



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222661
Inspection date	23 August 2006
Inspector	Caroline Wright
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 1995. She lives with her husband and one child aged nine years in Linton, Cambridgeshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a summer-house in the garden that is also used for childminding; children use the 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 five and one child over eight on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children, and she attends the local toddler group. The family has no pets.

The childminder attends the local childminding group; she holds a level two qualification in early years.

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 wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating; hand towels are changed regularly to reduce the risk of cross infection. If the children become unwell whilst they are in the care of the childminder, up to date records are in place to make sure that they are adequately cared for.

Children benefit from the childminder's good knowledge and understanding of childhood nutrition. Parents provide their own meals and they enjoy snacks of fresh fruit or other healthy options. Children learn about healthy eating through meaningful experiences, such as making a wall display of 'healthy fruit'. In addition, children learn to lead a healthy lifestyle; they take part in regular exercise such as running around and climbing in the park or playing in the garden.

The childminder helps children to develop new physical skills according to their stage of development using the wide range of suitable toys and resources she provides. For example, they use knives and scissors to cut dough, under the childminders supervision, to help them to develop manipulative dexterity. They have plenty of space to move around safely. The childminder forms firm relationships with children so that their emotional well-being is well promoted, enabling them to be relaxed and secure.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe environment where 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 'be careful' when they are using scissors or coming down stairs. Children learn about staying safe outside the home, holding hands when they go out for walks with the childminder; they learn to 'look and listen for cars' so that they know how to cross the road safely.

Younger children learn about personal safety in meaningful ways. The childminder engages in role-play 'tea parties' and remarks on the 'hot tea'; she enables them to take well managed risks to learn essential skills, such as climbing upstairs, by positioning herself so that she can prevent accidents, offer sensitive support and promote independence.

Children select activities and resources from a wide range of interesting toys and equipment, which are checked by the childminder to ensure they are in good condition. Children's overall welfare is maintained by procedures and documents that promote their safety. For example, the childminder holds a current first aid certificate and has a good understanding of child protection procedures, which are in line with those set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the childminder's house and form good relationships with the childminder. Their language and mathematical thinking are encouraged in meaningful ways. For example, the children make Telly Tubbies with 'two big eyes' with dough, telling the childminder the name of the character they have made. They develop their imagination through role play with the childminder, wearing hats and carrying bags as they make 'tea' or put the 'baby' to bed, telling their own stories and exploring familiar daily routines. They develop early writing skills and explore their creativity drawing and painting pictures, which they proudly display on the wall in the summer-house for everyone to enjoy.

Children of all ages pursue their own interests and make decisions. The childminder prepares an interesting range of toys and activities before they arrive and displays them attractively, so that they are easily accessible and the children can choose what they want to play with. Young children form good relationships, as they play alongside each-other and learn to share resources.

Toys are placed within children's reach to stimulate their interest and encourage them to investigate further. The childminder uses the foundation stage curriculum guidance to help her to plan activities for children. Written plans are clear and informative and show how the activities will help children to make progress towards the early learning goals. However, the childminder does not use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to help her to plan activities for children under-three-years old. As a result some of the group activities that she plans, such as the daily calendar and alphabet session, are very structured and do not meet the needs of the younger children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children have equal opportunities to access activities and resources and they are confident and independent. They play with small world figures and role play equipment that represent all members of society, helping them to learn about the world they live in. They learn to respect each other's needs when the childminder helps them to share resources.

Children behave well and understand what is expected of them. The childminder establishes regular routines and consistent expectations, for example, they always sit at the table to eat meals and use conventions such as 'please' or 'thank you'. The childminder explains what she expects them to do in a way that they can understand and listens to their views so that they feel valued.

Children benefit from positive relationships between the childminder and children's parents, together with up to date records about their individual needs. Children's progress is discussed daily with their parents so that their changing needs continue to be met. Photographs of children at activities are displayed on the wall of the summer-house so that parents can be well informed about what their children do. The childminder has good information for parents to enable them to contact the regulator if they need to and she is aware that she should record any concerns that parents might raise about the care of their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the childminding promotes positive outcomes for children. Children benefit from the childminder's experience of caring for children and her sound knowledge and understanding of child development. The organisation of the play space in the summer-house and easy access to resources contributes to children's independence and enables them to pursue their own interests. They choose for themselves from the well planned activities that are provided by the childminder each day. There is plenty of space for them to play indoors and out. In addition, toys and equipment for babies and children under-three support their overall development and encourage them to make progress.

The childminder takes part essential training, such as first aid and child protection, to ensure she provides good care to children and promotes their overall welfare. Essential documents are well organised and stored confidentially. Up to date records contribute to the health and well-being of all of the children that the childminder looks after. However, the childminder does not record enough details about children's existing medical conditions. This impacts upon their health and well-being in the event of an emergency.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to request parents' permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice for their children. She has set up a system to record parents' written permission to seek medical treatment or advice for children in an emergency, which has improved the way she promotes children's ongoing good health.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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):

- make sure parents provide adequate information about children's allergies and existing medical conditions
- use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to enhance the provision for children under three-years-old.

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