



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222614
Inspection date	26 October 2006
Inspector	Emma Bright
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 1996. She lives with her husband and two children aged 12 and 18 in Cambridge. All areas of the childminder's house are 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 seven children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group. The family has a dog, a cat and a hamster.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit significantly from the childminder's excellent knowledge and understanding of childhood nutrition. Parents provide their child's packed lunch, in accordance with the childminder's healthy eating policy, and this is stored in the fridge so that food remains fresh. Children enjoy a wide range of healthy snacks prepared by the childminder, which includes fresh fruit or vegetables every day and they are encouraged to try new tastes, such as fresh peppers with a dip. Any additional food is always agreed with parents so that they are clear about the food their child eats. As a result children benefit from a well balanced diet to promote their growth and development and their dietary needs are extremely well met. Children learn about food that is good for them through a range of meaningful activities, such as shopping for fruit and regular cooking activities. In addition, they discuss and complete a daily sticker chart to show how many portions of fruit and vegetables they have had, which helps children to understand about a healthy diet. Children readily help themselves to regular drinks, including fresh drinking water which helps them recognise and respond to their body's needs. This ensures that they remain well-hydrated and their ongoing good health is promoted.

Children thrive because the childminder has a highly effective approach to health and hygiene; she has very high standards of cleanliness and hygiene to ensure that the risk of cross-infection is minimised at all times. Children learn about the importance of staying healthy through the childminder's clear support and guidance, for example she helps young children to wash their hands after using the toilet and explains to them about why it is important to make their hands clean. In addition, she acts as an excellent role model, washing her own hands after helping children attend to their personal needs. 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 and procedures 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. This means she can contact the emergency services and parents, and ensure the appropriate care is given to the children if needed.

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 use small hammers and nails to carefully create a picture made of shapes. 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. In addition, children learn about the effect that activity has on their bodies in meaningful, practical activities. For example, they use a stethoscope to listen to their heartbeat, and after jogging on the spot they listen again to hear how fast it is beating. The childminder develops good routines so that all children can sleep or rest when they need to, and this ensures that they are happy and content.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's overall welfare is efficiently maintained by the use of rigorous procedures and clear documentation 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 are safe for them to use. The childminder has an excellent understanding of child protection issues, which are in line with those set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. She attends regular training to enhance her practice and ensure her knowledge is kept up-to-date, which means that children are protected and kept safe from harm.

The childminder preserves children's well-being by continuously monitoring safety issues. All risks are identified and minimised, which means children move around freely under the childminder's constant supervision. The childminder skilfully reminds children to be careful so that they do not hurt themselves and they learn to take responsibility for avoiding accidental injury. In addition, the childminder ensures that activities offer challenge and this allows children to take acceptable risks in a safe environment. Children's safety in case of fire is given high priority. For example, the childminder thoroughly checks smoke alarms on a regular basis to ensure they are in good working order, and children regularly practise the emergency escape plan so that they all know what to do in an emergency and are familiar with the routine.

Children play in a welcoming and homely environment, where their artwork is consistently valued and attractively displayed for others to see and enjoy. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem, whilst contributing to their strong sense of belonging. Children confidently select superior activities and resources, which have been carefully chosen to effectively support their play. All resources and equipment are rigorously checked by the childminder to ensure they are in exemplary condition and absolutely safe for children to use.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit significantly from the childminder's exceptional knowledge and understanding of child development. The childminder clearly understands how children learn through meaningful and practical experiences. She finds out what children enjoy and what they can do, and uses this information to inform her planning. For example, children help to buy train or bus tickets for their planned trips to the zoo or indoor play area, and they go to the shops to buy ingredients for cooking activities. They enjoy baking and icing biscuits and make jelly, which they explain is in the fridge to make it 'wobbly'. Children develop their social skills and make friends with others through attendance at local groups and explore their local environment on visits to the shops or library.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and form warm and affectionate relationships with her, which significantly contributes to their sense of belonging. They receive lots of praise and encouragement from the childminder, who acknowledges their achievements and takes photographs of their work, promoting their self-esteem. Children benefit from the superb range of interesting activities and resources on offer, which ensures they make very good progress in their learning and development. For example, children learn about nature by

observing caterpillars, watching them grow and change into butterflies; to reinforce this knowledge they find further information in books about nature.

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 growing language skills because the childminder involves them in lots of conversation, giving children excellent opportunities to demonstrate what they know. For example, they look at books and photographs together and discuss what they can see and talk about how differences and similarities. The childminder comments that in the picture the child is wearing her hair in two bunches and asks what she has got in her hair today. The child carefully thinks and responds "Not bunches".

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from highly effective relationships between the childminder and their parents, which significantly contributes to their care and well-being, ensuring their changing needs continue to be met. Parents know about the childminder's practice as excellent written and verbal information is shared with them. Written feedback from parents demonstrates their high regard for the childminder's practice in caring for their children. Children benefit from excellent settling-in procedures and this helps children to move confidently between home and the childminder setting.

Children's behaviour is excellent and they clearly understand what is expected of them. They learn through purposeful routines and sensitive expectations. For example, they explain that they take their shoes off indoors and there is "No jumping on the furniture because you might fall off". 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. In addition, children's personalities are recognised and affirmed as they discuss what name they like to be called so that they feel valued and secure.

Children's individual needs are clearly understood by the childminder, who gathers excellent information from parents to ensure these needs are very well met. Children have equal opportunities to access a superb range of interesting activities and resources that present positive images of all members of society. They celebrate a wide range of cultural and religious festivals, which help them understand about other lifestyles through worthwhile first-hand experiences. Children look at photographs of themselves and their friends, and enjoy discussing the pictures with the childminder. Although there are no children currently on roll that have learning difficulties or disabilities, the childminder is very open to caring for children with specific needs. She has lots of experience in this area to enable her to offer the appropriate care to meet their needs.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by the exemplary organisation. The childminder is highly effective in promoting positive outcomes for children and this enables them to develop their growing skills in a relaxed and caring environment. Children's well-being is actively promoted by the childminder's excellent knowledge and understanding of the National Standards. 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.

The childminder has an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development and is very well qualified. She demonstrates this through comprehensive policies, which are clearly reflected in her practice. This means children are safe and extremely well cared for. In addition, the childminder is fully committed to ongoing training and attends a superb range of early years' training courses, which enable her to continue to provide a highly successful range of activities and outstanding care for the children she looks after.

Children benefit from well-established routines and effective support, which means they feel a sense of belonging and are secure. 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 easy to access in an emergency. All records are shared with parents so they know what to expect and can be confident their children receive appropriate care. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical treatment and for transporting children in a vehicle. Both of the required consents are in place and as a result parents are clear about their child's care and routines, and children's safety and welfare is promoted.

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 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