



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222533
Inspection date	22 November 2006
Inspector	Carol Mansell
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 1997. She lives with her husband and three children aged 16, 14 and 12 years in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. 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 six children at any one time and is currently minding two children under five all day, one child over five before and after school, one child over five after school and two children over eight after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler group. The family has three dogs and one rabbit.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to understand simple hygiene procedures. They are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Young children request wet wipes, whilst older children have access to individual face cloths and paper towels. This helps to protect children from the spread of infection. Children are safeguarded as the childminder has updated her first aid training recently. She ensures children are well taken care of if they have an accident and maintains her accident record appropriately. She makes sure parents are informed if the children have had any accidents whilst attending school or playgroup. This ensures children receive appropriate care. Children benefit, as the parents adhere to the childminder's policy and procedures regarding illness. They collect their children early if notified that they are unwell and generally inform the childminder if their children are unwell at home. This ensures children are protected from infection. However, the childminder does not have prior written consent from parents to administer medication. This potentially compromises the children's welfare.

Children are nourished as the childminder offers a well-balanced diet. She is aware of children's dietary needs and works with the parents. Children have finger foods for their snacks such as, fresh fruit, carrot sticks and 'quavers'. The childminder offers crisps and biscuits in moderation which helps the children to understand about healthy eating. The childminder recognises favourite meals and uses this information to encourage children to eat their meals. Children love to eat spaghetti bolognese, toad in the hole and bangers and mash. They are encouraged to drink regularly throughout the day to prevent them from becoming dehydrated. Children have their dietary needs met as the childminder obtains relevant information and works in line with parents wishes.

Children participate in a wide range of physical activities both indoors and outside. They go for walks daily and visit different facilities depending on the time of year and the weather. The children enjoy exploring the maze, the park and visiting the trim trail where they can walk over chain bridges and climb on and over logs. This helps to increase their confidence and self-esteem. Children visit indoor adventure play areas where they explore the ball pool as well as using the slides and climbing ropes. This aids their gross motor skills. Children enjoy playing with the tea set, pouring drinks carefully. They experiment with their drawing skills and participate in a variety of art and craft activities. This helps to develop their fine motor skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and homely environment. They have space available to allow them to participate in energetic activities and quiet, restful ones. This allows children to rest or sleep according to their needs. Children have access to a range of toys, resources and equipment which are safe and suitable. The toys are accessible to the children, enabling them to make independent choices. The childminder encourages the children to put the toys away before choosing something else to play with. She checks the toys for damage weekly and

ensures they are wiped over at the end of each week. The children help the childminder with this task. This helps them to learn to keep themselves safe.

Children are kept safe on outings, they understand simple road safety procedures and follow these happily. Children recognise the need to stay close to the childminder and away from the road when walking back to the childminder's house after school. They listen intently for cars and look carefully before crossing the road. This helps to keep the children safe and helps them to understand responsible behaviours. Children benefit, as the childminder practises her emergency evacuation procedures regularly. She cleans and checks her smoke alarms, ensuring they are maintained in good working order. This ensures the children are protected from harm. However, not all electric sockets in areas accessible to the children are fitted with socket covers. This potentially compromises children's welfare.

Children are protected as the childminder understands her role in child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. She has relevant phone numbers accessible and informs parents about her duty of care to the children. This ensures children are protected from harm or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy participating in a variety of planned and spontaneous indoor and outdoor activities. They make independent choices and are well supported by the childminder. Children visit local groups with the childminder and enjoy walking around the local area and using different facilities such as the park and maze. They meet and interact with people from the local community which helps to increase their social skills. Children benefit, as the childminder listens to what they have to say. She talks with them and reinforces words for young children by repeating their sentences back to them. This helps to enhance their language development. Children are well cared for as the childminder works in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She plans a few activities, preferring to be led by the children's interests and desires. This enables the children to use their initiative and build on their existing knowledge.

Children enjoy playing with the tea set and dolls. They are well supported by other children who extend their play by providing water in the tea pot to encourage children's hand and eye co-ordination. This also helps children to develop their imaginative skills. Children are interested in what they do and enjoy counting in everyday activities. For example they count the number of dolls they are playing with. This helps to build their confidence and enhance their mathematical thinking. Children receive cuddles if they are upset. The childminder is aware of children's additional needs and gives them time to talk through any difficulties they may be experiencing. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement which helps to build their confidence and self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by the childminder who works with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are included fully in the life of the setting. The childminder provides resources which offer children positive images of difference and diversity, these are being extended to help children gain an awareness of their own culture and the wider society.

Children benefit, as the childminder has a calm, consistent approach to behaviour management. She encourages the children to share and take turns and is aware that some children find this difficult. The childminder is aware of issues arising between siblings and discusses the issues with the children at an appropriate level for their understanding. This helps them to distinguish between right and wrong and enhances their understanding of responsible behaviours.

Children are safeguarded as the childminder fosters a professional working partnership with parents. They exchange information regularly to ensure children receive appropriate care. Previous parents record positive comments in cards and letters, stating that they have appreciated the childminder's 'flexibility, reliability and love for the children'. This helps children to feel a sense of belonging. The childminder keeps parents informed of their children's day and shares her policies and procedures with them. She makes sure they understand the safe collection procedures which ensures children receive continuity of care and are protected from harm.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and contented in the setting. They are cared for by the childminder who knows them well and understands child development. She has a high regard for the well-being of all children and arranges her day to allow her to offer individual attention for the younger children. This enables her to positively support their care, learning and play. Children benefit, as the childminder shares her policies and procedures with parents, ensuring consistency of care. This helps children to feel safe, secure and equally valued.

Children are protected as the childminder ensures adults they see regularly have completed suitable vetting procedures. She has appropriate arrangements in place when children are collected by other adults. This ensures children stay safe. Children benefit, as the childminder organises her time, space and resources to promote their health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to make sure that low-level glass panels are safe or inaccessible to children. The childminder has checked with the manufacturers and has been assured that the glass panels are made from safety glass. As a further precaution the childminder has made the piece of furniture inaccessible to the children. This ensures they are protected from accidental injury.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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 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):

- obtain written prior consent from parents to administer medication
- ensure potential hazards are made safe or inaccessible to children, this refers to electric sockets.

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