



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222348
Inspection date	13 March 2006
Inspector	Christine Linda Tomaselli
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since December 1992. She lives with her husband and three children aged seven, 11, and 14-years-old. They live in a house in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. The childminder uses the whole of the ground floor and the upstairs bathroom facilities for childminding purposes. Areas downstairs include a kitchen with dining area and living room. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have a pet goldfish.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under the age of eight years at any one time and is currently minding a baby, two children aged two and a five-year-old on various part-time contracts.

The childminder walks or drives to take and collect children from the local school as required. She attends local toddler groups and the childminder's support group on a regular basis. She

runs a music group weekly and plans walks to the park and the town centre for shopping activities. During the holidays she plans trips to Sandringham Woods, Butterfly Park and the city of Ely for various attractions.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is an active committee member on the Wisbech and District Childminders Association. She is a 'Buddy' childminder who offers support to newly registered childminders in her area. She is an accredited childminder with her Local Authority but at the time of the inspection had no children on roll who were in receipt of government funding.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in a warm, child friendly home where the importance of good hygiene and personal care is thoroughly promoted through the childminder's superb daily routines. All children happily wash their hands and they are provided with individual towels. Antiseptic hand wipes are used when the situation requires this, for example on outings. The childminder's excellent hygiene routines ensure that there is little opportunity for cross infection and children are encouraged to undertake personal hygiene routines themselves; for instance, encouraging the use of their hand to cover their mouth when coughing or use tissues to wipe their own noses and putting the tissue in the bin.

Children's accidents and medication records are completed correctly and shared with the parents to ensure they are kept informed on matters concerning their child. The childminder has a basic first aid certificate and an appropriately stocked first aid box. Her first response to any accident ensures the children's well-being is given priority.

Children benefit from the childminder's strong knowledge of healthy eating. They enjoy an extensive and varied range of fresh fruit and vegetables as part of their daily diet and children are encouraged to try new foods. These are introduced sensitively and often form part of the topic of the week; for instance, they try stir fry, prawn and vegetable crackers and sea weed whilst undertaking a topic on the Chinese New Year. Drinks are offered regularly to young children and older children request drinks when they want them.

There are ample opportunities for all children to practise and develop their physical skills as they benefit from a range of physical activities every day, these include being outside in the fresh air which contributes to healthy living. Children actively and enthusiastically undertake the challenges; for instance, during a topic titled 'On the move', the children were involved in lots of nature walks and on one occasion to search for spider webs. Children experience lots of large group physical activities that include parachute games and obstacle courses that help their development. Children benefit from and thoroughly enjoy using many resources to promote their physical development in the childminder's home, this includes ball games, skittles and a cricket set. Younger children have access to trikes and scooters. Resources are provided to enhance their individual skills; for instance, the older children are given resources to practise their threading skills whilst babies are encouraged to roll and stretch for toys placed close to

them. Children with different special needs are included in most physical activities as the childminder has attended training to help her adapt or modify activities to include all children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy a safe, secure, rich child-centred environment where risks are identified and minimised, due to the childminder's use of risk assessment and excellent awareness of safety and recognising potential hazards. This enables children to move around the home safely. Children learn about staying safe through regular routines; for instance, when out walking they learn about the 'green cross code' and how to be safe around traffic. Older children are encourage to fully interact with the baby but not to pick her up and to make sure that the stair gate is always closed when younger children are present with reasons given as to why.

Children regularly take part in fire drills ensuring that if needed they would know what to do if there was a real fire. The childminder ensures that all fire equipment is in working order and exits are clear to ensure the safety of the children is maintained at all times. Children freely make choices from the extensive range of toys and resources available, all of which are stored and displayed safely within easy reach of the children where possible. Children use toys and equipment that are cleaned regularly and are appropriate to the stage and development of each individual child. Children's furniture, in particular the toddlers and babies is well provided for and safe. The childminder, again uses regular risk assessments to ensure the safety of all equipment used.

All required documentation is in place to ensure that children's welfare is promoted and that parents are kept fully informed of matters associated with their child. Parents' consent is obtained as required. Children are very well protected by the childminder, who has undertaken training and has a very clear understanding of child protection procedures and is confident to be open with parents where appropriate. She has an excellent written policy on child protection, is aware of her local Area Child Protection Committee's guidance and has various publications which she shares with parents to ensure they understand her duty.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy and confident in the childminder's home and are reassured by the excellent attention given by the childminder. Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and become immersed in the extensive range of activities available. Babies receive plenty of cuddles and attention to help them feel secure. The childminder has recently been on a course to enhance her knowledge on the 'Birth to three matters' framework for young children's development and she has just started to implement this into her practice.

