



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 127892
Inspection date 08 February 2006
Inspector Kerry Freshwater

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 1982. She lives with her adult son in Ware, Hertfordshire. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and occasional use of one bedroom upstairs. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five all day and one child over five before and after school. The childminder also provides occasional care for children over eight years. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children.

She attends and runs the local toddler group. The family have 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 enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. They play in the garden and visit local open spaces 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 the slide, bikes, scooters and ride-on toys and play ball games and skip in the garden. They enjoy the climbing apparatus at local parks and soft play areas. In the house they enjoy dancing to music, dressing and undressing dolls, constructing with bricks and using crayons and pencils.

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 have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands before food and after using the toilet, they learn to cover their mouths when coughing.

Children are beginning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They know which type of food is good to eat and will help them grow up big and strong. They enjoy fruit and fresh water as part of their daily snacks. The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents. She has obtained information from them relating to children's likes, dislikes, allergies and dietary needs and takes this into consideration when providing snacks and occasional meals.

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 place their fingers in cupboards and doors and to be careful on the stairs in case they trip and fall. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves free from harm inside and outside of the home through discussion and leading by example. Children learn to cross the road safely, practise using pedestrian crossings and know to stay a safe distance from the road edge. Children have not practised evacuating the house in the event of a fire and this could put them at risk in an emergency situation.

There is a wide and varied range of safe developmentally appropriate play resources placed in organised containers 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, has attended training in this area and has all the relevant information to hand.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a very broad variety of stimulating 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.

They benefit from a range of activities which help develop their knowledge and skills. For example, children begin to know different colours as they play games and pretend with cups and saucers. They count as they sing songs and nursery rhymes and play shops together. Sharing books helps to develop their language and reading skills. Access to toys and equipment for differing abilities encourages the children's progress. Regular use of creative materials such as pencils, crayons and glue, encourages the children to represent their ideas in a variety of ways. They make lanterns for Chinese New Year and enjoy using stickers to create colourful pictures. They have a number of opportunities to express their feelings and experiences through imaginative play with dolls, telephones and a large collection of kitchen equipment.

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. They make positive relationships, play well together and make new friends on outings to the park, toddler group and at the different activity centres used.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides interesting and meaningful resources to promote a positive view of the wider world. Children enjoy books, dolls, dressing up and activity toys as well as celebrating traditional festivals.

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 to keep parents up to date with events and routine activities. 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 good.

The children's needs are met through very effective 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 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. Children 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 and childcare experience which she updates with further training. She 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 consider further training in order to enhance her childminding practice. She has since completed a child protection training course.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made 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:

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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):

- ensure children's safety in case of fire by practising emergency evacuation.

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