



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221980
Inspection date	06 September 2006
Inspector	Margaret Elizabeth Roberts

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 was registered in 1992. She lives with her husband in a large village in Cambridgeshire. All areas of the home are used for childminding 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 14 children, all of whom attend on a part-time and full-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group, takes children to the local library and the local park. The childminder has no pets.

The childminder supports children with disabilities and who speak English as additional language. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted because the premises and equipment are clean. The good hygiene practices in place help to reduce the spread of infection. For example children use individual paper towels to dry their hands on. They are learning the importance of personal hygiene through gentle reminders by the childminder to wash their hands, particularly after going to the toilet and before eating. Children's medical needs are well met because the childminder is trained in first aid and first aid equipment is available. All relevant documentation is in place such as accident and medication recordings. Written parental permission has been sought for the seeking of any medical advice or treatment to ensure that children can be cared for appropriately in an emergency.

Children are provided with good nutritious snacks and meals to promote their healthy growth and development. These include fresh fruit and vegetables provided by the childminder who is also willing to serve children with their packed lunches. Children's dietary requirements are well met because discussion takes place with parents about likes and dislikes, which are then recorded on children's personal detail forms. Drinks are available at all times which ensures that children do not go thirsty.

Children's physical skills are developed through a good range of outdoor equipment such as climbing frames, swings and slides. They have opportunity to practise their coordination skills through riding tricycles, using writing materials and completing puzzles. Walks taken in the local area and to the park also contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into an environment that is safe, secure and suitable for its purpose. They play in a room that has been specifically set out for childcare, whilst also having access to the safe kitchen area where they can do art and craft. The lounge is used for children wishing to rest where very young children can sleep peacefully in a travel cot. Baby monitors are used and the childminder checks on sleeping children to ensure their safety further. Children have access to a downstairs toilet which helps to promote their independence, suitable washing facilities are also available. The clean, hygienic kitchen area allows for the safe preparation and storage of food.

Children's varying needs are met through a very good range of safe, well-maintained furniture and equipment. Children have access to a very wide range of suitable toys and play materials that enable them to develop their emotional, intellectual, social, creative and physical skills. All of the resources are accessible and create an exceptionally stimulating environment where children are happy and contented.

Children play safely because the childminder has taken reasonable steps inside to ensure that hazards to children are minimised. For example dangerous substances such as cleaning materials

and medicines are locked away or inaccessible to children. The front door is kept locked and a safety gate is available to prevent access to the stairs. Children are supervised at all times in the very large garden where there is a pond which has been made safe because it has a weight bearing cover. The high gate has a hook and eye fastening at the top, out of reach of children. However this is not always in place and poses a danger to children because they could leave the garden unsupervised. Children are protected should a fire break out because fire fighting equipment is available and an emergency evacuation procedure is in place.

Children are protected if abuse or neglect is suspected because the childminder has a good awareness of local procedures. She has recently undertaken training, has developed a policy and has systems in place where she can seek advice or support.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children relish their time with the childminder where they become confident, independent individuals, through being encouraged to do things for themselves. Children are involved in a broad range of activities which support their language and imagination. Children particularly enjoy role play where they make 'cups of tea' for the childminder and visitors, pouring 'tea' into cups and offering slices of 'cake'. They are able to make decisions about their play because they have free access to all of the resources, which are interesting and stimulating. These are presented at children's level, either on the floor or low storage areas to allow them freedom of choice and increase their independence. They are interested in what they do and are able to sustain interest at self chosen and well supported activities. For example children as young as two years listen attentively to story time, talking about the pictures and then sharing books with visitors. They are involved in the choosing of books when they visit the local library which helps them to learn how to handle them carefully.

Children's self esteem is promoted through appropriate interactions with the childminder who values their contribution. She talks and listens to children, praising, encouraging them to use their imagination and ask questions. Children have access at all times to a good balance of activities, which allow for active play and relaxing times.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn about equality through their play where they have access to a full range of activities that reflect our diverse culture. The childminder treats children with equal concern while recognising that they all have individual needs. These needs are met through close liaison with parents where children's individual needs are discussed and recorded so that appropriate care can be given. Children with special needs are cared for well because the childminder understands the needs of all the children in her care. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of each child being minded. For example the childminder has learnt to use sign language; space and resources are organised so all children are able to access them easily.

Children behave extremely well because the childminder is a good role model. Clear and realistic boundaries are given so that children know what is expected of them. The childminder takes into account children's level of understanding and maturity when dealing with behaviour management. For example distraction and intervention methods are used for younger children. Older children are asked to reflect on how they have behaved and are given explanations as to why the behaviour is unacceptable. Good behaviour is encouraged through being occupied at all times, sharing and taking turns and being praised for small achievements.

Children benefit from the very strong partnerships that have been developed, by the childminder, with their parents. They are given access to a very informative brochure which includes the childminder's policies. Good information sharing enhances the care that children receive, promoting their welfare and development. For example the childminder always finds out what the children have been doing at weekends so that she can share this with them and build on what children already know. The daily exchange of what children have been doing and diaries for very young children help to provide continuity of care for each child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare and development is promoted because the childminder has the appropriate skills and qualifications. She has been pro-active in attending further short courses and workshops to ensure that she has up to date childcare information. This enhances the care of the children she minds and shows a good commitment to improving practices. The childminder has recently obtained a certificate for an endorsed quality assurance scheme.

Children's needs are very well met because space and resources are organised to allow them to play and learn, independently or with good support from the childminder. Children's attendance is recorded with the times of arrival and departure, so that they can be accounted for at all times. Overall children's needs are met.

Well-organised, relevant documentation is in place and ready for inspection. The childminder has developed some policies which are shared with parents. These procedures help the childminder to carry out her work effectively and has a positive impact on the care children receive.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to make sure that electric sockets in areas accessible to children are fitted with socket covers and provide parents with the contact details for Ofsted.

The childminder has made good improvements. Children's safety is further enhanced because electrical sockets are protected and parents are informed of how to make a complaint through the relevant information that is displayed.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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):

- ensure that hazards to children are minimised; this refers to ensuring that the safety fastener at the top of the gate is kept in place

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