



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123407
Inspection date	28 February 2006
Inspector	Kim Wailling
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 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 husband in Harpenden, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house, including a downstairs toilet is used for childminding and there is a garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for three children. She is currently minding six children over five before and after school, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children.

The childminder and her husband are accredited foster carers with the Local

Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health needs are adequately met as the childminder talks to parents to ensure that children's health and dietary needs are known and are accommodated. Good health is satisfactorily promoted as the childminder follows sensible hygiene procedures such as providing soap and towels for children to use when washing their hands. Children's well-being however, is compromised if they have an accident as the childminder does not hold a relevant first aid qualification.

Children's rest and sleep requirements are discussed with parents so that individual needs are satisfactorily met. If children are tired after school there is a comfortable sofa available for them to rest on. Children are regularly offered drinks and snacks. In addition, the childminder is aware of the importance of bringing children's attention to the benefits of healthy living by involving them in activities such as cookery sessions which helps them learn about food and food preparation.

Children use the garden to enjoy exercise. The childminder walks to take and collect children from school daily. This means that children experience regular physical activity.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe environment. The childminder is aware of potential hazards to children in her home and takes appropriate action to manage these. For example, ensuring electric sockets are inaccessible to children. However, risk assessment procedures are not consistent. The garden fence had loose fence panel which means that this area, although not in use on the day of the inspection visit, was not fully secure for children. Children play with toys that are kept in good repair so that they are safe to use. Time and attention is given to helping children keep themselves safe indoors, such as clearing away small toys so that other children do not trip over them.

Children are kept safe when on outings as the childminder takes appropriate steps. For example, when collecting children from school she arrives in the playground in good time and the children know where to find her. The childminder uses the daily walk to and from school to teach the children about road safety.

Children's welfare is satisfactorily promoted as the childminder keeps relevant records such as emergency contact numbers. Daily attendance records are kept which record accurate times of children's arrival and departure, which means that these are effective. The childminder has a sound understanding of child protection issues and of the procedure to follow if she has any concerns which safeguards

children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy time spent with the childminder as she provides a choice of age-appropriate toys and resources. Children under five play with toys such as cars and large construction sets which reflect their interests. Children over five are offered a wide range of art and craft materials to use. Toys can be freely accessed and are changed on a regular basis so that children do not become bored.

Children feel comfortable at the childminder's home as she takes a genuine interest in them by talking and listening to them. The childminder understands the importance of play in children's learning. However, she has not yet accessed 'Birth to three matters' or adopted an approach in line with this. This means that some learning outcomes for children under three are limited. Children's achievements are shared with their parents at the end of the day and any completed craft projects are taken home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued as individuals and are helped to learn about similarities and differences in others through the use of such resources as story books and by watching appropriate children's television programmes. They are encouraged to be helpful towards each other and share. Older children are given simple chores, such as carrying drinks for younger children. This helps children gain a sense of responsibility.

Many of the older children have been in the childminder's care since babyhood which means that the childminder knows the children, their siblings and parents very well. Children benefit from this as their individual needs are made known to the childminder who accommodates these into her daily routine, for example, children's favourite snacks. Time is made at the end of the day to discuss events and arising problems are quickly resolved. Currently, however, there is no procedure to record parent's concerns made in writing which impacts on the effectiveness of working in partnership with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children benefit from the well organised daily routine which takes into account the school run, time for unhurried play, mealtimes and children's sleep patterns. Records which promote the welfare of children are kept and the importance of maintaining and reviewing these is understood by the childminder. However, the dates of birth on the children's personal records are not always filled in.

Consequently, documentation that supports children's well-being is not fully comprehensive. In addition, the childminder does not hold an appropriate first aid qualification. This compromises children's health and represents a significant weakness in organisation. However, this is being addressed and a place on a training course is being sought. This means that overall, the needs of children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the following areas were highlighted as needing review and attention: the lack of accurate recording of any medicines administered to children and the absence of covers on electric sockets accessible to children.

Both have been fully addressed. Recording procedures safeguarding children's health are in place and electric sockets had been made inaccessible. This has had a positive impact on children's health and safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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):

- establish procedures to assess risks to children and take action to minimise these
- improve outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters'
- establish procedures for recording any complaints made by parents and informing them of the outcome of any investigation
- update children's records to show name, address and date of birth

- complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk