

Inspection report for early years provision

---

|                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 105163         |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 13 August 2007 |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Susan Marriott |
| <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 satisfactory. 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 1998. She lives with her two sons aged 18 and 20 years in their house in Luton, in Bedfordshire. The whole of the ground floor and one of the upstairs bedrooms are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three children under five years at any one time and is also registered to provide overnight care for one child. She is currently caring for four children under five on a part-time, flexible basis during the day. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends a local toddler group and childminding support group when appropriate. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean home where the childminder follows basic hygiene rules in order to prevent the spread of infection. The children learn why they must wash their hands after using the toilet. Children stay healthy because the childminder controls infection by

excluding children who become sick or unwell. Appropriate documentation is available to record accidents and any medication. The childminder keeps a suitably stocked first aid box and maintains her first aid qualification in order to ensure that children are well-cared for if they have an accident. However, the childminder does not have written parental permission for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment. This potentially compromises children's welfare in an emergency situation.

Children enjoy general play in their childminder's garden and an appropriate range of activities that contribute to their good health. The childminder does not drive, so the children walk to and from the school with their childminder. The childminder makes good use of the nearby park for the children to run, and play on fixed equipment. This supports the development and improvement of children's physical skills.

Every minded child is encouraged to have frequent drinks to ensure that children are not left thirsty. Children receive a varied and balanced diet in line with parents wishes. The childminder seeks information about permitted foods before the placement commences and then devises her menus to comply with requests. Children go shopping with their childminder and help to choose the fresh ingredients for home-cooked meals which promotes an appropriate interest in healthy eating and living.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure home environment where suitable emphasis is given to identifying and minimising risk. For example, the front and back doors are kept locked and children sometimes practise their fire drill. Domestic safety precautions are in place. For example, safety gates are used appropriately to control children's access to various parts of the house. This enables children to play safely, happily and independently. The childminder requests parental permission for transport and outings. The childminder gives appropriate priority to helping children understand to keep themselves safe and to maintaining children's safety outside the home. For example, the childminder ensures that the children hold hands or hold onto the buggy when out walking and promotes road safety awareness.

Space is used well to ensure that children play under close supervision at all times. The childminder completes her household cleaning before the children arrive so that she can devote her entire time and attention to them during the day. Children can easily access toys from a wide range of resources; which are age appropriate and maintained in a good state of repair. Children's health, safety and welfare is properly promoted. Children are safe with the childminder, who has a confident understanding of child protection procedures. She has previously attended a training course and has a copy of the reference booklet 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for ready reference if required.

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

The provision is good.

Children receive lots of affection and cuddles, and are happy, settled and content to play. The childminder ensures that children settle quickly into her setting as she encourages parents to allow the children to bring a link from home in the form of a soft toy or a favourite piece of music or story book. Children are helped to understand that their parents go to work but return later in the day.

The childminder talks constantly to the children about what they are doing and develops their speech and language skills effectively. Children are happy and make steady progress in learning and personal development because the childminder ensures that children are involved in a sound range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development and overall learning. She plays with them at their level and her interaction is highly caring and appropriate. For example, during the inspection the children play with plastic frogs, flicking them into a tub. The childminder asks how many frogs are in the tub and how many more are left outside, extending children's mathematical thinking. Children state how much they enjoy story time and singing with their childminder and eagerly choose a new picture book about aliens who steal peoples underpants.

Children benefit from a balanced range of activities included in the weekly routine. The childminder tries to follow the children's lead, responding to their choices and decisions. She encourages them to play with different toys and varied activities. Occasional trips by train or bus include visits to the seaside at Brighton or to the river embankment in Bedford. They socialise and interact with others when visiting other childminders and their children. They go to the town and help to choose the shopping on a regular basis. Outings near to home include visits to the museum at Wardown Park. The childminder is familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and intuitively incorporates the spirit of the framework to guide her practice with children under three-years-old. She has attended a training course based upon the framework and finds that she instinctively includes the aspects and components when working with young children.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a suitable range of resources and activities which promote a positive view of the wider world. The childminder has a written equal opportunities statement which demonstrates her knowledge of this standard. She actively promotes positive images of other cultures, race and disability through the use of toys, books and planned activities. For example, at Chinese New Year, children make red envelopes to symbolise good luck and have the opportunity to taste noodles. Children are valued and respected as individuals. The childminder has a sound practical awareness of how to include and appropriately care for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. She is aware of children's developmental stages and alert to any possible cause for concern. The children behave very well in response to the routine and consistency of the childminder. She uses facial expression and the tone of her voice to indicate any displeasure or disappointment and ensures that positive behaviour is copiously rewarded with lots of praise and encouragement. Children know the house rules. Children's needs are suitably met as they follow their daily routine as discussed and agreed with their parents. The childminder values daily conversations to ensure that appropriate information is shared with parents and has a suitable complaints system in place.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder is generally familiar with the National Standards and holds a recognised childcare qualification. She has regular contact with other childminders and benefits from regular visits from an advisor to update her knowledge. However, she does not regularly review her records, policies and procedures and as time has passed she has become confused about the information she holds. If not addressed, this may compromise the quality of care provided. The childminder

is conscientious and confident in her childcare practice to promote positive outcomes for children. She uses her time effectively to ensure that she is able to cater for each individual child's needs with all aspects of care provided. This means that children are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. A mixture of verbal and written policies and procedures are discussed with parents and accurately reflect the service offered, and most required permissions are in place. The childminder regularly shares daily discussion with all parents and carers. This ensures an appropriate partnership and parents and carers remain well informed about the service provided and their children's activities. Overall, children's needs are met.

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

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to ensure that vetting checks are carried out on all persons over the age of sixteen years, living in the household. The childminder has evidence to demonstrate that the appropriate checks have been carried out. The childminder was also asked to ensure that children do not have access to the dog's feeding bowls. Following the death of the family dog, no pets are now present in the household. The satisfactory actions taken have improved the quality and standards of childcare.

### **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 satisfactory. 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 written parental permission is requested, at the time of the placement, to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future
- ensure that records, policies and procedures are updated and further enhanced to ensure the continuing welfare, care and learning of children.

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)