

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 127870
Inspection date 24 October 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 1995. She lives with her partner and one child aged nine years in Ware, Hertfordshire. The whole ground floor 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 six children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has two pet cats and a chameleon.

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, walk to and from school and visit local parks 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 playing with hoops, quoits and bean bags, enjoy ball games and climb on the apparatus at the park. In the house they enthusiastically construct with Duplo and Lego and join the Brio pieces to create new train tracks.

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. They have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands after touching animals and are encouraged to 'catch their sneezes' to prevent the spread of germs. Children learn about germs through discussion and know that they need to wash the germs away so that they do not get into their mouths and make them sick. Children learn about keeping their bodies healthy through conversation with the childminder and a broad range of interesting books. This is illustrated by discussion about bodies being like cars which need good petrol to make them work well in the same way that we need healthy foods to make our bodies work well. Parental consents for emergency medical treatment are not in place which means that appropriate action may not be taken in the event of an emergency.

Children are beginning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They know which type of food is good to eat and learn how food passes through their bodies. They learn that it is better to eat some foods in small amounts. Children have access to regular drinks throughout the day and eat fresh fruit and vegetables. The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents and works with them closely to provide nutritious snacks and 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. 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 when out and about and know never to answer the door. They learn to stop at the kerb and look for cars as they cross the road. Children know that it is not safe to go too close to the edge of water or stairs. Fire safety equipment is in place and evacuation has been considered, however, an emergency escape has not been practised and therefore the procedure may not be familiar in an emergency.

A broad range of safe, developmentally- appropriate resources are provided for children and stored at child height for easy access. This enables the children to independently select their play and activities safely. 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, is aware of her responsibilities and has all the relevant documentation in place.

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 sets them challenges

along with a range of stimulating play to aid their development. For example, children enjoy play schools and have activity sheets and number work incorporated in this.

Children benefit from a range of activities which help develop their knowledge and skills. Children practise their early reading skills as they learn to write different words, breaking them down into sounds as they go. They develop their counting and social skills as they move their counters in board games, learning to take turns as they play. They participate in the weighing of ingredients as they prepare recipes for cooking. Children learn about the natural environment as they observe the care of the family pets, visit a local petting farm and enjoy nature trails. Children develop their imaginations through different role play activities as they re-enact their days at school, play doctors and enjoy dressing up. Children express different feelings and ideas using different art materials.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is developed by the childminder who gives them frequent praise and encouragement at appropriate times. Children's sense of belonging is promoted by the childminder who knows them well and values their achievements which she shares with parents. They make positive relationships, playing together and finding new friends on outings.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a varied range of activities and meaningful resources to promote a positive view of the wider world. Books, dolls, small world figures and activities increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. Children learn about different countries and cultures through discussion, research on the internet and by looking at maps together. One child is encouraged to share the words and symbols used in his own country and enjoys teaching these to the other children and childminders.

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 learn to share and take turns. Children learn the rules of the house and are aware of the 'three warnings' system if they cannot stay within the boundaries. The childminder provides a range of opportunities for the children to socialise which helps them make positive relationships with others. Realistic challenges are set 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 about the children and what they have been doing. This helps keep parents well informed of how their child's needs are being met and their developmental progress. The childminder values feedback from parents to support her provision and has received positive and complimentary comments.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children's needs are met through effective organisation. Toys are stored so that children can access resources easily and independently which enables them to make choices. Children benefit from routines to help them feel secure and relaxed. Children play, eat and rest as they

need to. A variety of activities are available which provide children with stimulating and challenging play.

The childminder's insurance policy has not been seen although the insurance company have confirmed that the required insurance is in place. Other documentation is stored securely and information shared appropriately with parents. Policies and procedures are in place. The childminder has booked to attend a new first aid course shortly. The children's health and welfare is therefore safeguarded.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to develop her knowledge of child protection and obtain the required guidance. She also agreed to ensure all records are readily available, implement a record of children's attendance and to ensure that animal food bowls are inaccessible to children.

The childminder demonstrates a clear knowledge of child protection and has the required documentation; she has implemented a record of children's attendance and ensures that animal food bowls are not accessible to children. Records relating to childminding activities are readily accessible with the exception of the insurance document, however, evidence of insurance has been provided through consultation with the insurance company.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment
- practise emergency evacuation to ensure the procedure is familiar in the event of a fire
- ensure that insurance documentation is readily available for inspection at all times.

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