

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY262946
<b>Inspection date</b>	01 May 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Tina Kelly
<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 has been registered since 2003. She works with her husband who is also a registered childminder. They live with their three children aged six, seven and nine years old.

The family home is situated on the eastern side of St Albans in Hertfordshire. The premises are within walking distance of all local amenities. Children do not generally access upstairs, though young babies may sleep upstairs. There is a downstairs cloakroom. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have a cat.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA). The joint childminding registrations enable the couple to mind a maximum of eight children with no more than six under five years. At the time of inspection both minders were working and were caring for one child under one year, two children aged two years and an older child aged four years.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. Their health is monitored as the childminder keeps extensive records in line with the National Standards. The childminder is sensitive to the individual needs of the children. She makes time to discuss the day-to-day issues with parents or provides a daily diary for the younger children and babies in her care. Children learn about good personal hygiene through their daily routines; they wash their hands as they come in from the garden and before sitting down for a snack or lunch. Young children are protected from cross-infection as they have individual cups and fresh bedding each day. Their personal care belongings are stored individually to ensure correct nappies and creams are used for each child.

The childminder has attained a Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety in Catering Certificate and has attended a healthy eating course. The children's nutritional needs are well met. They are introduced to new tastes and food experiences through the week. Older children are encouraged to think about foods that are good for them and they draw pictures of different fruits and vegetables. Foods high in sugar and fat are also identified so children learn about healthy eating through everyday activities. When the pictures are completed the children receive an award certificate to show they have understood the importance of a balanced diet. Parents are kept informed through the daily diary and a sample menu that is available in the registration portfolio. When parents provide food for their children the childminder supplements this with fruit and healthy snacks to ensure all aspects of a good diet are available to children during the day.

Children have opportunities for exercise each day. They walk to and from the local school and have regular visits to the playground and nearby parks. They access age-appropriate apparatus where they can climb and explore in a stimulating environment. Children have many opportunities to develop their physical abilities in the garden. The younger children are skilled at steering the wheeled toys. They use a wide range of sporting equipment to practise their hand to eye co-ordination which is developing well.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and child-centred environment. Appropriate safety measures are in place to monitor and maintain the children's safety both inside and in the garden. A risk assessment for the home is in place, this identifies areas that need to be checked on a daily basis. Arrangements are in place to ensure the safety of the children in the event of a serious emergency and the need to evacuate the family home.

Children use an extensive range of good quality toys and equipment, these are maintained to a high quality. These are age-appropriate and cater for the differing needs of the children cared for. Children are able to safely initiate their own play and extend their learning as they access their toys and resources from low-level storage systems.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe through their play. They are reminded to put toys away and not to tread on them as they may fall. They learn about the importance of using equipment correctly so they do not crash into each other when using the ride-on toys. Parents are kept informed about the activities that the children take part in. The childminder has signed

permission forms for children to use the large trampoline in the garden, which is brought out on special occasions.

Children are protected as relevant and up-to-date records are in place with regards to accidents and incidents. The detail is cross referenced with other information relevant to each child. The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues as she attended a recent course. Contact and referral information provided by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board is readily available.

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

The provision is good.

Children are introduced to a wide range of activities in the home, garden and out in the community. They are encouraged to make decisions about what they like to do. Children are well supported by their carer as they move freely between the home and garden where they extend and develop their play ideas.

The childminder is aware of the needs of the different ages that she cares for. Activities and games are adapted to ensure all children are able to take part. Young children and babies enjoy the daily music and singing sessions. They are keen to share the instruments with each other and visiting adults. The children are becoming aware of the new sounds they make. The childminder extends their language and introduces them to new descriptive words as they drum, shake and bang the instruments with great delight.

Activities for older children are well thought through. Projects such as mask making and a wide range of art and craft ideas are displayed on the wall. The days routines and plans are adapted to ensure age-appropriate activities are available. The older children are able to use paints and get involved in sewing and craft activities such as making and decorating bird houses when the younger children are asleep or on days when they are not cared for.

Different areas in both the home and garden provide children with space to adapt and develop their play. Floor play with cars and animals is a great favourite. The play house in the garden provides an exiting and well resourced environment for children to extend their imaginative play ideas.

Young babies enjoy watching the older children play. A colourful play mat ensures a designated area for the babies to explore. They reach and stretch towards favourite characters and hanging mobiles.

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

The provision is good.

All children are respected and valued within the setting. The childminder is sensitive to their needs and aware of the busy routines that may impact on their well-being. Children's behaviour and achievements are reinforced with consistent praise. They are learning to take turns and to share. They are encouraged to negotiate if they want to swap or exchange toys. Children are developing good social skills.

Resources and planned activities develop the children's understanding of the wider world. They look at different cultures to make masks. Exotic foods and fruits extend their interests both in different countries and their own well-being. 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.

Good relationships have developed with parents. This is evident as the childminder uses a questionnaire to seek their opinion on activities, routines and their children's care. The information is used to adapt and improve the care provided for all children. New families complete a form outlining the likes and dislikes of their children. This ensures children are happy and a calm and well managed settling-in process is in place.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder works with her husband in a joint minding situation. This enables them to offer a very flexible timetable. They organise the weekly routines around the care of a young baby, part-time care for young children and older children before and after school. Children greatly benefit from routines which make them feel secure and relaxed. Daily plans can be adapted which ensures children of all ages have appropriate activities and routines that meet their individual needs.

The childminder uses the toolkit provided by the National Childminding Association (NCMA) to ensure all the required documents are up to date and in place. The well-organised registration portfolio contains statements and policies that ensures safety issues and personal care needs are in place. Although parents are well informed about their children's care and routines, they are not made fully aware about the commitment the childminder has to the registration. They are not informed about the training she has attended, the record of complaints process or the full extent of the childminding service provided.

The childminder has a strong commitment to training and to developing her knowledge and understanding of child care practice. She keeps up to date with new regulations and aspects of children's play and learning, which ensures all children in her care thrive and develop to their full potential.

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 a suitable and sufficient range of books and resources are available for children aged 5-8 years and to ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

The childminder has developed a selection of books and resources that meet the needs of the older children. They are able to make choices and to take part in activities which are age appropriate. Children's understanding of the wider world is extended as they have opportunities to develop themes and topics that cover different cultures and countries.

### **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):

- ensure parents are informed about the record of complaints, training attended and the childminding service provided

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)