

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY342420
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Karen Molloy

<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 was registered in 2006. She lives with her husband and 17 month old child in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole of the house, excluding the third bedroom on the ground floor, the first floor office and first bedroom, is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding one child under five all day. The childminder is close to local schools, pre-school groups, parks and open spaces.

The childminder holds an appropriate early years qualification.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and comfortable home where they are beginning to learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They wash their hands before snack and after

using the toilet and are given the necessary support. Children's independence is encouraged with a step in the bathroom and individual coloured flannels that children can remember such as 'yellow fellow' and 'white lady'. Children stay healthy as there are suitable procedures in place to protect them from infection; nappies are changed regularly and disposed of appropriately and changing mats are wiped down. Children who are infectious do not attend the childminder's home and a sick child policy is shared with parents and supports the practice. An accident and incident policy ensures that children are dealt with appropriately and sensitively. All the relevant medication and accident records are in place to ensure children's health is safeguarded. Children also benefit from the childminder's up-to-date first aid knowledge.

Children enjoy regular physical activity which contributes to their good health and helps develop their physical skills. They regularly walk to nearby parks where they can use the play equipment and enjoy large open spaces to play football. In the garden, children have access to a slide, rocker and pop-up toys. The childminder makes good use of a local toy library to provide additional resources for children's outdoor play. Indoors, children and the childminder dance and move to action songs, which they do enthusiastically. They use the pop-up toys indoors and crawl through the tunnel. Children rest and sleep according to their needs. A travel cot is available upstairs so they can sleep undisturbed. Their own routine is followed and the childminder makes sure children have any comforters they need. Older children who do not sleep take part in more restful, quieter activities such as listening to stories or completing puzzles.

Children are well nourished and benefit from a range of healthy meals and snacks. A healthy eating policy is shared with parents and encourages children to make healthy choices. They are also encouraged to try different foods from different cultures. Sweets are reserved for special occasions and no fizzy drinks given. Snacks include raw vegetables, fruit and breadsticks. Children have regular drinks of water, milk or fruit juice throughout the day. Any specific dietary requirements, including children's likes and dislikes, are discussed and recorded. The childminder also supports parents if they are weaning their child. Children's food is recorded in their daily contact book to ensure parents are kept informed. A weekly menu planner is shared with parents and includes meals such as vegetable and pasta bake and fishermen's pie, with yoghurt and fruit crumbles for dessert. Children enjoy sitting at the table for a snack and are offered a choice of fruit with their drink.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment where risks are identified and minimised. This means they are able to move around safely, freely and with some independence. Appropriate safety measures are in place such as socket covers, window locks, safety gates and door 'bumpers'. The bookcase is fitted to the wall and children stay out of the kitchen if the childminder is cooking. Suitable fire precautions include smoke alarms, a fire blanket and fire procedure, which all contribute to children's safety.

Children are kept safe outdoors. The garden is all enclosed and a recent addition of a picket fence has increased children's safety. Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, the childminder sets sensible limits whilst they are out, such as 'wait at the next tree'; this enables them to have some freedom whilst ensuring their safety too. Children know if they cross the boundaries they will have to hold onto the pushchair. The childminder discusses the importance of keeping safe so they learn for themselves. Children develop an awareness of road safety even at a young age. As they walk regularly, children learn to cross

roads safely whilst holding onto the buggy, looking left and right, using their eyes and ears. Children travel in a car safely. Appropriate car insurance and car seats are in place and children are never left unattended. The childminder carries first aid and a mobile phone in case of an accident or emergency. Parents are informed of any special trips and children's needs are discussed, such as travel sickness. However, there is currently no written consent for transporting children in a car, which may potentially impact on children's well-being. There are other effective safety precautions and documents in place; pushchairs have harnesses, there are plans in the event of an emergency and an outings policy. Additional policies including a dropping-off and collection policy ensures that children's safety is maintained. These are shared with parents and support the good practice.

Children use safe and suitable equipment. They have access to a varied and wide selection of toys and books that provides them with challenges and stimulates their interest. Many are easily accessible, stored in low-level boxes or drawers which helps children to make independent choices. There are plans to store some of the resources to enable them to be rotated regularly, thereby providing further choices for the children. Toys are kept clean and well maintained.

Children are protected by a childminder who has a sufficient knowledge of child protection, understands her role and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. All the up-to-date literature with relevant contact details are in place and the childminder is aware of the need to record any concerns. She is keen to undertake child protection training to develop her knowledge and understanding in this area.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. They have the opportunity to play, rest and enjoy various activities at their own pace. Children are beginning to form positive relationships with the childminder as she responds appropriately and promptly to their requests and needs. In turn, children approach the childminder confidently for guidance or reassurance. Children have their individual needs met. Although there is a general routine, the childminder adapts this according to the children's needs, organising events or activities around their mood or interests. Children are well supported by the childminder who listens to them effectively and asks questions to extend their learning. All children receive one to one attention from the childminder and older children have some additional time when younger ones are asleep.

Children show an interest in what they do and are busy and involved throughout the morning. They enjoy playing with a range of toys that they initiate or the childminder suggests. Children are keen to participate in the play dough activity and become absorbed in this for quite a while as they make dough cakes and sausages and offer them to others. Children become absorbed in imaginative play and spend time putting up and folding down a cot frame, they put the cot on, take it off and then tell the adults to 'be quiet as the baby is going to sleep now'. Younger children copy older children and the childminder encourages them to help and learn from each other.

