



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222865
Inspection date	31 October 2006
Inspector	Veronica Sharpe
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 lives with her husband and two children aged six and nine years in Longstanton, near Cambridge. She is registered to care for no more than five children aged under eight years. There are currently six children on roll, most of who attend part time.

Minded children use the ground floor of the home. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The family has two dogs, a cat and a guinea pig.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminder's Association

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about good hygiene through daily routines, such as washing their hands after using the toilet to prevent cross infection. Pets have their own area of the garden so they do not pose a health risk to children. Accidents are recorded appropriately and are shared with parents, which promotes children's welfare. The childminder maintains her knowledge of first aid and emergency care by regular attendance of suitable first aid courses. Children who receive medication are well cared for because the childminder follows parents wishes and records the times and dosage given.

Children enjoy a good range of activities that promote their physical development. They benefit from country walks with the family dogs or visit a recreation ground, where they play on challenging equipment. A trampoline in the garden provides a fun way to exercise vigorously, closely supervised by the childminder so they keep safe. Active games, such as disco dancing indoors ensure children stay active in inclement weather. Routines include regular times for children to sleep or play quietly, which ensures they are well rested.

Children sit together at meal times so they develop good eating habits and enjoy social contact with their peers and the childminder. Food is fresh and healthy, such as salads, apples or carrots so children are well nourished. Children learn about healthy eating through food related activities, such as cooking pizzas. Information is collected about any special dietary needs so the children eat safely.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from an extensive range of resources, most of which are organised so they are accessible to the children. This ensures they play independently and are free to develop their own interests. Toys and equipment are good quality and checked for safety. Children are protected from harm by sensible safety precautions, such as a sturdy cover on the pond and a safety gate on the stairs. However, the cloakroom used by the children has an unsuitable lock, which potentially presents a hazard to children's safety. Good levels of supervision protect children when they play on equipment such as the trampoline. Children practise the emergency evacuation plan so they confidently implement the procedures.

Parents give appropriate consents for outings, such as trips in the car and children travel safely in seats which have been checked to make sure they comply with new legislation. Children learn to keep themselves safe on outings as they practise crossing roads under the supervision of the childminder.

In order to safeguard children effectively the childminder has recently attended child protection training so she has a satisfactory understanding of the local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. The childminder is aware of her responsibility to protect children therefore they benefit from close supervision when out and about or in the company of unvetted adults.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are secure and confident in the childminder's care. They play happily with the activities provided and eagerly explore their environment. Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and form strong bonds with her and with each other. Consistent routines ensure children are secure and know what to expect. Good habits are established quickly and children show a well developed sense of responsibility as they enthusiastically help each other tidy away resources.

Children have excellent opportunities to socialise with their peers, for example, they enjoy a regular music group in the childminders home or visit other children in the village. Planned activities, such as a 'sports day' or picnics in the summer ensure they build exceptional relationships in their own community. The lively household ensures children develop their ability to interact and communicate with children of diverse ages and interests.

Outings, such as country walks help children extend their knowledge of the world around them they find leaves in autumn or look for wildlife. Creative activities, such as collage with leaves and other items they collect, helps them to consolidate their learning and have fun. So that parents learn about their children's activities the childminder collects children's artwork in a folder, which is presented to parents as a very pleasing record of their children's time in the setting.

Children happily talk about their interests and demonstrate their confidence, for example, as they search excitedly through the dressing up clothes looking for their favourite costumes. They twirl round with pleasure in their costumes, enjoying the praise and admiration of the childminder.

Younger children benefit from secure and close relationships with the childminder and they are warm and affectionate together. Children sit comfortably in the childminder's lap as she reads to them or helps them with their activities. The childminder's knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework helps her to plan and provide a very good range of activities suitable for the age and stage of development of the children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children demonstrate very good relationships with the childminder and each other. They enjoy each other's company and are secure and content. Resources are organised very effectively so children have independent choices and can therefore meet their own needs. Information about children's likes and dislikes is collected by the childminder when children first start, which enables her to provide an exceptionally good range of appropriate activities which children enjoy. Children benefit from a very good range of activities that help them learn about other cultures and lifestyles, they have maps of the world, compare countries and look at different customs or clothes. Everyday access to resources, such as small world toys, crafts and books gives them many positive images of diversity.

Children's interest in the activities means they are motivated and purposefully occupied during their time with the childminder. Prompt and appropriate praise for the children means they show high levels of self esteem and behave exceptionally well. Consistent boundaries ensure children are secure and know what to expect. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities should have good support as the childminder has previous experience caring for children who have additional needs.

Parents put their trust in the childminder as, for example, they rely on her to support their children's transition into school or sometimes care for them when they are ill. Settling in periods are flexible to ensure younger children are secure and comfortable before they are left. Parents or carers have time to visit to meet with the other children on roll and the childminder's own family. Time scales are decided to ensure the children's needs are met, as a result they are secure and content. Daily verbal feedback is shared and parents are clearly confident and comfortable as they collect or hand over their children. Children's care is considerably enhanced by parent questionnaires, which the childminder uses to evaluate her own provision in order to improve the care she provides.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's attention to detail, which means she organises the resources and routines very successfully to ensure children are well cared for. Flexible planning reflects children's interests and the childminder talks to them about their interests, which ensures they know she values their opinions. The childminder attends training to enable her to continue to offer good quality care to the children. Courses, such as story telling, positive behaviour and child protection all contribute to her sound knowledge of child development.

Documentation, including daily registers are kept accurately and up to date, although the registration certificate is not currently displayed so that it informs and reassures parents. Confidentiality is given due consideration as personal information is safely stored in children's individual folders. Important information, such as emergency contact details, is easily available, which promotes children's health, safety and welfare. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain parental consent to transport children in a vehicle and to request permission to seek emergency medical care or advice. Parents' consent for their children to be transported is obtained on placement. Copies of the consents are kept in children's individual folders for easy access. Written permission for the childminder to seek emergency care or advice has been obtained although the wording is not sufficiently clear to enable parents to understand about the reasons for needing the consent. The childminder has agreed to improve the wording so it fully complies with current guidance. Suitable documentation is in place to ensure the childminder is able to offer children appropriate care with their parents knowledge and consent, which promotes their welfare.

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):

- display the registration certificate
- ensure the lock on the cloakroom door is inaccessible to 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