

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY342917
Inspection date 24 April 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder lives in a rural village in the west of Hertfordshire with her husband and three children aged 12, nine and seven years. The premises consist of a four bedroom semi detached property with a secure garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for five children aged under eight years and has nine children on roll. The family have a dog, two cats and a pet snake.

The childminder attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis and uses her car for outings. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have a balanced diet as they are offered healthy snacks and nutritious meals including regular portions of fish. Generous amounts of fruit and vegetables are provided. Children enjoy favourite foods and are encouraged to try new tastes. Mealtimes are social occasions and good manners are encouraged. Children are learning about healthy eating as they help with the

preparation for meals and they discuss the origins of food when children visit the nearby 'pick your own farm'. Allergies and food preferences are noted and respected.

Children are learning about healthy living as they are encouraged to wash their hands after the toilet, before meals and after playing in the garden. Parents are fully informed of the opportunities for children to play with the animals, in the grass and in woods with fallen leaves and twigs. Young children are beginning to learn about their bodies as the childminder gently explains the need to change their nappy.

Children are well protected after an accident as the childminder has sufficient first aid training and equipment. Contact numbers and permission for emergency medical treatment are easily to hand. A comprehensive sickness procedure and records of medication and accidents help keep parents informed.

Children enjoy stimulating and worthwhile physical exercise. In the better weather they play in the garden with a range of suitable resources suitably graded for the children's stage of their development. The childminder provides sufficient spare clothing to ensure children are suitably clothed on walks to school, the park or the woods. The childminder ensures children are protected from the strength of the sun. They bring sun cream which the childminder has permission to apply and there is shade in the garden to ensure the children can play safely.

Children can rest and sleep in peaceful surroundings according to their individual routines. They sleep in separate rooms with their own cot and bedding and the childminder is sensitive to the children's signs of tiredness.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming secure environment. The home is comfortable and inviting where children choose from an ample range of resources kept in good order and appropriate for their developmental needs. Young children's toys and pictures are displayed at a low level and older children can easily reach the games and craft activities unsuitable for the toddlers. This ensures they feel valued and respected.

Children have sufficient space to move freely and play on the ground floor. There is straightforward access to the garden. Risks are generally identified and minimised with the appropriate safety equipment easily available. The childminder assesses the risks of the trampoline and follows the manufacturer's instructions. Parents give their permission and children follow the strict rules for the safe use of the equipment. For example, young children are only allowed onto the trampoline with the childminder and the older children are allowed to use the equipment one at a time and they bounce in the middle of the trampoline. However, a small chair nearby, potentially allows children access when they are not fully supervised.

Children are developing an understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they follow the house rules. The childminder ensures children discuss the consequences of their actions. Older children understand there will be an accident if they do not follow the safety instructions for the use of the trampoline. Children know to wear a seat belt and to hold hands or the buggy when on outings. They practise road safety and discuss when it is safe to cross the road. Regular emergency evacuation practices help children prepare for emergencies.

The childminder has a secure understanding of child protection issues. She has efficient procedures and suitable documentation including ensuring parents are fully aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a concern. This ensures the children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children settle well and become happy in the setting. Warm, responsive and caring relationships between the adults and children are evident. They communicate easily with each other. Young children are encouraged to form attachments and friendships with the other children and this promotes their sociability. The childminder supports children to feel secure by responding to their need to stay close by. Young children enjoy playing with real things as the childminder provides resources which support children's imaginative learning such as strings of attractive beads, saucepans and wooden spoons.

Children follow a secure but flexible routine around school and meal times and their sense of belonging is encouraged as they help to lay the table. Young children can independently choose and get from the cupboard their favourite drinking cup.

Children have access to a rich and stimulating range of technological toys. Young children enjoy the dance mat and the childminder demonstrates how to plug in and use the electric piano allowing the children to experiment with the sounds it makes. Older children are happy and busy as they enjoy a wide range of craft materials, books and games.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are learning about the wider world as the older children visit the supermarket to buy the ingredients to bake a cake. They have frequent outings during the holidays to farms and zoos. Young children gain confidence as they enjoy attending parent and toddler groups knowing that the childminder is close by ready to support and help if needed. Children take an active part in the setting as they celebrate traditional festivals and birthdays are honoured with a birthday tea. They shop for balloons and banners; they make cards and have a celebration chocolate cake. Children make cards and occasionally bake a cake to acknowledge their parents' birthdays. They learn to respect the needs of animals as they help care for the family pets.

The childminder demonstrates a sound knowledge of supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She has a system in place to gather information from the parents and other professionals regarding children's individual needs. Children receive valuable praise and support from the childminder who is a good role model. The house rules are sensitively explained to children in a positive manner.

Children's well-being is promoted as there is an excellent partnership between the childminder and parents. 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.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the childminder's organisation. All procedures are robust and individual to the setting. Records are clear, up-to date, easily accessible and stored securely. The childminder enhances her skills by attending courses on partnership with parents and the business side of childminding. She uses information from these courses to reflect on her practice to protect children and promote their welfare. The childminder uses her time to good effect. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, 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 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 that young children do not independently access 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