

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY294077
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 December 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Gail Groves
<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 2004. He lives with his wife who is also a registered childminder and their three children aged six, eight and nine-years-old in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house and two bedrooms and the bathroom upstairs are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time or eight children when working with another childminder. He is currently working with his wife and so is minding eight children who attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children. He attends the local parent and toddler group, takes children to the local library and to the local park. The family has a cat, three Guinea Pigs and a pet mouse.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are well protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill because the childminder follows current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, children have their own bed linen, the childminder holds current first aid and food hygiene certificates and parental permission is obtained to use plasters and sun cream. Children are encouraged to carry out simple, good health and hygiene practices such as washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet, so that they develop good hygiene routines for later life. However, they do not understand the reasons for doing so. Consequently, they are not developing an appropriate understanding about the important part that good personal hygiene routines play in being healthy.

Children are well nourished and are encouraged to widen their tastes so that they develop good eating habits. Meals provided by the childminder are freshly prepared and use mainly organic produce, although parents can choose to provide their own meals for children if they wish to do so. Opportunities to taste foods from different countries and to learn about healthy eating are well planned and charts and posters are used to good effect to support children's understanding. In addition, children who do not eat readily are encouraged to do so through the use of reward systems that are agreed with their parents. Children's health and dietary needs are also well met because the childminder works closely with their parents. For example, he discusses children's requirements with parents before they begin to attend and seeks written permission to administer non prescription medication such as Calpol when needed. Parents are always consulted before this happens and are kept fully informed about how their child is feeling if they become unwell whilst in the childminder's care.

Children take part in regular physical activity both indoors and outdoors. For example, they play ball games, use scooters, a trampoline, sit and ride cars and enjoy making obstacle courses with a variety of resources in the garden. They visit the park to use the swings, slide and large scale climbing apparatus and take part in daily music and movement sessions inside. As a result, they are developing large motor skills and coordination. Active play is balanced with less strenuous play and the daily routine is carefully structured to ensure that children can rest or sleep according to their needs and do not become overtired and irritable.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment in which the risks to their safety are minimised. For example, the childminder has carried out a written risk assessment of the premises and has addressed the identified issues. Hard wired smoke alarms are fitted, stair gates are used to prevent children accessing dangerous areas and the childminder ensures that he monitors children's safety at all times. As a result, they can move around and access resources safely and independently. In addition, children use good quality, well maintained suitable and safe equipment which meets their differing needs and allows them to take part in activities safely and independently.

Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure that children are kept safe on outings. The childminder ensures that suitable seats and restraints are used when travelling in the car and

has a mobile phone and children's contact details with him at all times. Children also learn to keep themselves safe through discussions, play experiences and practical instances within their daily routine. For example, they discuss road safety and hold hands to cross the road when the childminder collects them from school, they play road safety games in the garden with traffic cones and cars and they practise the emergency evacuation procedure regularly.

Children are safeguarded because the childminder understands his role in child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. For example, he has recently attended child protection training and has all the appropriate information and contact details readily to hand should he need to seek advice or report any concerns he may have about a child's welfare or well-being.

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

The provision is good.

Children are involved in a broad and interesting range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support all areas of their development and learning. For example, they visit the local toddler group to develop social skills by mixing with others and build with Lego, crawl through tunnels and manipulate puzzles to develop hand and eye coordination and physical control. They play imaginatively with dolls, home corner resources and small world toys such as cars and animals to develop their understanding about the world around them and their role within it. Regular opportunities to paint, glue, draw or model with clay and playdough help them develop their creative skills and they develop an understanding of numbers and counting as they take part in activities such as playing number games or singing number songs. The childminder constantly interacts with children and their play in order to develop and extend their language and communication skills and they enjoy a daily story time during which they can join in with familiar stories at age-appropriate levels. As a result, children respond to adults who are interested in what they do and say, relate well to others and are developing good social and communication skills.

The childminder plans the day around a carefully structured routine which provides a good balance between adult led and child initiated activities. This enables children to develop confidence because they clearly know and understand what the routine is. Consequently, they are happy, well settled and confidently join in with all of the play and learning opportunities provided for them. Children are becoming confident to make decisions and to explore and investigate their environment. For example, they decide what resources they would like to play with, explore how to make a building with a construction toy and investigate how to attach cotton wool to their Christmas hats with glue. As a result, they are able to extend their thinking and learning in ways that are meaningful and interesting. The childminder knows and understands the children's individual needs well and provides appropriate support to meet those needs. For example, children for whom English is an additional language are particularly well supported because the childminder shows that he values the language they speak at home by learning and using simple words and phrases in their mother tongue. This also aids their understanding of English and helps to develop their communication skills.

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

The provision is good.

Children are valued and included and feel a strong sense of belonging. They form affectionate relationships with the childminder and his wife and consequently feel comfortable and at home.

Their individual needs are well met because the childminder works in close partnership with parents and carers. He shares information about children on a daily basis and provides a written diary for those parents who wish to have one. This gives them details about what their children have been doing, how they have eaten and what their sleeping and nappy changing routine has been. Close liaison and discussions with parents also enables the childminder to meet children's changing needs such as their sleeping, eating or potty training requirements. As a result, children have consistency in their care routines.

Children learn to respond well to appropriate expectations for their behaviour. The childminder uses age-appropriate methods for dealing with unwanted behaviour and is careful to praise and acknowledge children's efforts and achievements at all times so that they develop confidence and self-esteem. With support, children learn to share and take turns and to play and take part in activities together. As a result, they are learning to work harmoniously together, are beginning to be aware of their own needs and are learning to respect the needs of others. Children make choices and take decisions throughout their daily routine. For example, they choose what story they would like the childminder to read to them, decide when they have eaten enough lunch and choose which toys they would like to play with. Consequently, they are developing independence.

Children benefit from some activities and resources which help them value cultural diversity. For example, they enjoy tasting food from different countries and have access to books, puzzles, dolls and puppets which reflect a range of people from different cultures. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their awareness and understanding of disability. Consequently, they are unable to fully develop a positive awareness of the differences and similarities between people.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of all children, a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. For example, he regularly attends training courses to update and enhance his skills and each year sends out a questionnaire to parents to seek feedback about his practice and the care he provides. He then uses this information to make improvements to his provision. As a result, children's care and development is enhanced. The childminder's policies and procedures work in practice to promote positive outcomes for children and all of the necessary documentation for the safe and efficient management of the provision is in place. Record keeping systems are used well to meet children's needs.

The childminder's effective use of his time and the available space contributes positively to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. For example, toys and resources are stored at low level so that children can select them independently and safely and the main lounge area is used flexibly to provide a range of active play activities as well as for resting and quiet play. In addition, because he works in close partnership with his wife, the childminder is able to ensure that children receive a lot of individual support and attention in order to support their care, learning and play. For example, he and his wife share tasks such as preparing meals and collecting children from school so that the daily routine flows smoothly and efficiently and children can be fully supported by at least one adult at all times.

Overall children's needs are met.

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

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to minimise the hazards to children in the shower area of the downstairs toilet and to obtain written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for their children should it be necessary. He has now cleared the shower room so that it does not contain any dangerous items and has obtained the required parental permission for each child in his care. As a result, children's health and safety is more fully protected.

### **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):

- develop children's understanding of the importance of personal hygiene routines
- increase the range of activities and play resources which provide children with positive images of disability.

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)