



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	222421
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 June 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Caroline Wright
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 was registered in 1986. She lives with her husband in Cambridge, on the outskirts of the city centre. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, with the toilet upstairs, and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding six children under five-years-old and two children over five-years-old on a part time basis. She sometimes cares for one child over eight-years of age during school holidays. She occasionally works with an assistant. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and she attends the local toddler group. The family has a cat as a pet.

The childminder supports is a member of an approved childminding network and is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and is a childminder 'buddy'. The childminder holds a level 3 early years qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through regular daily routines. They clean their hands after using the toilet and before eating: they use wet-wipes to reduce the risk of cross- infection. The childminder chooses wet-wipes with a 'hypo-allergenic' formula to minimise the risk of children developing a skin reaction. If the children need to take any medicines or become unwell whilst they are in the care of the childminder, up to date records are in place to make sure that they are properly cared for. She receives training to enable her to administer specialist medications such as adrenalin, with parents' prior written permission.

Children benefit from the childminder's sound knowledge and understanding of childhood nutrition and their dietary needs are well met. Parents provide children with meals and the childminder encourages them to provide healthy snacks of fresh fruit. Children have free access to drinks so that they remain well hydrated and can think effectively. The childminder helps children to learn about food and the benefits of healthy eating through meaningful activities. For example, children join in with Sure Start 'Healthy Eating Week'; they look at books about food and talk about their 'favourite' things to eat. In addition, children learn to lead a healthy lifestyle; they take part in regular exercise such as running around and climbing in the garden and walking to and from school each day. They learn how their bodies work and how to keep themselves healthy; the childminder talks to children about looking after their teeth and the importance of playing outside in the fresh air.

The childminder has a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of babies and children under three-years-old. She uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework to guide her practice and enable her to provide a very good range of suitable activities for younger children. Children develop new physical skills according to their stage of development and the emotional well-being of babies and toddlers is very well promoted so that they are confident and secure.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very safe environment where all risks are minimised and they move around safely and independently under the childminder's constant supervision. The childminder helps children to learn to keep themselves safe by reminding them to sit down in the play car so that they do not fall; older children know that they should not play with toys with small parts if babies are present. Children learn about staying safe outside the home, holding hands when they go out for walks with the childminder and they know to 'keep looking and listening' for cars when they cross the road. In addition, the childminder helps children know how to behave in the event of an emergency in the home. Older children learn how to 'dial 999' or seek help from a neighbour in case an adult who is caring for them ever has an accident or is ill.

Children confidently select activities and resources, which are checked by the childminder daily to ensure they are in good condition and safe for them to use. Children's overall welfare is

maintained by effective procedures and documents that actively promote their safety. For example, the childminder holds a current first aid certificate and has an excellent understanding of child protection procedures, which are in line with those set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. She has clear written procedures that are easily accessible to guide her and her assistant if any emergency situations should arise; these include telephone numbers of emergency contacts and other individuals known to the parents of minded children who could be available to care children at short notice.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy their time at the childminder's house and form strong relationships with each other and the childminder. Their learning and development is encouraged in an excellent range of interesting and meaningful ways. For example, children notice that when they look through coloured cellophane sweet wrappers 'everything is red'; the childminder builds on their curiosity and helps them to design and make spectacles with different coloured lenses so that they can investigate further. They learn about everyday technology, such as telephones and cookers in role play situations and the childminder expertly extends children's learning when she joins in with their play. For example, she encourages a two-year-old to become a confident communicator when she joins in 'telephone' play with her. Children have free access to drawing and colouring materials so that they can make marks and learn to communicate their ideas through pictures and writing. They develop their imagination through role play and stories, making 'dens' with large pieces of fabric and cushions that the childminder has provided for this purpose. They learn about nature and the changing of seasons when they collect leaves and conkers for their artwork or walk to the river with the childminder to feed the ducks.

The childminder uses story sacks and interesting props to help children to become interested in books and stories. An attractive book corner with a wide range of interesting books for children of all ages, including books for babies, is freely accessible for children to use.

The childminder encourages under three-year-olds to develop new physical skills and explore their creativity. They enjoy making marks on paper and exploring the texture of paint or mixing colours using their hands and fingers. They learn to use tools such as knives and forks or scissors under the childminders expert supervision and guidance. The childminder uses her deep knowledge and understanding of how children and babies learn to encourage them to make comments and develop their language skills. Toddlers try out new words, such as 'flower' and 'shopping', as they play. The childminder sensitively refines the new vocabulary and offers additional words to build on what the children already know.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children have equal opportunities to access a wide range of interesting activities and resources and are very confident and independent. They play with a diverse assortment of small world figures and role play equipment that represent all members of society and they learn about

the world they live in. They join in with their local community to celebrate a range of cultural and religious festivals, which helps them to develop positive attitudes towards diversity.

Children under three-years-old have high levels of self-esteem and they form strong relationships with the childminder and other children. The childminder listens enthusiastically to their attempts to communicate and responds with animated smiles and encouraging comments. Close contact with the childminder and consistent attention to their individual needs makes them feel secure and valued.

Children behave well and understand what is expected of them. The childminder explains what she expects them to do in a way that they can understand and she listens patiently to their views so that they feel respected and acknowledged. In addition, the childminder encourages children to tell her about the activities that they like best so that she can take account of their opinions. Those who are able, write their comments on 'evaluation' sheets that the childminder provides; younger children draw their favourite activities and the childminder acts as a 'scribe' so that they are able to be fully involved in the feed-back process.

Children benefit from good relationships between the childminder and their parents. Their individual progress is discussed daily with their parents so that their changing needs continue to be met. Clear information regarding activities that the children take part in and daily updates of their achievements enables parents to share their children's progress and helps children to move confidently between home and the childminder.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The good organisation of the childminding promotes positive outcomes for children. Children are welcomed into a relaxed and comfortable environment and leave their parents with confidence. The organisation of the play space and resources promotes to children's independence and enables them to pursue their own interests. Toys and equipment are ready for when the children arrive each morning to encourage them to leave their parents easily and settle into their play. They confidently choose for themselves from the varied resources that are provided by the childminder. There is enough space for them to play, both indoors and out, and toys and equipment are well organised.

The childminder is very experienced and has a deep knowledge and understanding of child development. She is committed to her own professional development. She holds a level 3 qualification in early years and attends a wide range of relevant training courses, such as 'Child Protection' and 'The Foundation Stage in a Childminding Setting', to enable her to reflect upon her practice and provide quality care to children. She is about to embark on further training to increase her understanding of caring for children with disabilities or learning difficulties.

All of the essential documents are in place and well organised. Up to date records about individual children's needs, contribute to the health and safety of all of the children that the childminder looks after. However, whilst the childminder retains all essential records for the required period of two years, she does not keep the letters from parents, which authorise her to administer medication to their child, for more than a few weeks.

Overall, children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to extend her knowledge of special needs and disabilities.

The childminder has been unsuccessful in completing this action due to the lack of a suitable training course in the locality. However, she has been able to secure a place on training that is due to commence in June 2006. Therefore, this recommendation will not be carried forward from this inspection.

### **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:

The quality and standards of the care are good. 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):

- keep parents' written permission to administer medication alongside other relevant children's records for the minimum required period of two years.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)