



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123315
Inspection date	25 October 2005
Inspector	Julie Whitelaw

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 has been registered since 1992. She lives with her husband and two adult daughters in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The ground floor of the house is the area used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children and is currently minding eight children part time aged from eight months to nine years. The house is within walking distance of the local park, shops and schools.

The family have one cat and one dog. The childminder is a member of the National

Childminding Association. She supports children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that contribute to their good health. They regularly visit the park, play outside in the garden and so enjoy the benefits of fresh air. They develop control of their bodies as they walk along a balancing beam and ride bikes. Their physical development is promoted well as they run in the park and climb trees.

Children benefit from a clean and warm home. Their health is promoted through the childminder's cleaning routine, storage and preparation of food. Appropriate procedures are followed when nappy changing that ensure children stay healthy. The childminder always wears disposable gloves to prevent the spread of infection. Children's understanding of good hygiene and independence in their personal care is developed as they are encouraged to wash their hands after going to the toilet and before eating. Their health is promoted as the childminder follows the policy and procedure that is in place to exclude sick children.

Children enjoy nutritious snacks such as fruit. Through discussion they learn about healthy eating. Drinks are always available which ensures children are hydrated. Information regarding dietary requirements is recorded on the contracts which ensures children's individual needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a safe and secure environment. This is because the childminder has identified and minimised risks within her home. Children are able to move freely indoors because it has been made safe through the use of fireguards, socket covers and stairgates. The childminder places high importance on the security of the environment. Outside, the garden gate has been fitted with bolts to ensure this area is secure and children are able to play independently. There is an all weather surface that ensures children can play outside safely throughout the year.

Children can freely access a wide range of resources. These are well organised and regularly checked to ensure they are clean, safe and appropriate for the children who attend. Children are kept safe because the childminder has a sound understanding of the importance of supervision. They learn how to keep themselves safe as they talk road safety when walking to the park.

Children are kept safe through the childminder's sound knowledge of first aid. They are protected because of her clear understanding of the procedure she would follow if she suspected a child was being abused.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children participate in a wide variety of activities and learning experiences that promote their development. Their attention is held as the childminder is lead by the children's interests. This ensures they are busy and have fun. Children confidently explain that they are colouring a picture of Cinderella after being read the story the previous day. They acquire knowledge when they visit museums and places of interest. They develop skills as they complete the weather chart, deciding what clothes are appropriate for today's weather. Children are enthusiastic to write the date on the chart and are then praised by the childminder and younger children for their efforts. Children select resources from a well equipped art box and use their initiative when making a picture of a bird.

Children play happily together and are beginning to understand there are rules for acceptable behaviour, such as sharing toys and taking turns. They use their imagination well as they play with small world toys and independently count the number of horses they have lined up. They benefit from the cuddles and affection the childminder shows them. Children's self-esteem is developed as they are praised for their efforts and good behaviour. They are confident to access the well resourced environment and independently make choices about what they want to play with. Babies needs are met well through an appropriate range of resources and the individual attention the childminder gives them. Sensory experiences such as cornflour play are beneficial to all the children's learning. They are encouraged to make progress because the childminder has a sound understanding of the stage each child is at. This enables her to move them onto the next steps in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and treated as individuals. They benefit from the attention the childminder gives them. Their understanding of the wider world is developed through a good range of resources including small world toys that promote diversity and discussion with the childminder. Children learn about the wider world as they talk about different countries and recall places visited on holiday. Their learning is extended as they prepare and taste food from around the world, such as Chinese food with chop sticks. Discussion about the news initiated by children and the use of books and small world toys develops the children's understanding of differences in society.

Children with special needs are supported well because the childminder has a clear understanding of how to meet their individual needs. She appreciates that some children may require additional support or resources to enable them to reach their potential.

Children benefit from the trusting partnership that has developed between the childminder and parents, where information is exchanged daily. A written record is maintained for parents of the care and achievements of babies. The childminder

compiles an informative scrap book of photos and the children's work which is given to parents on Christmas day. This records the activities they are involved in and the progress they are making.

Children are developing self-control and manners through the clear consistent boundaries the childminder sets and her calm manner of dealing with any incidents. Their self-esteem is promoted through the use of positive methods such as praise and encouragement to reinforce good behaviour.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the training the childminder has completed and her willingness to update her knowledge further through further training and reading. They make progress because of the individual attention she gives them.

Children are protected because the childminder ensures that persons living at the address or visiting the premises are suitable to do so and that ratios are always maintained. The required documentation is in place and well organised. Prior written permission from parents to administer medication must be obtained on each occasion it is required. The daily exchange of information keep parents informed and involved in their child's learning.

Up to date policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was given an action to complete an approved first aid course. She completed this in March 2004. This has developed her knowledge of how to deal with any accidents the children may have.

It was recommended that the childminder improve fire safety precautions by ensuring that a fire blanket is accessible in the kitchen. This is now in place and improves the safety of the premises for the children.

It was also recommended that the childminder make available to parents the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint, including Ofsted's contact details. The childminder has this in place and has given a copy to all the parents. She has obtained parents signature to confirm this. This promotes the safety of the children.

The childminder was asked to request written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. She now includes this in her contract which parents sign. This promotes the safety of the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- ensure that parents give written permission to administer medication on each occasion it is required.

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