understands child protection issues and the appropriate steps to follow that will support children's wellbeing.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are able to develop confidence and self-esteem because the childminder gives them opportunity to talk and values their efforts at all ages. Children explore language as they describe where they want things placed by the childminder or talk about colours and shapes. They use mathematical concepts in everyday activities and with play materials. Children are introduced to physical capabilities through their own play as well as with toys which move or jump. They copy the childminder as she describes what they see and try the language later in their play, they are learning to extend and accommodate new language in all activities.

Children have access to a broad range of play materials, that continues to be developed, offering scope for all areas of development and stimulating the children to experiment in a safe environment. Materials are extended and offered appropriate to children's stages of development such as smaller role play items and small construction. Children enjoy trying new materials such as threading where they explore the idea of push and pull, colour choices, and repetition to reinforce new skills. They enjoy showing the childminder what they have done and, when completed, pack away and point out to the childminder when she has missed one left on the floor. Children use their emerging language such as asking to be picked up or put down, they ask the childminder to come with them when they want to show her something. This enables them to control and initiate their own learning.

Children become independent as they choose from play materials where sufficient supply ensures that they may develop their play alongside others. They share larger materials and use the same equipment to develop large co-operative role play. Children are encouraged to relate well to each other, their personal development and self-esteem are promoted through sensitive support and interaction from the childminder. Children's development is not yet fully supported by the 'Birth to three matters' framework although the childminder does have a copy. It is not yet being used to assess children's current stage of development or to plan for the next steps. This means that children may not always be sufficiently supported to take the next step in their development.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their needs are met as they follow their normal daily routines as discussed with their parents. However, a lack of detail within agreements with regard to arrangements or facilities for children when they are sleeping impacts on their safety. Relationships are positive and children are making early friendships with other children both in the childminder's home and at regular social and activity groups. Children thrive because their individual developmental stages are recognised and planned for by the childminder. Transition into the care of the childminder is well-planned and completed at the pace dictated by children's needs.

Children are beginning to understand responsible behaviour and recognise the needs of others due to consistent boundaries being maintained by the childminder. Children are aware of each other's age and are supported in learning about the development of younger children. They show that they are caring and appreciative of younger children's needs. This broadens their understanding and fosters good social development.

Children appreciate and understand about other cultures and ways of life because the childminder provides resources to promote conversation and interest, including topics and exploring the wider locality around them taking part in social events and gatherings. Children receive appropriate support that meets their complex needs as individuals because the childminder seeks information from parents where children have learning difficulties or disabilities. Individual children's needs are considered in all agreements to ensure that each child's development and wellbeing is suitably supported within any new agreement.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are secure within the surroundings where they develop a sense of trust in the childminder. They feel at ease in this organised environment leading them to confidently initiate play and explore their surroundings. Children are confident and respond to new experiences offered by the childminder. They listen attentively to new adults in the home and share their toys readily demonstrating a firm sense of belonging. Organisation within the home allows access to all play activities both indoors and outside. Children have independent access to personal care facilities and develop awareness of their personal space and care through example and routines.

The childminder has a sound knowledge and understanding of the Children Act and most associated regulations ensuring that she addresses her responsibilities. She maintains basic documentation in accordance with that outlined within the National Standards and continues to develop agreements shared with parents to effect firm relationships and continue meeting children's needs. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to improve documentation by obtaining written permission for her assistant to be left in sole charge of minded children and to devise a method to record concerns regarding children.

Since that time she has maintained a record book for concerns regarding children and added permission for care by an assistant to parental contracts. This has improved both safety for children and continued to develop partnerships with parents and carers.

### **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 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):

- improve knowledge of procedures to prevent the spread of infection, notifiable disease or in the event of significant injury to minded children
- ensure that the emergency escape plan has been practised
- improve outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters'
- review the written agreements with parents to ensure that it sets out the expectations of both parties as to all aspects of care for children including sleeping arrangements.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)