



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	258063
Inspection date	12 September 2006
Inspector	Heidi Falconer

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 2001. She lives with her partner and three children aged eight, 16 and 18, in Cambridge. The whole ground floor 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 two children at any one time and is currently minding one child under five part-time. The family has a cat and two rabbits.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Good promotion of hygiene procedures by the childminder ensures that children stay healthy. Through daily routines children are learning how to manage their own hygiene. For example,

children know to wash their hands after they have helped to feed the pet rabbits. Children are generally well cared for in the event of an accident or if they become ill whilst in the childminder's care. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and she has suitable procedures in place for recording the administration medication. However, she does not ensure that her first aid box is suitably stocked and she does not record non-marking injuries to children. This has an impact on children's well being in an emergency.

Children receive adequate quantities of food and drink, so that they are well nourished. Parents provide the majority of the food for their children. All food brought to the childminder's home is stored appropriately so that it remains safe and appetising for children to eat. Children and young babies are encouraged to have drinks at frequent intervals, to ensure that they remain wellhydrated. When preparing and making up bottle feeds for young babies the childminder follows appropriate procedures to ensure that children remain healthy.

Children enjoy a suitable range of activities which contribute to their good health. They develop their physical skills through regular walks, using apparatus at the local park and during trips to the local soft play centre. In addition activities in the garden such as football, trampolining and using bikes provide children with plenty of opportunities for fresh air and exercise. This contributes positively to a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children use a suitable range of safe, good quality and developmentally appropriate resources. With the help of the childminder older children are able to select items/toys for their own use from the playhouse in the garden. For babies, the childminder selects a variety of age-appropriate toys, which she places within their reach. This allows them to select toys which interest and stimulate them. To make floor play comfortable for babies the childminder sets out toys and resources on a fleece blanket.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Children are kept safe from hazards in the home, as the childminder has put in place effective measures to protect them from potential dangers. For example, drains in the garden are covered and cleaning products are kept out of children's reach upstairs. However, the childminder has failed to ensure that a working smoke detector is fitted on the first level of her home. This compromises children's safety. Children are encouraged to think about their own care and keeping safe. For example, on outings the childminder talks to the children about the potential dangers when crossing the road and when feeding the rabbits, they are shown how to do this safely.

The childminder demonstrates an adequate awareness of child protection procedures to follow if suspicions arise relating to children attending. This knowledge helps safeguard and protect children's welfare. However, she is not familiar with the guidelines set out by her Local Safeguarding Children's Board and therefore some of her knowledge is not up to date. As a result, potentially there could be a delay in her responding to a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and display good levels of confidence in the childminder's home. They have formed warm relationships with her, which contributes to their sense of belonging. The childminder shows a genuine interest in the children, talking to them and joining in with their play and activities. Babies enjoy playful interactions with the childminder. The childminder responds positively to young babies babbling by imitating and mimicking their noises and sounds. This is supporting their communication skills by encouraging their impulse to communicate. This close communication with the childminder also supports their emotional well-being and feelings of security.

Children are able to initiate some of their own activities and begin to gain some independence because the childminder places toys and equipment within easy reach. This allows children to select some items for their own use. All children enjoy a suitable range of activities and experiences, which ensures that they spend their time purposefully. For example, they regularly meet up with friends and attend the local parent and toddler group. This provides them with opportunities to socialise with others and form relationships with others. Outings to local areas of interest, such as Cherry Hinton Park, widen children's experiences. For example, at this park they are able to see and feed the ducks with the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued as individuals. The childminder works closely with the parents to ensure that the needs of all children, including those with additional needs, are met. For example, during settling in visits the childminder takes time to discuss children's home routines for sleeps and feeds with the parents. She then organises her daily routine around these so that children benefit from being cared for consistently. Children are learning about diversity and the wider community through discussions that they have when they are on outings with the childminder and through resources such as books and figures.

Children are happy and settle quickly into the childminder's home. Children relate well to the childminder. Babies in particular benefit from a warm and affectionate relationship with the childminder. Their emotional needs are well supported from the cuddles they receive when they are anxious, tired or being fed a bottle. The childminder uses a consistent approach for managing behaviour. For example, older children know that they must tidy up and put away toys before taking out more resources. This helps children as they learn to understand behaviour boundaries and to distinguish right from wrong.

Children benefit from the positive relationships the childminder has developed with their parents and carers. They receive daily verbal feedback about their child's activities, sleeps, feeds and nappy changes. This ensures that all of the essential information is shared, helping to promote the children's care and welfare. However, the childminder is not fully aware of the procedures she should follow if she received a written complaint from a parent. This affects the effectiveness of her partnership with parents and carers.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has worked as a childminder for many years, prior to being registered through Ofsted she was registered through Social Services. She uses this experience to ensure that the organisation of her home supports children's care, learning and play. Children are comfortable, happy and at ease with the childminder and in her home. The childminder's organisation of the day ensures that children's individual needs are met and that they are provided varied play opportunities. To support children's safety and well-being the childminder has just initiated the required checks for her child who has just turned 16.

The childminder has most of the required records and has procedures in place to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. Documentation is stored securely and information shared appropriately with parents. This helps to promote the care and welfare of the children. The childminder talks to parents regularly to keep them well informed about the service and their child's activities. This contributes to the continuity of children's care so that they feel secure. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to draw up written agreements with parents for all children who attend the provision. The childminder currently has contracts in place for all of the children. This ensures that both parties are aware of the expectations of the care, activities provided and the business arrangements. As a result children's care is being supported because the childminder is working with parents to ensure that their individual needs are met. To further improve her partnership with parents the childminder was also asked to review her written records to ensure that she had written consent from parents to transport children in her vehicle. The childminder has now insured this is in place for all children.

The childminder agreed to improve health procedures by obtaining written permission from parents to seek emergency medical treatment for their children. This is now in place for all children and as a result they would be able to receive treatment promptly in the event of an emergency.

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 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 a copy of the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards guidance for childcare providers
- develop knowledge and understanding of the changes in regulations on 3 October 2005, with regard to keeping a complaints log and ensuring that it is available on request
- provide a first aid box, the contents of which are checked frequently and replaced as necessary and ensure that accurate records are kept of all accidents to children
- improve fire precautions by ensuring that smoke detectors are fitted on every level of the premises.

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