



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	162312
Inspection date	03 October 2005
Inspector	Cheryl Langley

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 August 2001. She lives with her husband and two children aged 10 and 8 years in Ware. She is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children and currently minds 3 children. All areas of the property are used for childminding. There is a garden available for outside play. The family have two pet dogs, a canary and tropical fish.

The childminder takes the children to the local mother and toddler group which she runs on a regular basis. 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 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 on climbing frames, swings, slides and walking the dog or racing up and down hills. In the house they enjoy threading buttons and cotton reels, completing jigsaws and pressing, turning and pulling switches on activity toys.

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 cleaning routines to keep them safe and healthy. Children help the childminder clean their chairs after snacks or messy play. They have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands after playing in the garden or using the toilet. Children know to blow their noses and discard the tissues to stop the spread of germs. They learn about keeping their bodies healthy through the good examples set by the childminder and discussion. All the required policies, procedures and consents are in place to support the care of the children and act in their best interests should they become unwell or need emergency care.

Children are beginning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They know which type of food is good to eat. The childminder introduces new and unusual fruits and vegetables regularly to expand their knowledge and experience of food. Children have access to water or sugar free fruit juice throughout the day and eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents. She works with them closely to provide nutritious 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. Children know not to run in the house and tidy toys from the floor so they do not fall and hurt themselves or others. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves free from harm inside and outside of the home with interesting activities, discussion and leading by example. Children learn to be aware of strangers and practise codes for crossing the road safely. They understand the need to keep away from the waters edge when they feed the ducks. Children have limited experience of the procedure for evacuating the house in an emergency to keep them safe in the event of a fire.

There is a range of safe developmentally appropriate resources placed around the room 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 and has all the relevant information to hand.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy an excellent range 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.

They benefit from interesting and appealing activities which help develop their knowledge and skills. For example, children recognise different coloured toys, they count as they sing songs and nursery rhymes and wait with excitement as they count the time lapse before the play pop up toast springs out of the toaster. Sharing books helps to develop their language and reading skills. They are beginning to recognise their names on their coat hooks. Activity games encourage their knowledge of letter sounds or enhance their matching and sequencing skills. They learn mathematical language comparing their size to that of insects. Access to toys and equipment for differing abilities encourages the children's progress. They become confident and adept at completing puzzles and jigsaws and using tools and utensils, such as spreaders for glue. Helping the childminder care for the family's pet bird and dogs and growing flowers and vegetables teaches them about the natural environment. Regular use of creative materials such as pencils, crayons, paint, play dough and glueing, encourages the children to represent their ideas in a variety of ways. They enthusiastically produce a collage with leaves collected from the park. Children have a number of opportunities to express their feelings and experiences through imaginative play with dressing up clothes, role play and a large collection of home toys. They have fun organising a picnic for themselves, the childminder and their dolls in the middle of the playroom.

Their confidence and self-esteem is developed with frequent praise and encouragement which is given 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. Their creations and art work is valued and displayed in the playroom. They make positive relationships, finding new friends on outings and at the different activity centres used.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides exciting and meaningful resources to promote a positive view of the wider world. Children enjoy a wide variety of books, dolls, dressing up and activity toys as well as celebrating different festivals. The children enjoy creating and decorating Chinese hats to celebrate Chinese New Year or finding out about

American Independence Day. They taste different food from around the world and share books about other families and the jobs that people do.

Children are valued and respected. Their individual needs are 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, share, take turns and are polite, remembering to say please and thank you. The childminder provides a range of opportunities for the children to socialise which helps them make positive relationships with others. Realistic challenges are set by the childminder 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 and review contracts, policies and procedures regularly. Evenings are organised for the parents to meet with the childminder and discuss the care of their children and their achievements. This helps provide consistency in the children's care and keep parents well informed of how their child's needs are being met.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The children's needs are met through excellent organisation and good communication with parents. Space and equipment is prepared so that children can access resources easily and independently which enables them to make choices about their play. A balance of child led activities and exciting and varied organised play ensure children have a range of different enjoyable experiences whilst they are with the childminder. They benefit from routines which make them feel secure and relaxed. The childminder knows the children very well and ensures that they can play, eat, sleep and rest as they need to.

Documentation is stored securely and information shared appropriately with parents. All of the required policies and procedures are in place to help keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge which she continues to update with relevant training. She has a Level 3 qualification in Childminding Practice and holds a current first aid qualification. Overall, the needs of all the children who attend are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure that there are no potential dangers to children in the bathroom or garden, or if medication is administered. Items that may be a hazard are stored out of reach and the water butt has a secure lid to prevent access by children. A written record, which is signed by parents, is kept of all medication given to make sure children receive the correct amount.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- practise the devised emergency escape plan with the 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