



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	404219
Inspection date	15 August 2006
Inspector	Caroline Wright
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

the time of the inspection there were no children in receipt of nursery education. Ofsted judges that the provider remains suitable to provide nursery education.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

14 years in a village near March in Cambridgeshire. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, with a bedroom upstairs for children to sleep, and 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 seven children under five and one child over five years old on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and she attends the local parent and toddler group. The family has a dog and fish as pets.

The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network. She is registered to provide early education for three-and four-year-olds, although there are no children in receipt of funding currently on roll. She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and attends the local childminding group. The childminder holds a level three early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through regular daily routines. They know that they need to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating 'because they've got germs' and say that the childminder reminds them if they forget. Hand towels are changed regularly and the home is regularly cleaned by the childminder to minimise 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 appropriately cared for. However, the childminder does not obtain parents' written permission to seek medical treatment or advice; this compromises children's well-being in the event of an emergency.

Children learn to lead a healthy lifestyle through practical experiences and everyday routines. They go for walks to the park or run around outside in the garden each day to benefit from regular fresh air and exercise. They enjoy healthy meals and snacks of fresh fruit or raisins, which the childminder provides each day. Children have free access to water so that they remain healthy and can think effectively. In addition, children learn about the benefits of healthy eating through activities such as preparing sandwiches or making wraps with healthy fillings for their lunch. They know that 'vegetables are good for you' and that 'milk makes your teeth strong'.

The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of babies and children under three years old. She uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework to help her to provide suitable activities that help them to make progress. Their individual feeding and sleeping routines are followed, according to parents' instructions, to help them to feel secure and settled. All children develop new physical skills according to their stage of development using the wide range of suitable toys and resources the childminder provides. For example, they ride bikes, use climbing and balancing equipment outdoors; they use tools such as scissors, knives and forks and pastry cutters with competence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe environment where all risks are minimised and they move around safely and independently under the childminder's constant supervision. The childminder consistently helps children to learn to keep themselves safe by reminding them to sit properly on the chair when they are playing at the kitchen table. Children learn about staying safe outside the home, holding hands when they go out for walks with the childminder; they show

a good understanding of basic road safety and know that they must 'look and listen for cars' before they cross the road.

Older children know that they need to help to keep babies safe; they understand that they shouldn't play with toys that have 'tiny pieces' because 'the babies put them in their mouths'.

Children select activities and resources easily 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 well maintained by procedures and documents that promote their safety. For example, the childminder has a good understanding of child protection procedures, which are in line with those set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board; she records any child protection concerns and take appropriate action to promote children's interests.

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 development is encouraged in meaningful ways. For example, young children enjoy playing finger games with the childminder and she encourages them to repeat the rhyme with her support so that they can develop their language skills. She sensitively reinforces their attempts to repeat the names of familiar things, such as the 'door'; her enthusiastic response to their 'babbling' encourages them to experiment with their voices and become confident communicators.

Children of all ages pursue their own interests and make decisions. The attractive play room has a good range of toys and activities that are easily accessible so that the children can choose what they want to play with. Safe toys are placed on the shelving within the reach of babies to stimulate their interest and encourage them to explore further.

The childminder has a good understanding of how young children learn through practical experiences. She devises written plans, using the 'Birth to three matters' framework: this enables her to provide a balanced range of activities that help children under three years old to make good progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning would be satisfactory. Although there were no children in receipt of funding for early education on roll at the time of the inspection, evidence suggests that children have the opportunity to make steady progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder has a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and she has devised suitable planning systems to promote children's learning. The availability of a wide range of good quality resources allows children to develop their physical skills; for example when using pencils, pastry cutters and rollers and scissors.

Children have opportunities to use numbers and to draw and paint pictures so that they begin to find out about mathematics and develop early writing skills. For example, they help the childminder to make salt dough, using the scales to identify numbers and measure the

ingredients; they write their own 'stories' and make shopping lists in the role play area. The childminder explains that children have opportunities to explore a variety of media such as sand, water and glue. She says that they discuss how things feel to the touch, talking about 'scratchy salt' or 'sticky' snow putty, as they learn about their senses.

Curriculum plans and examples of children's work show that children learn about their natural environment in topics such as 'mini beasts'. The childminder explains how she encourages children to express their creativity when they make salt-dough spiders and decorate them with sequins, paint and buttons.

Systems are in place to record children's progress towards the early learning goals. However, the childminder does not record parents' observations of what children do at home so that she can plan future activities that will build on everything children already know and can do. This limits learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children have equal opportunities to access a wide range of interesting activities and resources and are confident and independent. They have good self-esteem and they form good relationships with the childminder and each other. The individual routines for feeding babies are followed and they sleep when they need to, so that they are well settled and feel secure. Although there are no children with disabilities, learning difficulties or English as an additional language on roll, discussion with the childminder indicates that all children are valued. She said that she would work closely with parents to ensure they she is adequately informed and would attend any specialist training to help her provide appropriate care

Children behave well, share resources and show respect for each other's needs. The childminder uses good strategies to help children to understand what is expected of them and is consistent in her approach to challenging behaviour; she works well with parents to ensure that their wishes are respected. Children play with a good assortment of small world figures, dressing-up and role-play equipment that represent all members of society and learn about the world they live in. This ensures that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive funded early education is satisfactory. Evidence suggests that children benefit from regular discussions between the childminder and their parents or carers. The childminder maintains a daily diary, with observations of what children do each day, to enable parents to be informed about their children's progress. However, the childminder does not record parents' observations of what children do at home as part of their progress towards the early learning goals. This compromises parent's involvement in their child's development and impacts upon children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the childminding promotes positive outcomes for children. Children benefit from the childminder's sound knowledge and understanding of child development. The

organisation of the play space and resources contributes to children's independence and enables them to pursue their own interests. They choose for themselves from the attractive resources and well planned activities that are provided by the childminder each day. There is enough space for them to play indoors and out. In addition, toys and equipment for babies and children under three years old, supports their overall development and encourages them to become confident.

Most of the essential records are maintained and they are stored confidentially. However, the childminder does not organise training for first aid well enough to ensure that her certificate remains valid; she does not ensure that evidence of adults' suitability is available for inspection. This compromises children's health and welfare.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure parents' signed consent is obtained to transport children in a vehicle and to take them on outings. The childminder now makes sure that the appropriate section of the contract is signed by parents before she takes children on outings or in her own vehicle to make sure that they are cared for according to their parents' wishes and individual needs are met.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.

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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):

- request parents' written permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice
- attend appropriate training to obtain a current first aid qualification
- maintain evidence that all persons in the household who are over 16 years old are cleared as 'suitable' and make sure that it is available for inspection at any time.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop the system for assessing children's progress towards the early learning goals to include parents' observations of what their children achieve at home; use the improved assessment records to improve parents' involvement in their child's development and to plan future activities that build on everything that children already know and can do.

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