



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221990
Inspection date	31 August 2006
Inspector	Emma Bright

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 1991. She lives with her husband and grown-up child in a village close to Ely. All areas of the childminder's house 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 four children under eight, two of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group. The family has two dogs.

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 benefit from the childminder's secure knowledge and understanding of childhood nutrition and their dietary needs are well met. They are well nourished and enjoy a variety of healthy meals and snacks provided by the childminder or their parents. The childminder encourages children to make healthy choices and they learn about food that is good for them through a range of activities. For example, they help to prepare healthy meals and enjoy cleaning vegetables to put in the pot; children munch happily on the celery sticks they have expertly washed. In addition, they compare their packed lunches to the poster on display to check that their food is healthy so they can "grow big and strong". Children have free access to fresh drinking water so that they remain well hydrated throughout the day.

Children's good health is promoted because the childminder has an effective approach to health and hygiene; she reduces the risk of cross-infection by ensuring that her home is clean and well maintained at all times. Children learn about the importance of staying healthy through the childminder's support and guidance, for example they independently wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals. Clear procedures and records are in place to ensure that appropriate medical care is given if children are unwell whilst they are in the care of the childminder and this ensures that children's individual needs are met.

Children enjoy regular physical activity; they play in the garden and go to the local park so they can extend their physical skills. They demonstrate good balance and coordination skills as they speed confidently along on scooters, stopping safely to avoid injury. This ensures children develop their physical skills in an interesting way and they have fun whilst exercising. Children understand how exercise contributes to their good health and they benefit from the fresh air on their regular walks to and from school. The childminder has developed good routines so that all children can sleep when they need to and this ensures that they are content and well rested.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and suitable home and are well supervised at all times, which means they develop their independence in a secure environment. The childminder identifies and minimises any risks or hazards in her home so that children can move around freely and safely. Children learn how to keep themselves safe because the childminder explains about the dangers, both indoors and on outings. They explain that they "hold hands when we cross the road". Children's safety in case of fire is priority. For example, smoke alarms are checked regularly to ensure they are in good working order and the childminder has a written emergency escape plan. However, children do not practise the emergency escape plan regularly so that they are familiar with the routine, which compromises children's safety in an emergency.

Children independently select activities from a good range of quality toys and resources, which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Resources have been well chosen to

support children's play and are regularly checked for hygiene and safety. Toys and activities are rotated regularly so that there is always something 'new' to play with, and these are stored so that children can follow their own interests and develop their play.

Clear documents and procedures are in place, which are very well maintained to safeguard children's welfare. For example, there is a clear child protection policy, which is shared with parents so that they understand the childminder's role in child protection. The childminder has a secure knowledge of child protection issues, which is in line with those set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. In addition, she has attended training to update her knowledge and this means that children are protected and kept safe from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle very well in the childminder's house. They thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and have established warm and affectionate relationships with her, which contributes to their sense of belonging. Resources are well organised so they are accessible and children explore them independently, making their own decisions and developing their own interests. For example, children select favourite puzzles and share them with the childminder. They talk about what they can see and concentrate to fit the pieces together. Children enjoy lots of positive interaction with the childminder, who offers them good support during their activities and this encourages them to develop their growing skills.

Children benefit from the consistent daily routines, which help them to settle and feel secure. They eagerly participate in a range of everyday activities and experiences; they write out shopping lists and go shopping to buy fruit for their snacks. Children are highly confident and independent in the childminder's care. They initiate conversations with adults and show great interest in what is going on. The childminder supports this interest, providing children with a keyboard so they can 'type' and they talk about the letters and numbers they can see. The childminder is sensitive to children's needs and enthusiastically praises their efforts, which helps to promote their self-esteem. In addition, the childminder has a good understanding of child development and uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework as a reference tool to help young children develop and make good progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's behaviour is excellent and they clearly understand what is expected of them because the childminder gives careful explanations in a way that they can understand. The childminder effectively manages their behaviour by having clear boundaries, which she shares with parents to ensure consistency between home and the childminding home. Children know that they help to tidy away the toys and resources, and they use conventions, such as please and thank you, occasionally needing gentle reminders from the childminder.

Children are highly valued and respected as individuals; their different needs are understood by the childminder, who gathers very good information from parents to ensure these needs

are well met. They play with small world figures and look at books that present positive images of all members of society, helping them to learn about the world they live in. Children clearly enjoy being in the childminder's company and they are affectionate with her, readily offering hugs. In addition, children enjoy looking at photographs of themselves on the computer and recalling what they did with the childminder and this positive interaction helps to develop children's self-esteem.

Children benefit from the positive, professional relationships between the childminder and their parents, which significantly contributes to their care and well-being, ensuring their changing needs continue to be met. Parents know about the childminder's practice as good written and verbal information is shared with them. Children benefit from a good settling-in procedure, which helps them to make the transition between home and the childminder's home. All required documents are shared with parents, which mean that parents are kept very well informed of their child's routines and they are clear about the care their child receives.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the good adult:child ratios, and from the individual care and attention offered by the childminder. Well-established routines and effective, caring support ensure children feel a sense of belonging and are secure. Children's general safety and wellbeing is promoted by clear policies and procedures; their individual records are well organised and easy to access in an emergency. Records are shared with parents so they know what to expect and can be confident their children receive appropriate care.

Children's needs are well met as the childminder has a sound and secure knowledge of child development and of her legal duties. This enables her to provide good quality care and promote positive outcomes for children. The effective organisation of time, space and resources contribute to children's high levels of independence and enables them to develop their growing skills in a relaxed and happy atmosphere. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to update the daily register and increase resources to promote equal opportunities. Children's daily attendance is recorded and includes times of arrival and departure, which ensures their safety. The childminder has improved resources which reflect positive images of other cultures and this helps children to learn about their differences and similarities.

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 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 the emergency escape plan is practised regularly.

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