



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222283
Inspection date	08 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 1994. She lives with her husband and two teenage children 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 for a maximum of six children and has eight children on role, four of whom are under five years. She occasionally minds with an assistant, and together they may care for a maximum of six children, four of whom may be under five years. The childminder walks to local playgroups and schools to take and collect children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted as the childminder ensures that the areas of her home which are used for childminding are maintained in a hygienic condition. Children are generally well supported in their self-care skills. For example, in the toilet the childminder provides a low-level step to ensure that the children are able to use the toilet and wash their hands independently. The provision of clean towels and anti-bacterial soap helps to prevent the spread of infection and ensure that children remain healthy. However, the childminder does not consistently remind children to wash their hands before eating. This compromises their health. If children become ill or need to take medication whilst in the care of the childminder, there are some written records in place to ensure that appropriate care is given. However, the childminder has failed to maintain a valid first aid qualification and she does not record non-marking injuries to children, although parents are verbally informed about them. As a result children's well-being is being compromised.

Children lead a healthy lifestyle whilst in the childminder's care. They have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise when walking to and from outings and when playing in the childminder's garden. Children's physical needs are promoted effectively. For example, children are able to sleep, eat, and rest to suit their home routines.

Parents provide the majority of meals for their children, which are stored appropriately in the childminder's fridge to ensure that they remain safe for children to eat. The childminder works with parents to ensure that any additional snacks, that she provides are suitable and meet children's health and dietary needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment. To promote children's safety in her home, the childminder has assessed potential risks and taken action to minimise them. For example, she has placed locks on all of the doors on cupboards in the kitchen, to prevent children accessing dangerous substances and she has attached finger guards on the doors, to prevent children trapping their fingers. In addition, in the garden the childminder has fitted a cushioned underlay under the swing, which helps to prevent injury.

Children use an appropriate range of suitable and safe equipment. To extend the range of resources that children use, the childminder regularly attends the local toy library with the minded children. Attending this library also gives the children opportunities to select toys and equipment which stimulate and interest them.

Children are protected because the childminder generally understands her role in child protection and would be able to put appropriate procedures into practice if suspicions arose. For example, she is aware of some signs and symptoms of abuse and she has a copy of her Local Safeguarding Children Board's guidelines to support her in her work.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the childminder's house and they are developing a strong bond with her, which increases their sense of well-being. The childminder playfully interacts with the children, watching the way they use equipment and showing them new things to do. For example, on the day of inspection a child was playing with a wide variety of trains. The childminder supported and extended the child's play by drawing out a train track, which they then stuck to the childminder's carpet. As the child's play became more involved the childminder added a train station and people to her drawing so that the trains could collect people from the station. This extended the child's imagination and he then went on to use a footstool as a garage for the trains.

Children's language development is supported by the childminder who uses everyday play activities to talk with them and develop their vocabulary. For example, during the train activity, the childminder added 'buffers' and a 'turntable' to her drawings and explained to the child what these were. In addition when the child was asking the childminder the names of the trains she pointed out the names on some of the trains and sounded out the letters as she said them, which helps young children to understand that print carries meaning.

Children benefit from attending a variety of local toddler groups with the childminder, this provides them with plenty of opportunities to socialise with others. The childminder's sound knowledge of child development means that children's personal, social, emotional and intellectual needs are met, through the provision of suitable toys, equipment and activities. Some toys are set out everyday and are available for children to access independently, these are rotated on a regular basis to maintain children's interest.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's welfare is supported by the effective partnership that exists between parents and the childminder. Prior to children being cared for by the childminder, all aspects of their care is discussed and agreements are reflected in the contracts made with parents. The childminder makes time at the beginning and end of each day to discuss the child's day with the parents. This effective liaison helps to ensure a consistency in the children's care.

The childminder has some experience in caring for children with additional needs. The childminder openly talks to the children about their differences and similarities, providing the children with explanations which are appropriate to their age and understanding. This helps children to understand and respect each other's needs. Children learn about their local community through visits to local shops, play areas and toddler groups. Children access a suitable variety of resources, including books, dolls and playmobil figures, to help them gain an awareness of diversity.

The childminder is consistent when managing children's behaviour. This helps children, as they learn to understand what is expected of them. Children's confidence and self-esteem is promoted

by the childminder's use of praise and encouragement. For example, children's efforts in completing puzzles are praised and they are thanked for helping to tidy away toys.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children receive good levels of support to help them feel, welcome, comfortable and at ease in the childminder's home. As a result they are confident to initiate and direct their play. The childminder offers flexible care and organises her day around the children's routines for attending pre-schools, toddler groups and their individual sleeping and feeding routines. This ensures that their individual needs continue to be met.

The play space is organised appropriately, allowing children to play safely indoors and out. The childminder effectively maintains and uses most of the appropriate forms of record keeping promoting the welfare and care of the children. All records are stored confidentially, most of which are accessible for inspection. However, her documentation is not reviewed on a regular basis and as a result her first aid qualification has lapsed. This compromises children's health. The childminder clearly displays her certificate of registration to ensure that parents are fully aware of her conditions of registration, this supports the effectiveness of her partnership with them. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that suitable systems were in place to ensure that people who have regular contact with the children completed the required checks. The childminder now ensures that Ofsted are informed of any changes in people who regularly come in contact with the children so that they can undergo the required checks. This is promoting children's safety and welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the 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):

- complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children
- ensure that accurate records are kept of all accidents to children
- improve the organisation of documentation to ensure that all records relating to the care of children are available for inspection at all times.

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