

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	260338
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 August 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 August 2001. She lives with her family; two children who are aged eight and 10 years. The family has one dog. Their house is in the town of Sandy.

The whole ground floor of the house is used for childminding, the first floor is not used. There is an 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.

The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time. There are currently 23 children on roll attending varying part-time hours. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home which is well-organised, offering sufficient space for play and arranged to meet the needs of all children attending. Children independently meet

their personal health needs, they wash and dry their hands and have personal flannels as well as toothbrushes held in the setting. This helps them to continue to learn about personal care with routines carried out both at home and at the childminder's house. Children access tissues when they need them, place their drinks on safe surfaces, and seek outdoor shoes when playing in the garden. Children can explain that they must not share drinking straws because of the germs and this demonstrates that they are learning about methods to reduce cross-infection. All these actions show that they observe a good role model and are understanding the explanations given by the childminder.

Children enjoy an exciting range of activities which contribute to their good health. Each day there are indoor and outdoor large physical activities to help them develop control of their bodies. For example, they access facilities in the garden and carry out visits further afield. Children enjoy regular walks in several local woods close to the home and enjoy exploring a cycle track where they can also observe farm animals in the adjacent fields. They enjoy visiting Jubilee park, Whipsnade Park, Twycross Zoo, Shuttleworth Park and Dunstable Downs. They explain how they enjoy taking the dog for walks as well as exploring the natural materials and surroundings in wooded areas. Children show their skill as they jump on the trampoline and balance on skateboards. This regular physical exercise helps them to maintain very good physical health.

Children are well nourished with clear agreements between the childminder and parents. This is supported by menus devised by the childminder which are rotated on a monthly basis. Children learn to select healthy snacks and have access to fruit each day. They visit the local farm shop with the childminder where they select fruits and vegetables which are later enjoyed either raw as snacks or cooked within their main meal. Children's individual dietary needs are clearly recorded and discussed with parents, the menus are designed to accommodate those needs.

Children's immediate health and safety is successfully protected because the childminder is informed of the requirements of the National Standards. Children's medical needs are effectively supported and protected due to good attention to maintaining information, seeking training for individual needs, and reviewing the care of children with parents.

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

The provision is good.

Children access an environment within which they may be independent and maintain safety. Children take part in regular evacuation routines from the home, learning about safety within any premises they occupy. They are able to understand and explain the routine showing that they comprehend the relevance and importance. The plan is carried out each month and care is taken to ensure that children returning from a period of absence complete the routine as soon as possible to enable them to be clear about how to keep themselves safe. Children take part in a broad variety of outings on a regular basis and have opportunities to learn about road safety as they walk in the local community. Children's safety when in the car is supported by an additional mirror set inside the car. This enables the childminder to view the rear seats and ensure that children remain well as they travel. Children carry out road safety routines whenever they are away from the home and comply with very clear routines for getting in and out of the car, to ensure that each is strapped into their seat securely whilst the remainder are safe as they wait.

Children's welfare is protected to a high standard because the childminder has a very good understanding of her responsibilities and robust procedures to follow in the event of concern

or child protection. Policies include the information regarding Local Safeguarding Children Board which ensures that parents and carers remain fully up to date. This is shared through the review of the policies and a folder which parents and carers are invited to keep. Health and safety arrangements support and protect children's welfare very efficiently. These procedures continue to be reviewed as the childminder is continuing to seek training, appropriate to her childcare role, and to develop her practice.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, secure and settled. They are eager to attend and relish their time at this welcoming childminding setting. They are enthusiastic about the activities and play opportunities provided, clearly and competently stating their own ideas to the childminder. For example, as a result of sitting together to 'brainstorm' ideas at the beginning of the holidays they worked together to construct a 'blow football' game. This led onto developing and designing players, the pitch, the rules, the scoring system, and teams within which they would play. All children take part in activities because the childminder is careful to adapt activities to ensure that each child may play at their own stage of development. Children enjoy using their skills and knowledge as they take part. For instance, they write the rules and display them together, and calculate during the games as they compare scores. This helps them to feel confident in their developing knowledge.