Children participate in a range of activities and experiences to support their all round development. A care, learning and play policy is in place and explains how children learn through play. Activities organised for children cover; mathematical and logical thinking, language and communication, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, imaginative play, construction, water play, art and crafts, cooking and gardening. Children acquire new skills and knowledge, for example, they learn to use scissors and practise this skill

to cut out legs to make a lion. The childminder plans ahead but is adaptable, led by the children's needs. She introduces a topic each week and may organise activities around it, for example, during shape week, the children completed dot-to-dot sheets. Children sing along to the alphabet as they complete an alphabet puzzle to help them remember what letter comes next, they chat to the childminder about a spider they have found and interact positively with each other and the childminder.

Children are beginning to develop confidence and self esteem. The childminder offers much praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements; as children count the puzzle pieces, they are told how well they have done. Children help to tidy away and are thanked for doing so. When children remind the childminder 'remember I need a bit of help with this puzzle', the childminder supports them but also reminds them how good they are at doing puzzles. Children's work is displayed and the childminder talks about it whilst children show pride in their art work.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by a childminder who respects the children and values their differences. An equal opportunities policy promotes positive practice; children are helped to reach their potential, activities are adapted according to children's ability and stage of development, appropriate resources are provided and additional time or support is given to those children who need it. Children are shown how to be kind and caring to each other and the childminder encourages them to work together and suggest they 'work as a team' to make a pyramid. Children respond enthusiastically 'that's a great idea!' and the childminder is a positive role model, showing them how to be helpful to each other. Children learn to be considerate to others; older children find a bib for a younger child and attempt to put it on for them. They are praised and their efforts acknowledged. All children have access to the resources, taking into consideration their age and stage of development. The childminder tries to provide toys that reflect positive images, cultures and abilities. She encourages children to learn about their own culture as well as other cultures and beliefs, in a fun way, through sharing books, cooking and celebrating special festivals. The childminder teaches children to value each other and encourages parents to share special occasions and artefacts.

Children are settled in sensitively and according to family needs. The childminder acknowledges how difficult it can be to leave their children and tries to ensure a smooth transition. Settling in sessions are arranged where parents have the chance to share information about their children; likes, dislikes, routine and favourite activities. This is a time to discuss parents wishes and it is the beginning of building a good partnership with them. Children with special needs are supported and fully integrated into the setting. A special needs policy states that the childminder will have regard to the special educational needs code of practice. She works closely with parents to build on children's previous experiences, knowledge, understanding and skills. Children's progress will be observed and monitored and discussed with parents. The childminder will seek appropriate support, adapt activities accordingly and arrange access to specialist equipment if necessary.

Children understand responsible behaviour and are beginning to learn the boundaries. Any minor disagreements are dealt with calmly and easily. Distraction works well and the childminder makes it exciting to look at something else or to tidy away. Children learn to be kind and considerate to others; they are reminded to share and ask before they take things and are praised when they remember. Children learn sensible rules such as eating at the table, looking

after toys, treating others how they would like to be treated, sharing toys and helping to tidy away. Children are encouraged to develop good manners and the childminder remembers to thank the children too. The childminder promotes a calm atmosphere where any potentially difficult situations are easily diffused. A positive behaviour management policy fosters children's good behaviour. Their self-discipline is encouraged, realistic limits are set, good behaviour is rewarded and children are given explanations, praise and attention to develop their understanding and foster their self-esteem.

Children are cared for by a childminder who works well with parents to establish an effective partnership and meet children's individual needs. She ensures she is approachable to parents so both parties are able to discuss any issues. Parents are welcome to call the childminder, as they try not to discuss the children whilst they are at the childminder's home. A daily contact book ensures parents are kept up-to-date with what is going on. This is completed with the children so they can have some input into their books. All required documents including contracts, child record forms and a complaints policy is in place. This ensures parents are well informed and the childminder has the necessary information to meet children's needs.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a childminder who has a high regard for children. She has a sound knowledge of the National Standards and regulations and a good knowledge of child development. The childminder holds a recognised child care qualification, the National Association for Maternal and Child Welfare (NAMCW) and has previous experience, working as a nanny and in a playgroup. The childminder has recently completed the required first aid course and the Diploma in home-based childcare, an introduction to childminding practice. She has also attended a briefing session in relation to the new Early Years Foundation Stage and is keen to keep up-to-date with current practice and attend further training.

Children are comfortable within their environment. This enables them to make their own play choices, yet still approach the childminder for support or reassurance. The childminder aims to provide an environment that is caring, fun and stimulating. Their independence is encouraged, for example, they put their lunch in the fridge, have their own flannels and make choices about activities. The adult-to-child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play and they receive lots of one to one time and attention. Space and resources are organised effectively to meet children's needs. Children can easily access a range of toys independently and the childminder also initiates play opportunities. Children benefit from a balanced range of activities indoors and out of the home.

All the records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision are in place. In addition, the childminder has a comprehensive file of information that relates to the National Standards and supports the practice. This is shared with parents and they also receive a copy of the policies and procedures to keep. Documents are kept safe and secure and the childminder is aware of the need to notify Ofsted of any significant changes or events.

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 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):

- obtain written permission from parents for children to be transported in a vehicle.

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)