



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123769
Inspection date	12 September 2005
Inspector	Lindsay Hare

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 registered in 1998. She lives with her husband and 2 children aged 10 and 14 in Bishop's Stortford, close to local schools and shops.

The whole of the 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 four children at any one time and is currently minding four children part-time. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler

group. The family has no pets.

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 cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn the importance of good personal hygiene. Daily routines and clear explanation help children understand that washing hands after visiting the toilet and covering their mouths when coughing reduces the risk of passing on germs.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and has the necessary written parental consents to administer medication and seek emergency medical treatment. This means that she can give appropriate care if there is an accident.

Nutritious meals and snacks help children develop healthy eating habits from a young age. They learn the importance of a healthy diet and enjoy helping to prepare snacks. The childminder gathers all the relevant information regarding diet which ensures children's individual dietary needs are met.

Children enjoy regular physical activities that keep them in good health, such as walking to and from school and the park. They benefit from using the wide range of equipment in the garden to help them develop control of their bodies. For example, throwing and catching a ball and riding a bicycle. Children become increasingly aware of the way activity affects their bodies and recognise when they need a drink or a rest.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in a spacious, well-organised environment that allows them to move around safely. They benefit from the good range of safety measures, for example, socket covers, fireguard and a secure outdoor play area. The childminder gives high priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, children practise the emergency evacuation procedures on a regular basis. This helps them to become familiar with the routine in the event of an emergency.

Children have easy and safe access to toys and play resources that are stimulating and appropriate to their age and stage of development. Regular visual checks of toys and resources ensure there are no broken parts that could harm a child.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect as the childminder ensures that they are never left alone with anyone who is not vetted. She has a sound knowledge of child protection issues and a clear understanding of the correct procedure to follow if she has any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the childminder's house. They enter confidently and make themselves at home. The childminder develops good relationships with the children and is very aware of their individual needs. For example, resources are stored at low level to enable the very young children to also be independent. They relate well to each other and socialise with other children through regular attendance at the local toddler group.

Children select from a broad range of activities that are easily accessible and provide stimulation. They concentrate well at self-chosen activities. Children enjoy sharing stories, talking about the pictures, colours and counting. The childminder reads to children frequently and asks questions to develop children's language.

Children are very independent. They see to their own personal needs such as visiting the toilet and washing their hands and take great pride in helping to sweep up and clean the windows. Children learn how to use numbers in everyday situations and show they understand size and shape through practical activities. For example, when they go outdoors and discuss the trees and insects and count how many red cars they can see. The childminder has not used the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Children are encouraged and offered support if necessary when acquiring new skills or practising them. For example, when learning to use the remote control car, the childminder suggested that they try together. This builds children's confidence and self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children form close relationships with the childminder and are confident to seek cuddles and reassurance. They develop an awareness of their own needs and those of others through interaction with the childminder. Many resources reflect positive images of all aspects of society. This means children learn to acknowledge and accept differences. The childminder is a good role model helping children learn the importance of showing respect for all. For example, she responded positively to a child's question about being in a wheelchair.

Children benefit from the flexible and supportive partnership the childminder has with the parents. For example, the childminder sometimes stands in for the parents at school assemblies when they cannot attend. Parents provide appropriate and relevant information about their children, which helps to ensure that the children receive individual care and attention. An effective two-way flow of information ensures continuity of care.

Children behave well and are polite. The childminder manages children's behaviour calmly and patiently. This encourages children to respond effectively to any guidance and praise. Appropriate strategies, according to the age and stage of development,

help children understand right from wrong.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a well-organised environment where they receive good adult support from the childminder to help them feel secure and confident. Written procedures guide the childminder in her daily practice. This ensures children's needs are met and all relevant information is shared with parents.

The childminder updates her knowledge of childcare issues from various sources as she is not always able to attend training. This ensures she is able to provide appropriate care for the children she looks after.

All the relevant documentation is in place and is reviewed regularly to ensure that children's welfare is promoted. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to consider attending further training to enhance her childminding practice. This has not been possible due to the location and timing of available courses as the childminder does not drive. However, she has gained further knowledge on some aspects of childcare from other sources such as the internet and other childminders.

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.
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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):

- consider attending additional training in order to further enhance childminding

practice

- continue to develop a suitable range of activities for the younger children, for example by using Birth to three matters framework.

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