



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	124015
Inspection date	27 June 2005
Inspector	Jill Nugent

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 registered in 2001. She lives with her husband and two children, aged 15 and 17, in a house in Hoddesdon. She uses the whole of the house for childminding. There is a secure garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time. She is currently minding two one-year-old children and a child over five after school. She attends the local toddler and childminding groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in a clean and tidy home. Younger children are kept from becoming too dirty or sticky as wipes are always handy. Older children learn about the importance of washing their hands before eating. Children are protected from cross infection through the use of hygienic practices for nappy changing. The childminder does not look after children if they are likely to pass on an infectious illness. Children benefit from her good maintenance of medical records. Her first aid qualification is up to date and she has access to first aid kits, at home and when out, so that children can be treated appropriately. Younger children sleep according to their routines and are allowed to rest for as long as they need.

Children are well nourished. Young children particularly enjoy snacks of rice cakes and raisins. They are beginning to eat independently at lunchtimes when given finger foods. They enjoy the availability of drinks throughout the day. Parents supply their dinners, although older children have a meal provided by the childminder. These are generally nutritious and healthy. Children enjoy physical activity in the garden. Babies learn to crawl and walk, and enjoy the freedom of moving around the conservatory and garden. Children also like to visit the local park where they can use the climbing apparatus and swings.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe environment. Any hazards in the house have been minimised, for example, by putting locks on cupboards and covers on sockets. Children in the garden feel safe as they can see the childminder at all times. They manage the step to the conservatory confidently. They can move around the house safely as all floor areas are kept free from clutter. The necessary fire precautions are in place. The childminder has a written evacuation plan, although she has not practised this to find out how well it works. Children are kept safe on outings. They are strapped into a buggy or car seats, all of which are kept in good condition.

Children enjoy good access to a wide range of toys. The childminder often updates these with new acquisitions to cater for different interests. Children are well supervised when playing in the garden. The garden gate is securely locked. Children are unable to access the staircase and are checked continually when sleeping upstairs. They are beginning to learn about keeping safe themselves. They respond well to a firm 'no' if trying to reach indoor plants. They are further protected through the childminder having a good working knowledge of child protection issues. She ensures that all family members are vetted when reaching the age of sixteen.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children show much interest in the toys set out for them. They especially like the ball pond and various musical toys. They benefit from the childminder's interest in their play. She encourages and talks with them to stimulate their learning. They are beginning to make connections between objects and experiences. The childminder makes good use of the Birth to Three framework to help children develop skills. Children are beginning to find a voice in response to her communications. They are building positive relationships with each other and with the childminder. They are very content, moving around choosing toys and playing happily alongside each other.

Children enjoy a variety of outings in the local area. They like visiting the animals at the garden centre and feeding the ducks on the river. They enjoy meeting other children at the local childminders' and toddler groups. After school, they enjoy the attention of older children. These children particularly like to play on the playstation in the conservatory. They also enjoy going on outings during the school holidays. As the toddlers get older they are able to participate in more creative activities and imaginative play. The childminder keeps photographic records of children to show how they are developing and achieving.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children receive appropriate support from the childminder. They are very much at home in her care and benefit from her close attention to their needs. She responds quickly when they get upset, finding toys to cheer them up. Children feel secure in the knowledge that she is on hand at all times. They show a sense of belonging, brought about through the easy-going and relaxed attitude of the childminder. Children of different ages relate well to each other. Their behaviour is good. Younger children are becoming aware of what is right or wrong. They learn to share toys and comply with requests not to touch certain things, such as garden flowers. They enjoy considerable praise from the childminder, for example, when learning to walk.

Children benefit from the childminder's close working partnership with parents. They are very pleased with the care offered to their children. They particularly like receiving photographs via e-mail so that they can see what their children have been doing during the day. The childminder discusses routines with them so that children receive consistency of care. This care is enhanced by the verbal exchange of information each day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder keeps her records and documents neatly and easily accessible. She has all the necessary information from parents, and procedures in place to promote children's health, safety and enjoyment. Overall children's needs are met appropriately.

Children enjoy plenty of space in which to play. They choose from toys set out on the floor or lawn and also from boxes in an outdoor playroom. They enjoy the extra space in the conservatory and can eat together here in high chairs. Older children are able to eat at the table in the kitchen. When sleeping, cots are in separate rooms so that children do not disturb each other. Much thought has been put into the organisation of space and this contributes to children's good care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the childminder was asked to update her knowledge of child protection and ensure children's safety through the minimising of various hazards. She was also asked to ensure that her childminding records are accessible at all times. She has recently attended training in Child Protection and ensures children's safety around the house. All records are readily available in files.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- practise the evacuation plan to ensure it is practical in the case of an emergency

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk