



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222872
Inspection date	17 November 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 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 1999. She lives with her husband their adult daughter, in a village close to Royston. 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 one children under five all day, and one child over five before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local childminding group with minded children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean environment, where their good health is fostered through effective hygiene routines. For example, to reduce the risk of cross-infection, the childminder provides each child with their own towel and flannel, which are for their exclusive use. These are easily accessible for the children in the downstairs bathroom, encouraging them to be independent in their self-care routines. Through discussions with the childminder children are learning why it is important that they wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. In addition, the childminder follows her written policy for 'sick children', which ensures that parents are informed of exclusion periods for children who have contagious illnesses. The childminder is experienced and confident in administering emergency first aid for children. She has gained consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and has attended a paediatric first aid course. However, from this course she only gained a certificate of attendance and not a full first aid qualification. The childminder is booked on a twelve hour first aid course, to develop her knowledge and skills soon, to ensure that any treatment she gives children follows current guidelines.

Children develop a positive attitude to, and benefit from, daily exercise as it is a regular feature of their routine. Each day the children have opportunities to go for walks, play outside in the childminder's garden or visit the nearby play area. These experiences help children to develop their physical skills, as they have opportunities to climb, crawl through play tunnels and use ride on toys.

Parents provide the majority of meals and snacks for their children. The childminder ensures that all foods are appropriately stored and heated through thoroughly. Snacks are offered to the children at regular intervals throughout the day to ensure that they eat sufficient quantities of food. Drinks are available to the children at all times, allowing them to drink in accordance to their bodies needs. This contributes positively to the children's healthy diet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe in a warm, clean environment because the childminder has put into place effective measures to minimise potential hazards. For example, knives are stored in high-level cupboard and a safety catch prevents children accessing cleaning materials. In addition, the childminder effectively uses stair gates to prevent children accessing other areas of the home, such as the laundry, which are not used for childminding. Children are learning to keep themselves safe through discussions and practical activities with the childminder. For example, through conversations and walks with the childminder, children understand what different coloured traffic lights mean. This helps children to develop their awareness of when they can cross the road safely. Children's safety in the event of a fire is enhanced as the childminder has devised an emergency evacuation procedure, which she has discussed and practised with the children. As a result, children are aware of all of the possible exits in the home, therefore enhancing their safety.

The childminder creates a welcoming environment for the children by arranging resources in groups around the sitting room. For example, she creates areas where children can look at books, eat their snacks, play with small world toys such as, dolls houses or play board and card games. This allows the children to move freely from one activity to another and enjoy a range of experiences of their choice. Children use a wide range of play resources, which are clean, well maintained and suitable for their age and stage of development. To extend the range of resources available, to the children, the childminder regularly borrows additional toys from a local toy library.

Children are well protected because the childminder has a good awareness of child protection issues. She has a sound understanding of signs which may indicate abuse, and is aware of the procedures to be followed if she is concerned about a child's welfare. Parents are made aware of the childminder's duty to report concerns through her written 'child protection' policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children take part in a broad range of activities and play opportunities, which ensure that they have fun as they learn, and develop new skills. For example, the children recently went on a nature walk with the childminder to collect twigs and conkers. These were then used to create collages, this activity helped the children to develop their creative skills and learn about the world around them. The childminder plans activities well to ensure that children's interest is maintained. For example, each month the activities are based around a theme such as, celebrations. Children enjoy and benefit from opportunities to socialise and meet with other minded children. For example, they have recently attended a local indoor play area with other minded children.

Children have formed good relationships with the childminder and her family, helping them to feel settled and secure in her home. In a written reference from a child, they said that they like going to the childminder's house as they have 'lots of toys and room to play, and that they have fun with their friends'. Children are happy and confident as the childminder spends time with them, joining in their play and offering lots of praise and support. Children evidently enjoy the childminder's company as they ask her to play games of snap or share stories with them. The childminder's support in children play enhances their learning. For example, when playing a game of leaf snap with young children, the childminder explains the rules of the game and helps them to match pictures and take turns.

Children have good opportunities to develop their creativity and imagination. They have regular opportunities to paint, use musical instruments and bake with the childminder, icing biscuits and making jelly. The childminder uses books well to promote children's language and communication skills. Children's enjoy looking at their favourite books such as, the teddy bears picnic with the childminder, talking about the pictures and joining in with the familiar story. Children enjoy opportunities to use musical instruments and sing familiar songs such as, 'Goosy, Goosy Gander' with the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well. Through discussions with their parents the childminder gathers information regarding each child's individual needs and cares for them accordingly. For example, settling in visits are tailored to children's needs, so that they feel emotionally secure and safe before being separated from their parents. The childminder has a positive attitude to inclusion and takes steps to ensure that, children's home languages or cultures are respected. For example, when previously caring for children who spoke English as an additional language the childminder learnt familiar words in that language to enable her to help the children feel a sense of belonging. Children use resources which show positive images of diversity. For example, when playing with the doll's house they use figures which have, different skin tones and disabilities. This helps children to develop a positive awareness of the wider world.

Children benefit from the professional attitude that the childminder has when working in partnership with their parents. The childminder has developed a detailed parents' portfolio that includes information about the provision that she provides. This includes written policies on behaviour management, confidentiality, equal opportunities, and the procedures that she would follow if a child became lost or was uncollected from her care. The childminder shares information regularly with parents so that children's changing needs can continue to be identified and met. Recent written references from parents, speak highly of the feedback that they receive about their child and the activities that they have taken part in. Daily communication books are also used to communicate with some parents. All of the required consents are in place to ensure that children are cared for according to their parents' wishes.

Children behave well and benefit from the childminder's understanding of effective, age appropriate strategies for promoting positive behaviour. For example, children receive lots of praise and the childminder shows them that their art work is valued by displaying it in her kitchen. This promotes children's self-esteem. Consistent boundaries are in place so that all children know what is expected of them, for example, children know to sit at the table whilst eating and not to wear their shoes indoors. The rules of the setting are clearly displayed for the children to see in the kitchen.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care and learning are supported well as the childminder updates her knowledge by attending relevant childcare courses. For example, she has attended courses on, talking and playing with babies, story telling through songs and food hygiene. The childminder is due to extend her first aid qualification and attend a course on child protection soon. In addition, the childminder is in the process of completing a quality assurance scheme, which has helped her to evaluate and develop her practice.

Documentation is well organised so that it is easily accessible in an emergency, whilst still respecting the need for confidentiality. The childminder has a range of policies and procedures in place, which effectively support her work in promoting positive outcomes for children in all

areas. For example, she has organised a 'buddy system' with another registered childminder. This ensures that in the event of an emergency the children would be cared for by a suitable adult, who has completed all of the required checks. This enhances children's safety. In addition, the childminder has displayed some of her documentation such as, her registration certificate and planning on a notice board in her kitchen, so that it can be clearly seen by parents. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to improve children's safety, by taking measures to ensure that the garden pond did not pose a risk. The childminder has moved house since the last inspection and there is no longer has a pond in the garden. This has improved children's safety.

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):

- ensure that additional training in first aid is completed.

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