



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222629
Inspection date	18 December 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 1995. She lives with her husband and two children aged six and nine, in a village close to Newmarket. 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 four children at any one time and is currently minding two children under five part-time. The childminder attends local parent and toddler groups with minded children. The family has two guinea pigs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy good opportunities to experience physical activity and development their skills. For example, children regularly play outdoors, using bikes, ride on toys, slides and a badminton set. To provide challenge and develop children's confidence the childminder also allows the children to climb low-level trees, in her garden, under close supervision. Good sleep routines are in place for each child, which are based on their needs and parents' wishes. This ensures that young children are well rested.

Children spend their day in a clean environment as the childminder uses good hygiene routines throughout her home. For example, she ensures that the toilet facilities are suitable by providing clean hand towels and anti-bacterial soap for the children to use. This helps to prevent the spread of cross-infection. Daily routines are in place to help the children learn about good hygiene practices and personal care routines. For example, children wash hands before eating and after using the toilet. Through regular discussions with the childminder, children learn about how germs are spread, and they understand that they wash their hands to prevent them and others becoming 'poorly'. Children receive generally suitable treatment when they have an accident in the childminder's home. The childminder has a fully stocked first aid kit readily available and she records all accidents, sharing the written record with the parents. However, the childminder has failed to maintain a valid first aid qualification. As a result children's well-being is being compromised.

The children enjoy healthy, nutritious meals and snacks, which are well planned to take into consideration their individual dietary requirements. The childminder provides freshly prepared meals made from fresh ingredients. Meals include salmon and new potatoes, curry and rice and spaghetti bolognese. The childminder encourages the children to develop their awareness of healthy eating through everyday activities. For example, when looking at a picture book with children the childminder talked to them about why spinach was good for their bodies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety and welfare is protected as the childminder has a very good understanding of her role in child protection and is aware of the appropriate procedures to put into practice when necessary. For example, the childminder understands the different types of abuse and keeps written records of existing injuries and incidents. The childminder ensures that parents are all familiar with her duty to report concerns.

Children spend their day in a warm, welcoming and friendly environment. Children mainly use the childminder's playroom, which is clean, bright, well-maintained and adequately ventilated. Children's pictures and creative work are on show in the room, which helps to develop their sense of belonging and feelings of security. Good quality toys and equipment, which are suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children attending, are readily accessible to them in low-level boxes or set up around the playroom. This allows the children to access them

independently and direct their own play. For example, on the day of the inspection, children readily helped themselves to toys, such as dolls, buggies, books and puzzles.

Children play in a safe environment as the childminder has identified and minimised potential hazards in her home, to reduce the risk of accidents. For example, stairgates have been fitted to prevent children accessing areas of the home which are not registered for childminding, and cleaning products are not accessible to the children. In addition, although the premises are kept secure at all times, there is an alarm on the exterior door of the playroom, which would alert the childminder to children leaving the premises unattended. This enhances their safety. Children use suitable car seats when they use the childminder's vehicle, and all required agreements from parents and insurance are in place. Children are unable to be collected from the childminder's home by anyone other than a parent unless the childminder has previous written confirmation of this by the child's parent. Younger children are learning to keep themselves safe, as the childminder reminds them to build with the wooden bricks and not throw them as they will hurt if they hit someone.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children spend their time in the childminder's care engaged in purposeful activity. This is because the childminder has a good understanding of each child's needs and their stages of development. For example, with young children the childminder skilfully helps to extend their language development as they play with the resources. For example, she encourages the children to name familiar pictures in books, and she asks them open ended questions such as 'where is the cat? What does the cow do?' This promotes children's impulse to communicate. Children enjoy the varied opportunities that they have to take part in creative activities. Children enjoy activities, such as free painting, pebble painting, wizards magic scratch cards and making models for special occasions, such as Christmas. Children are currently making wooden aeroplanes which they will paint. To ensure that older children are stimulated and enjoy their time, the childminder provides them with interesting and unusual activities. For example, recently children have enjoyed using metal detectors in the childminder's garden to search for coins which she has hidden in mole hills.

Children have developed a warm relationship with the childminder and they display high levels of confidence in her home as they access resources independently. Children enjoy attending local parent and toddler groups and meeting up with other minded children. These trips give children the opportunity to play with other children of a similar age and stage of development, developing their social skills and making new friends.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder treats each child as an individual and she has a flexible approach to suit both children's and parent's needs. The childminder is respectful of parent's preferences for the care of their children. For example, the childminder meets children's individual dietary requirements, and in some circumstances she will collect children from their homes. This enhances her

partnership with parents. Children are supported well in the transition between home and the childminder's care. The childminder provides settling-in visits for all children, the length and duration of these visits is flexible, so that they become confident and relaxed in her care before being left by their parents for the first time. The childminder regularly sends children's art work and creations home for parents to enjoy. Parents were made aware of this inspection and have provided the childminder with excellent written references, which demonstrate their high regard for the care and service which she provides. However, the childminder is not fully aware of the changes in regulation regarding keeping records of complaints.

The childminder is aware of the importance of providing an inclusive service for all children. She has experience of caring for children with additional needs and disabilities and she understands how she can work with parents and other professionals to ensure that all children's needs are met.

Children's self-esteem and confidence is promoted through the childminder's appropriate use of praise and encouragement. For example, children are praised for remembering to say thank you after being given a drink, and for their efforts in building towers with bricks. Children are learning right from wrong as the childminder talks to the children about why some behaviour is not appropriate.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has a professional approach to her work. Her documentation is clear and well-organised, which ensures that all of the children's details are available quickly in the event of an emergency. The childminder keeps Ofsted fully informed of any changes to her circumstances, which may affect her suitability. For example, she has informed Ofsted of her recent house move. This ensures that minded children are suitably cared for in a suitable, safe environment. However, the childminder has failed to maintain a current first aid qualification and is therefore in breach of her conditions of registration.

The childminder keeps an accurate register of children's attendance. These records show that adult and child ratios are maintained in line with the childminder's conditions of registration. As a result, children are able to receive appropriate care and attention from the childminder. The childminder's good organisation and flexible approach ensures that she is able to spend the majority of her time caring for and playing with the children. This contributes positively to their enjoyment and feelings of security in the childminder's care. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to improve children's safety in the event of a fire by ensuring that her fire blanket is easily accessible in the kitchen. The childminder has ensured that her fire blanket is wall mounted and therefore easy to access in an emergency. The childminder also agreed to ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. The childminder has developed her resources and is now able to provide opportunities for children to access a

wider range of activities, which are not gender specific. In addition, the childminder agreed to ensure that all contracts reflected that Ofsted were the regulatory body. These records have been updated which improves the effectiveness of her partnership with parents.

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 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):

- develop knowledge and understanding of the changes in regulations on 3 October 2005, with regard to keeping a complaints log and ensuring that it is available on request
- complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children.

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