



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222763
Inspection date	19 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 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 2000. She lives with her husband and two children aged seven and ten 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 five children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five all day, and two child over five after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends a variety of local toddler groups with minded children. The family has a dog, rabbit, hamster and fish.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home. Their individual toileting and nappy changing needs are met well by the childminder who demonstrates an awareness of, and commitment to, preventing cross-infection. For example, she washes her hands and cleans the changing mat with anti-bacterial spray after changing nappies. In addition, through discussions with the childminder children are developing a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands after using the toilet. The childminder has developed a written sickness policy, which she shares with parents. This ensures that they are aware of how they can help to reduce the risk of cross-infection, through illness, between children. To ensure that children are well cared for in the event of an accident the childminder maintains her first aid certificate and ensures that her first aid box is appropriately stocked. Written records of all accidents are kept and shared appropriately with parents.

Children enjoy a very good range of activities which contribute to their health. Children access regular indoor and outdoor activities which help them to develop their co-ordination and balancing skills. For example, as they balance on stepping stones at the local park and ride push along toys and bikes in the childminder's garden. In addition, regular attendance to a physical play group provides challenge for children and improves their physical skills. At this group, children enjoy parachute games, using pom poms and climbing on apparatus. Babies and young children are able to sleep at times that meet their needs.

The childminder encourages the children to develop good eating habits. For example, by encouraging them to try different fruits at snack time and by leaving drinks where they can access them as they require them. Currently parents have chosen to provide the majority of meals and snacks for the children. The childminder ensures that all food brought in is stored appropriately so that it remains safe and appetising for children to eat. All children's dietary needs and preferences are identified and respected by the childminder.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

All children have access to an extensive range of good quality, accessible and safe equipment. Resources are carefully chosen to support children's play and they are regularly checked for hygiene and safety to ensure that they remain suitable for children to use. To ensure that all children can be engaged in purposeful activity and choose the resources safely for themselves, the childminder has organised her resources safely in a low-level storage chest and in a shelving unit in her dinning area. This promotes their independence. To maintain the children's interest and enjoyment, the childminder regularly attends a wide range of differently themed play sessions with the children. Attendance at these groups significantly extends the play materials available to all children, ensuring that they are stimulated and interested by what is on offer.

The childminder gives high priority to keeping children safe in her home and when they are on outings. Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised because there are excellent safety and

security precautions in place. For example, the childminder has a panic alarm fitted in the home, this ensures that in the event of an emergency she could raise an alarm and seek help quickly. To keep children safe when on outings the childminder has developed a set of 'emergency cards', which she keeps on her at all times. These contain children's photos and all of their emergency contact details. These would be used to keep children safe in the event that something happened to the childminder whilst they were out. Children's safety is enhanced further as the childminder has developed a range of procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. These include policies on the procedures she would follow in the event that a parent fails to collect their child or if a child becomes lost whilst they are in her care.

The childminder places a strong emphasis on helping children to learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, by practising the childminder's fire evacuation plan, children have learnt how to protect themselves in the event of a fire. In addition, children develop their understanding of road safety extremely well whilst they are on outings with the childminder. When crossing roads with the childminder the children know to 'stop, look and listen' and to wait for the green man when using pedestrian crossings.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted extremely well because the childminder has an excellent understanding of her role in child protection. The childminder has attended several training courses specifically in this area and is clear about her responsibility to report concerns. This knowledge is up-to-date and in line with her Local Safeguarding Children Board's guidelines. Parents are well informed about the childminder's duty to report concerns through her clear and detailed policy, which they read prior to their child attending.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children receive good support and warm interaction from the childminder. For example, at routine times such as nappy changing the childminder playfully interacts with the children, tickling their feet and chatting happily to them. This helps them to feel happy and emotionally secure in her care. Established and stable routines to the day help children to feel a sense of security and settle quickly in the care of the childminder. The childminder encourages all children take the lead in their play. This develops children's confidence and independence. Younger children make their own choices, as they choose from the resources set out at child height in the dining area. Older children know the variety of resources well and ask the childminder for resources which are not visible to them.

The childminder plans a theme of activities each term, which ensures that children acquire new skills and are stimulated by the play opportunities that they are provided with. Children enjoy participating in a wide range of activities, which provide sensory experiences. For example, they play with shaving foam, rice cereals, sand, water and take part in hand and feet painting activities. Children's creative skills are developed further through cooking activities, such as making heart biscuits for Valentine's Day and by using junk materials to create models of trains and musical shakers.

Children are beginning to develop early communication skills as a result of the communication they receive from the childminder. For example, as young children play with different coloured

stacking barrels the childminder names the colours with the children, which they then attempt to repeat. Children enjoy and benefit from attending a wide variety of different groups with the childminder. These include a local childminding group, toddler group, and messy play group. Children's attendance at these groups helps to develop their social skills and extends the play opportunities they are provided with, ensuring that all children enjoy their time in the childminder's care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the positive relationships the childminder has developed with their parents. Parents are kept verbally informed daily about how their child has been and the service that the childminder provides. This is further enhanced by an individual daily diary which the childminder completes on babies and young children. This ensures that essential information is shared, helping to promote children's care and welfare. A detailed and well-presented prospectus is made available to parents, which details specific information about the childminding service. Policies include child protection, health and safety, behaviour and equal opportunities. However, the childminder is not fully aware of the changes in regulation regarding complaints. This affects the effectiveness of her partnership with parents. Parents have recently written references for the childminder, which show their high regard for her practice. They describe the care she provides as being of a 'high standard' and state that they have 'total confidence' in the childminder.

Children are treated with equal concern and are given individual attention according to their needs, for example, their home routines for sleeps and feed are followed. Children develop their understanding of the local community through regular outings outside of the home to local places of interest. For example, they enjoy looking for creatures when go pond dipping in the local country park. The childminder provides a range of resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and celebrates some festivals with the children. For example, to celebrate Chinese New Year the children ate noodles with chop sticks. These types of activities help to increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of different lifestyles. The childminder has a positive approach towards caring for children with a range of needs and abilities. Although is not currently caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities she is able to demonstrate how she would adapt her service to ensure she provides fully inclusive care which is accessible to all children.

The childminder has a consistent approach to behaviour management, which is appropriate to the ages of the children attending. She encourages the children to play co-operatively together and to share and take turns with popular resources like the trains. As a result children are learning what is expected of them and they are beginning to understand the consequences of their actions.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder's organisation of her home positively supports children's care, learning and play. The childminder organises her daily routine around the children's needs. The day is well planned to accommodate journeys to groups and taking and collecting children from school, allowing them appropriate time to rest, play and eat. Documentation is very well maintained and record keeping systems required for childminding purposes are in place and kept up to date. The childminder continually updates her information folders, which contain her policies and evidence of the type of provision she provides. These ensure that parents are well informed about the service and their child's activities. This contributes positively to children's continuity of care, helping them to feel secure.

The childminder shows a high commitment to developing the provision for the children who attend. She is well qualified and she continues to develop her knowledge by regularly attending training sessions and meeting up with other childminders and professionals to share good practice. For example, the childminder has attended courses on festivals and celebrations, parachute play, rhyme sacks for babies and positive behaviour management. As a result she is able to develop the provision for the children who attend. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection 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 the last inspection since 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

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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):

- develop knowledge and understanding of the changes in regulations on 3 October 2005, with regard to keeping a complaints log

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