



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123541
Inspection date	04 May 2005
Inspector	Jill Nugent

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 1994. She lives with her mother in a house in St Albans. She uses all of the house for childminding although children are not allowed access to the two main bedrooms upstairs. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding one child under five on two mornings each week. She 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 clean environment. Good hygiene is encouraged by the childminder. Children understand the need to wash their hands before eating and after playing in the garden. They are provided with healthy meals. Sweet foods are generally avoided and children have a choice of fruit at snack time. A drink of their own choice is available at all times. Dietary needs are discussed with parents so that any special diets can be managed appropriately. Children enjoy mealtimes in a relaxed atmosphere, often sharing a book with the childminder while they eat. They are developing physical skills through playing games in the spacious garden. They also visit the local playground. Good health is promoted through the childminder maintaining all medical records clearly and correctly. Children with infectious illnesses are excluded so that others are not affected.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. They are able to move around the house and garden freely and safely. The house is bright and comfortable for children. Good use is made of all the available space and children know which rooms they are allowed to use. They enjoy floor play in the lounge and conservatory and the use of a small table in the kitchen. They are becoming aware of how to keep themselves safe from harm. Children enjoy good access to a range of toys. These are stimulating and appeal to different age groups. The garden is well kept and children are closely supervised when outdoors. When on outings children learn where and how to cross the road safely. The childminder is aware of Child Protection issues and the need to keep records, although she has not updated her previous training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have a variety of learning experiences. They participate in art and craft activities and enjoy imaginative play with various small-world resources. They benefit from the childminder's continual interaction, sharing ideas and widening their communication skills. They learn about letters of the alphabet and numbers, practising counting in different situations. They are beginning to use mathematical language, for example, when building towers. They particularly enjoy singing and like to choose books at the local library. Children's individual needs are attended to by the childminder. She is supportive and children develop a close relationship with her, enjoying cuddles now and again. They are encouraged by her involvement in their play. She responds to their particular interests and they become increasingly independent and confident in her care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are all carefully included and the childminder shares her time between them. They are kept busy and happily involved in activities. Any special needs are met appropriately. Parents wishes are taken into account and children benefit from this. They are given time to settle in and develop a sense of belonging. They behave well and are helped to understand the reasons for any intervention by the childminder. Children make their own choices within the home environment. They are becoming increasingly aware of diversity within society. They ask questions about people who are different and these are dealt with sensitively. Information is shared daily with parents at pick-up times so that they can work together to promote children's development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder's documents are all clear and well maintained. She has all the required information and permissions from parents. Her records are kept up-to-date and stored securely. She is NNEB trained and has much experience of working with children. She has a flexible routine which results in a good mix of directed and free-choice activities for children. She has a gentle and quiet manner. Children feel happy and comfortable in her care. Her practice is effective in promoting good care and children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the childminder gave children more opportunities to choose from a range of accessible resources. Children now have good opportunities for choosing toys and games. Many are easily accessible in see-through containers and others are set out ready for play.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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):

- update knowledge of child protection through further training

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