

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	155740
Inspection date	07 March 2006
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 satisfactory. 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 August 2001. She lives with her three children aged 13, 11 and 9 in Oxhey Village, Watford, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding with limited access to upstairs where babies may sleep. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler group and takes children to the nearby park. The childminder is registered to care for 5 children at any one time and is currently minding 3 children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder has a rabbit and two guinea pigs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

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 kick footballs and climb the slide. Their physical development is promoted as they walk and run in the park and dance to music tapes supported by the childminder.

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. 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. They are encouraged to be involved in the preparation of snacks and through discussion learn about healthy eating. Drinks are always available which ensures children stay 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 satisfactory.

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 stair gates, socket covers and safety catches on the cupboards. The childminder places high importance on security of the environment. The garden is secure and children are able to play independently.

Children can freely access a wide range of resources. These are stored in a large toy box 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 about road safety when walking to the park.

Children benefit from the childminder's sound knowledge of first aid. They are protected because she has an adequate understanding of the procedure she would follow if she suspected a child was being abused. This could be further developed to extend her knowledge of this subject.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children participate in a wide variety of activities and learning experiences that promote their development. Their interest is maintained as the childminder plans activities in advance to ensure they are busy and have fun. Children show an interest in what they do as they play with a train set. Their imagination is developing well as they pretend to talk on the phone. The childminder extends their learning by asking open ended questions that encourage them to think. Young children can name the different colours of the train track pieces and can recognise some numbers. Their creative skills are developed through a range of craft activities including marble painting, collage and drawing. Their independence skills are promoted as the childminder encourages them to put on their socks. Children learn to care for others as they help to clean out the cages of the pets.

Children play happily together and are beginning to understand that there are rules for acceptable behaviour, such as sharing toys and taking turns. 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 make choices about what they want to play with. Children are encouraged to make progress because the childminder has a sound understanding of what stage they are at and is able 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 individual attention the childminder gives them. Their understanding of the wider world is developed through a range of resources and discussion with the childminder. Children learn about the wider world as they prepare and taste fruits from around the world. Children's understanding of differences in society is developed through books and small world toys. Children with special needs are supported 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 each day. A diary keeps parents informed of their child's routine and the progress they are making. Children are developing self-control and manners through the clear, consistent boundaries the childminder sets. Their self-esteem is promoted through the use of positive methods such as praise and encouragement to reinforce good behaviour.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the training the childminder has completed and her willingness to update her knowledge further. She also updates her knowledge by reading relevant articles on the internet. Children make progress because of the individual attention the childminder 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. Most documentation is in place and well organised. Currently a record of medication administered to children is not maintained by the childminder and written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is not in place.

The verbal exchange of information each day keeps parents informed and involved in their child's learning. A daily diary ensures they are aware of their child's routine and the progress they are making.

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 a first aid course approved by the local authority that included training in first aid for infants and young children. The childminder completed this in June 2003. She has a clear understanding of what action to take if a child has an accident. This has promoted the safety of the children in her care.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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):

- develop knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures
- ensure all the required records relating to childminding are in place and available for inspection.

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