All children play extremely well together, enjoying each other's company and the full support of a childminder who is exceptionally committed to caring for children. Babies are growing in confidence and independence as they start to move around the floor. The childminder spends time talking to and getting to know the children so that she can plan and present activities to

meet their individual needs. They are encouraged to and are supported in attending to their own personal needs, for example, fetching a tissue and blowing their noses. Children become independent as they eagerly choose activities and resources that are readily available to them. The childminder's highly effective interacting with the children ensures that children are happy to communicate their thoughts, wishes and feelings fostering their self-esteem. The childminder has started to introduced the use of sign language for the younger children as a form of communication. Children are encourage to learn how to share and take turns. They have opportunity to self-select their activities from resources provided in many cases or as babies placed appropriately either lying or sitting with a variety of suitable toys to encourage their development placed around them.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Currently the childminder is not caring for any nursery funded children but had written evidence and photos to show how she includes this area in her planning.

Children are offered a range of interesting and stimulating activities that contribute to their learning. The childminder's sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and her understanding of how children learn enable her to effectively ensure that children are learning throughout the day. Observations and evaluations on children's learning are used successfully to inform the days plans and form part of a child's Foundation Stage portfolio. However, planning lacks specific details of the six areas of learning and as a result, it is difficult for the childminder to ensure that all areas of learning are covered equally. The childminder uses a topic approach to the curriculum she offers the children. Past planning has included 'Me, Myself and I', where children learnt about themselves and each other with drawings of themselves crying or smiling being displayed. Children used this activity to learn about their emotions. Children are involved in cooking activities, for example making 'Hungry Caterpillar' fruit parcels then this was linked to the story of the same title helping children to use their imagination, understand about healthy eating and building on their vocabulary. The childminder uses open ended questioning encouraging children to think and respond confidently. Activities provided ensure children are encouraged to use their imagination, link sounds and letters through planned and incidental opportunities.

Children are encouraged to begin to make marks and are offered correct resources. If disinterested the childminder will, by using the child's favourite activity and explore ways to include this skill, build the child's confidence resulting in the child making their first attempts at using pencils or crayons. Children actively enjoy a range of creative play opportunities that encourage them to use their imagination in role-play, art and craft and they experiment freely with musical instruments. Children regularly use a wide variety of tools and equipment which enables them to develop good small hand skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder is committed to ensuring children learn, understand and respect differences for individual people and communities. Children have opportunity to access many activities and

resources provided by the childminder to help their learning and understanding about different lifestyles. For example, using toys to positively promote different cultures, activities to learn about a range of festivals and the use of baby sign language to support communication when appropriate. Children feel valued and respected by childminder who is sensitive, caring and willing to learn about differing identities that may occur. Children with special needs are supported by the childminder who is committed to ensuring that all children are included in the day's activities.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave extremely well in response to the praise and encouragement from the childminder. Children are involved in setting house rules which they themselves with the support of the childminder establish. Children are aware of the routines and boundaries within the childminder's home which contributes to children's behaviour being good.

The childminder has developed a professional initial leaflet and an excellent information pack that parents are provided with. In a special situation the childminder spent time producing an extra, attractive leaflet full of information about a child's week in her care for a parent who needed to be away for the week. Her clear written policies and procedures and working closely with parents ensuring that children benefit from a consistent approach in their care. The use of a daily diary for younger children ensures that parents are kept informed daily of important matters that concern their children. The childminder has designed an informative power point presentation that is shown to parents.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. The childminder has superb procedures in place to acquire appropriate information on children's starting points as they begin being minded by her and then share information with parents about their child's achievements. The childminder provides various written or verbal opportunities for parents to comment on the educational care of their children. Children benefit from the two-way sharing of information between parents and the childminder which enhances their learning potential. Parents are provided with the written information on the foundation stage and planning of activities that attempt to cover the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The children's care and education benefits extremely well by the organisation skills of the childminder. These ensure that children are very well cared for in an environment where her excellent commitment to training, planning and assessment and working with parents ensures the care and educational needs of all the children are met. Recording , policies and procedures protect children and are effectively implemented to promote all outcomes for children and keep parents fully informed on matters associated with their children at all times.

As an accredited childminder she works extremely hard on the requirements to ensure that children are provided with a stimulating learning environment which promotes their learning in all areas. She works very well with other professionals, positively accepting advice and support to develop her practice for funded children. Although not currently minding any funded children,

the childminder uses her wealth of knowledge and skills around nursery education and the 'Birth to three matters' framework to help her to support other newly registered childminders or those intending to apply in meeting the outcomes for their children. All children are supported appropriately to achieve their potential by the childminder who knows their starting points and works closely with parents to support their progress.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to devise a statement to inform parents on procedures taken if a child became ill in her care and to consider recording additional details of the children to include ethnic origin, culture, religion and other languages used.

The childminder has a clear written policy and procedure for sick children that parents are made aware of verbally and in writing this includes what may happen if a member of her own family are ill. Full details of individual children are now recorded to ensure all needs are met appropriately.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has 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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that all areas of funded children's learning in the Foundation Stage are covered equally.

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