Children have excellent relationships with each other and with the childminder, confidently participating in discussions with her and initiating conversations. Children enjoy sharing their previous activities and plan to continue games and activities in the future. For example, they use several local woodland areas and show pride as they talk of the camp called 'Woodlands Hotel' which they constructed from natural materials found on the ground. They extended this activity by making membership cards for themselves on which they wrote their names and details and added photographs. This helps them to relate their play to daily life experiences such as the use of driving licences, passports or membership cards for clubs. An emphasis is placed on practical and physical experience which will enable children to learn by themselves. This is shown by the extension of activities such as going for a walk when children jump puddles, collect rocks and stones, and drop them into water to observe the effect and listen to the sounds. They then extend their language to describe what they see and hear, compare size and weight, and talk about the world around them. Their development and self-initiated learning is supported because the childminder has a very good understanding of the way in which young children learn.

Children settle quickly due to the quality of care, understanding and planning. Children's information, including their likes and dislikes, is maintained and given high regard in their daily care. All children's learning and development is thoughtfully and carefully promoted. Children explore new subjects and their developing knowledge with the support of the childminder. Children tell the childminder what they see and are confident in experimenting with their emerging knowledge because they receive sensitive support and constant praise.

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

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their needs are well met as they follow their normal daily routines as discussed with their parents. This includes support for children attending

extra-curricular activities. Children thrive because their care is shared with parents and carers within daily diaries. The procedures related to children's care, which are developed by the childminder, are shared fully with parents and they hold a parent pack in which they have copies of forms, such as permission slips. This link between the childminder and their home life helps children to feel secure. However, there is no extended system, other than daily discussion, whereby parents and children may feed back their thoughts regarding the care or arrangements to the childminder. This means that she is unable to use that information when planning for future development within the setting.

Children understand responsible behaviour and recognise the needs of others due to consistent boundaries being maintained by the childminder. They show that they have developed good social behaviours and need no prompting to use the phrases 'please' and 'thank you'. Children make requests when sharing materials and work together when developing large role play and construction. For example, this was shown in their development of a 'blow football' game and the development of rules by which they would all abide. Children are caring for younger children and include them in their play.

Children use a range of resources which promote conversation and interest. Children talk about objects within the home which originate from other countries and enjoy looking at maps displayed on the wall. They discuss each other's likes or dislikes and appreciate that each one has preferences or specific needs. However, whilst each child is clearly treated as an individual there is not yet a proactive procedure to actively promote children's awareness of equality of opportunity. This means that they may fail to fully develop their understanding of the cultural diversity or each person as an individual within society.

Children receive excellent support that meets their complex needs as individuals because the childminder seeks appropriate information from parents and takes positive steps to inform herself on a variety of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She offers flexible care, including respite care, to all children and attends training courses to ensure that she is able to fully integrate all children into daily routines, thereby ensuring that they may reach their potential. She is able to draw on extensive experience in the care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and this means that she uses systems to fully assess any child's needs before planning in detail how she may fully support that child within her home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are secure within the surroundings where they develop a firm sense of trust in the childminder. They feel at ease in this well-organised environment, leading them to confidently explore their surroundings and respond to conversations with the childminder. Their daily comfort and enjoyment is enhanced by the quality of organisation and the attention to all details relating to their care and well-being. This is shown by the attention to information sharing with parents and carers through the diaries. It is also supported by the flexibility offered to families which responds to the demands made for care at short notice or with flexible hours.

Play is effectively planned to allow time for relaxation after school or in the holidays with practical experience and physical learning given high emphasis. Younger children are offered stimulating practical experiences which enable them to develop at their own pace. They are supported and extended with new activities introduced regularly. Children have access to personal care facilities and develop good awareness of their personal space and care through example and routines. These include personal hygiene, care for surroundings, and responsibility

for play materials and personal belongings. This clear organisation enables the children to feel confident in initiating their own play and learning.

Children's care, safety and welfare is promoted through the childminder's practical, daily implementation of detailed policies and procedures across all areas of care. The childminder has a clear knowledge and understanding of the Children Act and associated regulations, ensuring that she addresses her responsibilities and demonstrating to parents that she meets the National Standards through a detailed file and discussion. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection a single recommendation was made for the provider to continue maintaining the level of care being provided. Since that time she has continued attending training courses, reviewed all documentation and continued to provide a quality service. This means that all children have their development fostered and that they are able to achieve their full potential.

### **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):

- continue to develop methods to share information with parents and children, seeking feedback to enable the provision to continue to meet the needs and preferences of all children attending
- extend the current practice and procedures to actively promote equality of opportunity and develop children's understanding of the diversity of society.

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)