



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY267243
Inspection date	17 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 outstanding. 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 2003. She lives with her husband and three children aged five years, three years and eight months-old in Ely, Cambridgeshire. The whole of the 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 three children at any one time and is currently minding two children over five and four children 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 supports children with English as an additional language. She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and attends the local childminding group. The childminder holds a level 3 early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children display an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves healthy through regular daily routines. They always wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating; they talk knowledgeably about 'art germs and o.k. germs' that might make them poorly if they should forget to wash their hands properly. The childminder has very high standards of cleanliness and hygiene: hand towels are changed each day to prevent cross infection and she acts as a superb role model, washing her own hands before preparing food. Children's ongoing good health is actively promoted. If the children become unwell or an accident occurs whilst they are in the care of the childminder, excellent records are in place to make sure that they are extremely well cared for. For example, the childminder always takes details of minded children and essential information with her on outings so that the emergency services can contact parents and give appropriate care to the children if they need to. In addition, the childminder's knowledge of paediatric first aid is exceptional and she deals with emergency situations extremely competently, which ensures that children remain calm and are not upset or frightened.

Children benefit from the childminder's very good knowledge and understanding of childhood nutrition. They enjoy healthy meals and snacks, with fresh fruit and vegetables every day, and their dietary needs are very well met. Children can easily help themselves to water whenever they want it, so that they remain well hydrated and their ongoing good health is promoted.

The childminder has an excellent knowledge and understanding of the needs of babies and children under three years-old and uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework effectively to help her provide a particularly high standard of interesting activities for them. All children develop new physical skills according to their stage of development through highly effective everyday routines. For example, children develop manipulative dexterity when they expertly spread icing onto gingerbread men 'road safety' biscuits. In addition, children take part in regular exercise, such as running around and climbing in the park or playing in the garden, so that they develop agility and learn to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very safe environment where all risks are minimised and they move around safely and independently under the childminder's exemplary supervision. The childminder skilfully helps children to learn to keep themselves safe by gently reminding them to pick up toys, so that they do not fall over them; older children share responsibility for keeping each-other safe and report that they should not play with toys with small parts if babies are present. Children learn about staying safe outside the home through very effective first hand experiences: for example, holding hands when they go out for walks with the childminder, they are consistently encouraged to look and listen for cars when they cross the road. In addition, innovative activities such as making a road safety poster, with photographs of the children riding bikes and wearing safety equipment, are highly successful in helping children to build

on what they already know. For example, children talk with a clear understanding about wearing luminous bands when they go out at night, 'so the cars can see you in the dark'.

Children confidently select superior activities and resources, which are rigorously checked by the childminder daily to ensure they are in exemplary condition and absolutely safe for them to use. Children's overall welfare is efficiently maintained by rigorous procedures and clear documents that consistently promote their safety. For example, the childminder always carries out a thorough risk assessment before children arrive each day to ensure that all areas and equipment that is used by children is safe. The childminder has an excellent 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 outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the childminder's house and form very strong relationships with each other and the childminder. Their learning and development is encouraged in an excellent range of interesting and meaningful ways. For example, children eagerly count how many 'road safety' biscuits they have made, skilfully calculating how many they have left to decorate; or they enthusiastically paint pictures with their hands and feet to explore colour and learn as much as they can about the texture of paint. Children always have free access to a superb selection of stimulating drawing and colouring materials so that they can make marks and learn to communicate their ideas through pictures and early writing. They develop their imagination through role play, dressing up and telling their own stories. Their own efforts in artwork are consistently valued and displayed attractively on the walls in the playroom for others to see and enjoy, promoting children's confidence and developing positive self-esteem.

Children eagerly pursue their own interests and their independence is actively promoted. The childminder prepares an extensive range of stimulating toys and exciting activities before they arrive and they are easily accessible to the children so that they can easily choose what they want to play with.

Babies form excellent relationships with other children as they play alongside them and learn to share resources. Toys are carefully placed within babies' reach to stimulate their interest and actively encourage them to investigate further. The childminder enthusiastically responds to babies' 'babbling' with encouraging smiles and comments, to help them to become confident communicators. Children of all ages enjoy sharing stories and looking at books with the childminder, who uses her excellent knowledge and understanding of how children and babies learn to encourage them to make comments and develop their language skills. Older children ask the childminder the meaning of new words, such as 'warehouse', as they play. The childminder skilfully explains to the children in a way that they can understand so that they can use the new vocabulary effectively.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children have equal opportunities to access a superb range of interesting activities and resources; they are very confident and extremely independent. They play with small world figures and role play equipment, which represent all members of society. They animatedly discuss their families and what they do at home, which successfully enables them to learn about each other's family cultures and traditions; they regularly celebrate a wide range of cultural and religious festivals to help them learn about other lifestyles through worthwhile first-hand experiences.

Children have extremely high levels of self-esteem and they form excellent relationships with the childminder and each-other. The childminder listens enthusiastically to their ideas and responds with encouraging comments during lively discussions. Babies enjoy close contact with the childminder and her superb attention to children's individual needs makes each of them feel highly secure and valued.

Children consistently behave extremely well and clearly understand what is expected of them. They learn through purposeful routines and sensitive expectations. For example, they always sit at the table to eat meals and snacks and they learn to take responsibility by helping to lay the table for lunch. The childminder very carefully explains what she expects children to do in a way that they can easily understand and she listens patiently to their views so that they feel respected and acknowledged. Children play together in harmony, happily sharing resources and taking turns, showing a great deal of respect for each others needs. For example, older children enjoy helping with the babies and show their affection for them with gentle cuddles.

Children benefit from highly effective relationships between the childminder and their parents. Children's individual progress is discussed daily so that their changing needs continue to be met. Daily diaries, recording children's details of their good progress, enables parents to share their children's achievements and helps children to move confidently between home and the childminder setting.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The exemplary organisation of the childminding is highly effective in promoting positive outcomes for children. Children's overall safety and welfare is actively promoted by the childminder's excellent knowledge and understanding of the Care Standards and outcomes for children. In addition the childminder has a very good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the early learning goals, which she uses purposefully to plan an outstanding range of activities that help children to learn through their play.

Children are welcomed into a very attractive and stimulating environment, which is prepared before they arrive each day. They leave their parents easily and immediately become engaged in the activities. The play rooms are very well organised, with toys and equipment at child height, so that children can easily help themselves to whatever they need. Additional toys are clearly labelled and easy for children to access from the open-shelving storage areas.

Up-to-date, well organised records contribute effectively to the health, safety and well-being of the children. All of the essential documents are stored confidentially and are very easily accessed if they are needed. In addition, the childminder is fully committed to her own professional development and attends a superb range of early years' training courses, which enable her to provide a highly successful range of activities and outstanding care for the children she looks after.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to develop her knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. She has undertaken a great deal of independent study using the internet and information from national publications, so that she is now able to act effectively in children's best interests in the event of any concerns for their welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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