



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY233805
Inspection date	28 June 2006
Inspector	Marianne Gascoyne
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 was registered in 2002. She lives with her husband and two children aged eight and ten years in a village near Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding two children under five years old on a part-time basis. She also cares for children over the age of eight years. There were no children present during the inspection due to changes in the childminding arrangements.

The childminder walks to the local pre-school and school to take and collect children. The family has two cats, pet rabbits and guinea pigs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder follows appropriate procedures which ensure that good standards of hygiene are maintained and her home remains clean and tidy. Toys and equipment are regularly washed. She is able to describe how children are generally learning good hygiene procedures and are encouraged to take responsibility for meeting their own personal hygiene needs as they independently access the toilet. The childminder explained how she discusses with them the importance of cleaning their hands after using the toilet, handling the pets and before meals which is developing their understanding of how to keep themselves healthy.

The childminder demonstrates a suitable understanding of how children's good health is promoted. She has systems in place to gather information from parents regarding medical needs, dietary requirements and allergies to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded. Parents are shown a copy of the sick children policy to make them aware of when they are unable to send their children to the childminder to prevent any infection spreading. It also describes how the childminder will provide appropriate care if children are unwell while being minded. They have not, however, given their consent for her to seek emergency medical advice or treatment if necessary. Her first aid knowledge is current to ensure children's well-being should an accident occur and suitable accident and medication records are held.

From discussion the childminder demonstrates a good understanding of a healthy and nutritious diet. Lists of healthy foods, drawn up by the children in discussion with the childminder, are displayed on the kitchen wall. She meets parents wishes by giving children packed lunches provided by them which she stores safely in the fridge. She ensures fresh fruit is always available for snacks and children can easily access drinks at all times to keep them healthy.

The childminder demonstrates a sound understanding of how children's physical development is promoted. They are given regular opportunities to play in the garden or are taken to the large grassed area close by to run or kick a ball and walk to the pre-school on a daily basis. The childminder is able to provide children with comfortable rest and sleep facilities. Babies and young children can sleep in a travel cot and older children can relax on the settee or floor cushions. Children's home routines are followed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder describes how she creates a warm and welcoming environment. This is achieved by preparing the rooms to ensure they are ready for children on arrival. She organises toys and resources so that they are easily accessible to children in the living room and promote children's free choice. She offers creative activities at the kitchen table. A suitable range of toys is available to positively promote children's development. Sufficient equipment is available to meet the varying needs of all the children, for example, high chair, cot for sleeping & buggies. The garden is easily accessible and an enclosed area for pets provides children with experience of handling small animals.

The childminder demonstrates a generally sound understanding of how children's safety is promoted. However, not all risks in the home have been assessed and the garden is not fully secure. Furniture in the living room is moved to create more space and prevent access to the open plan staircase to keep children safe. The childminder explains how children are always supervised and how she helps them to learn about road safety when walking to and from pre-school. An emergency evacuation procedure has been written and is shared with parents. However, it has not been practised to ensure children are aware of the need to evacuate the premises promptly and the fire blanket is not correctly hung in the kitchen to ensure it can be accessed quickly in an emergency.

The childminder demonstrates a full understanding of safeguarding children in relation to child protection issues. She is clear about her role in protecting children and parents are advised of her responsibility. All the information she needs to enable her to follow the correct procedures, if she has any concerns about children in her care, is easily accessible.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Through discussion the childminder explains how she organises space and resources in a manner which helps to promote children's free choice and ensures they have access to a wide range of learning and play opportunities to meet their developmental needs. Boxes of toys are set out to enable children to make decisions, explore and investigate. She describes how she, for example, is undertaking a project on shapes with children and talks to them about shapes seen in the environment and outdoors. She is able to share details of daily activities offered which include baking, weighing and mixing the ingredients, making play dough and painting and drawing. She talks about taking paper and crayons outside and making bark rubbings and looking at the patterns created. She describes the challenges provided by the wooden train set which children can use to make different layouts.

The childminder talks about encouraging children's language through reading stories and discussing what they have been doing at home or school. She demonstrates she is aware of the need to provide active and quiet activities at different times of the day.

The childminder is aware of the importance of developing a good relationship with the children in her care by listening to them, giving praise and encouragement and sitting at their level to join in with their play. She describes how she encourages them to take responsibility for tidying away toys after use to ensure they are available for other children and helps children to play together, share toys and be kind to each other.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder demonstrates how she raises children's self-esteem and confidence through praise and encouragement. She ensures they are made to feel special by celebrating birthdays and values their creative work by displaying it in the home. The childminder has appropriate systems in place to record individual details given by parents about their children. Useful

information has been recorded about children's specific needs, likes, dislikes or fears, for example, 'frightened of bears' and she has regard to this information when planning activities or outings.

The childminder has some resources to help children develop positive attitudes towards differences in people and learn about different cultures. Boys and girls are equally able to play with all the equipment and the current fascination with World Cup football is widening their knowledge of the world. The childminder recognises some children may have special needs and would ensure she works with the parents and takes adequate steps to promote their welfare and development.

The childminder shows a sound knowledge of behaviour management, giving good examples of how she would approach a variety of situations for children of different ages. Children have helped develop a list of house rules which they have written and displayed in the kitchen which helps their understanding of appropriate ways to behave. The childminder is aware of the need to provide a good role model and provide activities to ensure children are happy and well occupied.

The childminder has developed a brochure to share information about her policies and procedures and the activities children will undertake while in her care, with parents. Appropriate contracts and children's records have been completed to ensure children are looked after according to parent's wishes. Details of emergency contact numbers and those with permission to collect children are recorded to keep children safe.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There have been no changes to the childminder's circumstances and she remains suitable to look after children. Due to transport difficulties she has been unable to access any further training since registering as a childminder in order to develop her knowledge, except to update her first aid qualification. She is able to describe how space and resources are organised to enable children's needs to be met and satisfactory systems are in place to ensure children will be well cared for in the home. She has made arrangements for cover in an emergency and developed a procedure in the event of children being lost or uncollected.

Appropriate records are in place to safeguard children's welfare. The childminder has produced a draft brochure which she is planning to develop and produce for parents to provide them with information about the childminding service she offers. She is aware of the need to notify Ofsted of any changes to her circumstances. Documents are well organised and stored appropriately to maintain confidentiality.

Overall, evidence suggests that the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made to include times of arrival and departure in the attendance record. Times of arrival and departure are now recorded but not at the times the children arrive and leave. The childminder agreed to ensure the register would be completed at these times in future. Further recommendations were made to devise a sick children's policy and extend the children's detailed records and this documentation is now in place. Further resources have been obtained to promote children's learning associated with diversity as recommended. The childminder was also set a recommendation to ensure parents are aware of the complaints procedure and a procedure has been written. However, a complaints log has not yet been set up in line with recent guidance.

Complaints since the last inspection

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

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 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):

- obtain written permission from parents to seek any necessary emergency advice or treatment in the future
- ensure all risks in the home are assessed and action taken to minimise danger and the premises are secure
- practise the emergency evacuation procedure and ensure the fire blanket is easily accessible in the kitchen.

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