

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	162283
Inspection date	20 June 2007
Inspector	Kerry Freshwater

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 was registered in 2001. She lives with her partner and one child aged seven years in Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding eight children under eight years, who attend on both full and part time basis. The childminder also cares for children over eight years. The childminder drives to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler group. The family has no pets.

The childminder welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. They play in the garden and visit local open spaces regularly to benefit from the fresh air. Children experience a variety of physical activities using both large and small equipment. For example, they have fun on the climbing frame and slide, ride on wheeled toys, crawl through the tunnel, kick, throw and catch balls. In the house they enjoy building with different construction toys, such as, Stickle Bricks and Lego. They complete puzzles, write, draw and confidently cut with scissors. Babies enjoy crawling around the indoor area, they explore toys, passing them between their hands and mouths and press buttons to make them work.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They are cared for in a welcoming, clean home where they understand the importance of regular routines to keep them safe and healthy. Children have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands after playing in the garden or using the toilet. They are reminded to cover their mouths when coughing so that they do not spread germs and know not to eat food picked up from the floor in case they get sick. Children learn about keeping their bodies healthy through discussion, good food and participation in food preparation activities.

Children are beginning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They know which type of food is good to eat and will help them grow up big and strong. They talk about the recommended five fruits per day and look at the chart that is displayed on the wall. Children enjoy an interesting menu that offers balance and variety. They are provided with two hot meals per day, enjoying foods like shepherds pie, macaroni cheese, or a roast dinner with a selection of fresh vegetables or salad. Children eat well and clearly enjoy their meals. Babies learn early feeding skills as they explore different finger foods and begin to feed themselves. Children have access to regular drinks throughout the day and eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. The childminder takes

account of the wishes of parents. She works with them closely to provide nutritious meals that appeal to the children as well as meeting their dietary needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is a high priority and they are cared for in a home where risks are identified and minimised. They move around safely, freely and independently and adhere to house rules to keep them safe. Children know not to climb on or jump off furniture in case they fall and hit their heads, they learn about things that are 'hot' and 'cold' and know not to open the front door. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves free from harm inside and outside of the home through discussion and leading by example. Children learn to be aware of strangers and practise crossing the road safely. Fire safety has been considered, a fire blanket and smoke alarms are in place, which are tested regularly. Fire evacuation has been practised with children to ensure that they are familiar with the procedure in the event of an emergency.

There is a broad range of safe, developmentally appropriate resources placed around the room at child height for easy access. This enables the children to independently select their play and activities safely. Other play resources are stored in a well-organised way in the garage and are rotated to ensure variety. The childminder has the required procedures and documents in place

to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. For example, she has a good understanding of child protection issues and has attended training in this area. She has all the relevant information to hand should any concerns be raised.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a broad variety of exciting play and activities which are child-led or planned and organised by the childminder. They receive adult guidance to give them extra support if needed but their independence is promoted as much as possible. The childminder provides a range of stimulating play to aid their development. For example, children learn new words as the childminder plays and chats to them constantly. The childminder has attended training relating to the 'Birth to three matters' framework, however, this is not currently being well used to extend the learning opportunities for younger children.

Children benefit from a range of activities which help develop their knowledge and skills. For example, they learn to recognise different colours when they choose coloured bricks or look at cars when out walking. They count as they build with bricks and sing nursery rhymes. They learn matching and sequencing with activity games and weighing when they prepare recipes for cooking. They learn about the natural environment as they go out for walks and participate in discussions about the different types of weather. Regular use of creative materials such as pencils, crayons, paint, glue and play dough encourages the children to represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. Children enjoy making collage pictures using lentils, they paint, print and produce colourful pictures using a variety of different craft resources. For example, children make shiny star pictures after singing Twinkle, Twinkle. Children are encouraged to take part in everyday routines, such as, washing up utensils after lunch and helping with some food preparation.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is developed by the childminder who gives them constant praise and encouragement throughout their time spent with her. Children's sense of belonging is promoted by the childminder who knows them well and values their achievements which she displays in her home and shares with parents. They make positive relationships, they enjoy each other's company and find new friends at toddler groups and on outings to the local parks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a good range of activities and meaningful resources to promote a positive view of the wider world. Books, dolls and activities to celebrate different festivals increases children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. Children learn about Chinese New Year, they make a dragon and visit a Chinese restaurant to taste different foods. They enjoy story time when they find out about different people and how they live in other parts of the world, they look at maps in the atlas, dress up in saris and carnival clothes. Children play hospitals using disability figures to enhance their play and practise simple sign language as they watch specific television programmes.

Children are valued and respected. Their individual needs are well met as they follow their daily routine which is discussed with parents. Children behave very well. They understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age-appropriate methods used by the childminder to manage behaviour. Children are considerate, they share, take turns and are polite, remembering to say 'please' and 'thank you'. The childminder provides a range of

opportunities for the children to socialise which helps them make positive relationships with others. Realistic challenges are set by the childminder to help the children develop. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem. They feel relaxed and secure and able to make independent choices about what they want to do.

Children benefit from a very strong partnership between the childminder and parents who exchange information frequently. They have daily discussions and review contracts, policies and procedures regularly. The childminder keeps a written diary to record the achievements and routines of younger children. This helps keep parents well informed of how their child's needs are being met and their developmental progress. The childminder is familiar with the required complaints procedure, however, parents have not been fully informed of this process. Parents are therefore not aware how the childminder would acknowledge and investigate any potential concerns they may have about their children's welfare.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children's needs are met through effective organisation and good communication with parents. Space and equipment is prepared so that children can access resources easily and independently which enables them to make choices about their play. A balance of child-led activities and organised play ensure children have a range of different enjoyable experiences whilst they are with the childminder. They benefit from routines which make them feel secure and relaxed. Children play, eat, sleep and rest as they need to.

Documentation is stored securely and information shared appropriately with parents. All of the required policies and procedures are in place to help keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge and experience which she continues to update with relevant training. For example, she has recently carried out training relating to child protection, special needs, the 'Birth to three matters' framework and strategies for dealing with parents. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate. Overall, the range of children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that parent's signatures are obtained for medication and that the upstairs windows and the outside area do not pose a hazard to children.

Parental consents are in place against all medication, upstairs windows have been replaced and retainers are in place to all windows. The garden is safe and secure for children to play and a new locked shed has been installed for storage.

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 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):

- provide parents with information relating to the complaints procedure
- consider enhancing the provision for younger children by extending the use of the 'Birth to 3 matters' framework.

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