



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	222458
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 August 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Veronica Sharpe
<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 lives with her husband and son, aged 13, in Sawtry, Cambridgeshire. She has been registered for over 10 years and is able to care for no more than six children aged under eight years. There are currently 12 minded children on roll aged between two and 10 years.

Childminding takes place on the ground floor, with the upstairs used for sleeping only. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The home is located within walking distance of the local school and shops.

The family has several pets, which include three rats and two rabbits.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are protected from cross-infection by good hygiene procedures. Children wash their hands, for example, after handling the family pets and learn to cover their mouth when they cough or sneeze. Areas of the home used by the children are clean and hygienic so children play safely. Parents are informed about exclusion policies, so they know when to bring their child back into the setting after an infectious illness.

Children receive appropriate first aid treatment and a clear record is kept of any accidents. Parents countersign the entries so they are well informed about their child's well-being. Accident and medications sheets are stored with children's individual records so they are easily available but maintain confidentiality.

Children enjoy physical play each day as they visit the local park or play in the enclosed back garden. Equipment, such as bats and ball, bikes and a slide help children develop their skills. All the children benefit from consistent routines that include times for rest as well as active play. This means they are secure and have their individual needs met.

Children are adequately nourished as they eat meals that are provided by their parents. Healthy snacks, such as fruit or toast are offered so children have their nutritional needs met. Water or fruit drinks are easily available. Children eat appropriate food because the childminder knows them well and is aware of any special dietary needs or allergies.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe environment where hazards have been identified and minimised, for example, gates are kept locked and cleaning materials are safely stored. The home is warm and child friendly so children and parents feel welcome. Children develop their independence because resources are organised in accessible boxes so they self-select in safety and follow their own interests. Toys and equipment are suitable for the age range and have regular checks so they are safe and hygienic.

Children are protected by good procedures that promote fire safety. Smoke alarms are checked and working and the emergency escape plan is practised monthly so everyone is clear about safe evacuation. The fire drill is displayed so parents and other visitors are made aware of the procedures.

Children's safety is promoted well by the childminder's understanding of child protection. Parents are informed about the childminder's responsibility to keep children safe through written policies and verbally on placement. Required information, such as the local Safeguarding Children Board guidance is available for reference, which promotes children's welfare.

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

The provision is good.

Children are secure and confident in the childminder's care. They enjoy warm and positive relationships and play together happily. Routines are consistent, but offer children choices and variety, for example, they choose to play with threading beads or make models from clay. Children confidently explore their environment, they seek out favoured toys, or sit to watch a planned television programme. They enjoy positive interaction with the childminder, asking her questions or seeking her enthusiastic approval of their creations, for example, when model making.

To help children progress the childminder uses her knowledge of child development to plan a flexible programme of activities. Toys and equipment are changed regularly so children are stimulated by the new experiences. Older children extend their learning experiences from school as the childminder plans activities at home that build on what they already know, such as a project on Egypt. Younger children develop their language and communication skills well. They chat with the childminder, for example, about the family pets, and whether the animals should be awake in the day as they are nocturnal.

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

The provision is good.

Children develop good relationships with the childminder and each other. They share a good range of toys and equipment that meet their individual needs. The childminder knows the children well, she listens to them and takes account of their views and ideas. As a result they thrive in her company and enjoy their time in the setting. Resources including books and puzzles, or activities such as planned television programmes like 'Balamory' help children learn about other cultures and lifestyles. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their needs met because the childminder has the necessary skills to support and care for them.

Consistent boundaries and clear rules ensure children know how to behave well. The childminder is a good role model, she speaks to the children politely and uses 'please' and 'thank you' so children begin to understand good manners.

Children benefit from positive relationships between parents and carers and the childminder. Good settling in procedures ensure children are settled and happy and the childminder offers verbal feedback each day, so parents are well informed. Necessary documentation is in place, such as contact numbers, and information is updated regularly to ensure children's needs are met. To ensure children have continuity of care the childminder has identified other childminders in the area, who can offer places to the children in the event of her own illness or holiday. This pro-active approach means parents' needs are met and children are secure in the care of adults they know. Parents are not fully informed about how the childminder will respond to any concerns they may have regarding their children's care.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's individual needs are met by the childminder who has several years experience working with children. Well established routines and good organisation of space and time ensure children are made welcome and progress well. Good adult-to-child ratios ensure children have appropriate care and support, for example, younger children have time for one-to-one play in the day, before older children arrive home from school. Children benefit from the childminder's professional approach to her work, she attends training to update her skills, such as first aid and shares good practice with other childminders.

The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards, she updates her knowledge and mostly takes into account any changes that affect children's care. To improve outcomes for younger children, for example, she has obtained the 'Birth to three matters' framework and is beginning to incorporate some aspects into her work with younger children.

All necessary documentation is in place and is updated regularly to ensure children's health, safety and welfare. Records are shared with parents so they know what to expect and can be confident their children receive appropriate care. Overall, children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to improve children's safety by ensuring the fire blanket was fixed to a wall so it can be used effectively.

The fire blanket has been mounted in a safe and suitable location in the kitchen. This ensures it is easily accessible and promotes children's safety in the event of a fire.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 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 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):

- improve knowledge and understanding of the updated complaints procedures, so that parents' concerns are dealt with effectively in line with the current legislation and guidance.

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)