



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	259630
Inspection date	02 August 2005
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?

This childminder lives with her husband and 10-year-old son in a village near Cambridge. She has been a registered childminder since 2001 and is able to care for a maximum of 6 children aged under 8 years. At present she cares for 11 children on a part time basis, of these, 5 are aged under 8 years.

Minded children generally use the ground floor of the home and there is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. Local facilities such as a recreation ground, toddler group, pre-school and primary school are in walking distance.

The family have two cats.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm home where good standards of hygiene are maintained. Children learn about good hygiene practice and wash their hands appropriately, such as before eating or after using the toilet. So that children are protected in a medical emergency the childminder updates her first aid skills and keeps a well-stocked first aid kit. Appropriate documentation, such as parental consents are in place, enabling children to receive medical treatment promptly if necessary. To reduce the risk of cross-infection the childminder has recently implemented a written exclusion policy which ensures parents and carers understand the importance of keeping children at home if they are ill.

So that children develop their physical skills they exercise frequently, they play football in the park, attend local activity groups or go for walks in the wildlife area. Daily walks to and from school further improves their level of physical activity. Children have regular, planned times for rest or quiet activities, such as reading or playing board games together, which ensures they are well-rested.

Children increase their knowledge of healthy food through a balanced range of meals and snacks. Foods such as fresh fruit or yoghurt are offered so children learn to make healthy choices. Drinks are always available in the children's own cups or flasks, which develops their independence and enhances their sense of belonging. So that children's individual dietary needs are met their opinions and preferences are established and parents wishes are taken into account.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe environment where most risks have been identified and minimised. To keep children from harm, external doors are kept locked and sensible precautions are taken so that children are well-cared for, for example, hazards in the kitchen are stored out of reach or in locked cupboards. Children learn to keep themselves safe on outings; they know the boundaries of the safe play areas such as the recreation ground and cross roads safely in the company of the childminder.

Children have space to play and they move around the home with confidence. They enjoy playing with a wide range of suitable toys and equipment, which are organised so children can choose safely and independently. So they maintain their own safe play areas children learn to put away resources themselves before moving onto the next activity. Age appropriate tools and materials further enhance children's safety,

such as scissors that are suitable for the age and stage of development.

To protect children's welfare the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and the local procedures that help to keep children safe from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy and settled and enjoy their time with the childminder. They show excellent caring relationships with the childminder and each other, sharing toys and resources and helping each other. The childminder plans a wide range of exciting and fun activities both inside and outside the home and involves children in the planning so they are able to express their preferences and meet their own needs. Activities are decided jointly and all the children share in choosing additional resources that extend their current play ideas and scenarios, such as the supermarket items to go with play-food.

Children are confident and trusting and show high levels of self-esteem, they chat happily together and are eager to share their ideas with their childminder, so she becomes actively involved in their activities. Older children show caring attitudes and help younger ones with their games such as explaining the rules of "pairs". They enjoy outings and visits during the holidays, such as walks to the local wildlife area and trips on the bus to town or to the cinema.

The childminder has an extremely good understanding of children's individual stages of development and as a result they progress well. Activities are planned that introduce children to new ideas and skills, such as "dot-to-dot" pictures that interest all the children and develop younger children's early writing skills. Older children have quiet periods to complete homework and benefit from routines that give them time to relax and unwind after school. Children show pride in their achievements, for example when they show their completed drawings and pictures to the childminder. Her positive praise enhances children's self-esteem and encourages them to experiment and explore with confidence.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children participate in a wide range of enjoyable activities that meet their individual needs. Resources are varied and accessible so children make independent choices and develop their own skills and knowledge. The childminder knows the children well, which enables her to plan effectively to meet children's developing needs. Children happily express their opinions and independently self-select resources that increase their skills and understanding.

To increase children's knowledge of the diversity of our society they explore maps and look at photographs and postcards from other countries. Resources such as dressing up clothes and play-food reflect other cultures and countries and enable

children to appreciate differences and similarities. Visits to the library and the use of the "pack-on-the-back" widens the range of resources available to the children.

Children benefit from consistent routines and boundaries so they are confident and know what to expect. They have developed good relationships and share resources or play games together, showing warm affection for each other. Praise and encouragement for positive behaviour develops children's confidence and their sense of right and wrong, as a result their behaviour is very good.

Children are secure and well-looked after as warm and trusting relationships have been developed with parents. Information is shared on a daily basis and all necessary contracts and agreements are in place, which enables parents to be clear about expectations of care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the well-organised environment and daily routines. Children are relaxed and comfortable in the childminder's company, they initiate their own play opportunities within consistent routines and are secure and confident. Children receive good individual support from the childminder, who consults with them and listens to their opinions so they have a sense of belonging and feel valued.

To promote the health, safety and welfare of the children all necessary documentation is in place and up to date, for example, parental consents to travel or administer medication. Records are well-organised and are shared with parents and carers so they know what to expect and are confident that the standards of care are good and meet their expectations.

The childminder reflects on her practice and implements improvements, such as the introduction of the policies and procedures for parents. She researches new ideas to enhance her good practice, which ensures children enjoy good experiences whilst in her care. The provision meets the needs of the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to improve resources that help children learn about anti-discriminatory practice. Children learn about the world through photographs and postcards and play with resources such as play-food. Children from ethnic minority families who attend the setting are encouraged to share what they know about their backgrounds, which helps them to value their own origins and widen other children's knowledge and understanding of diversity.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- practise the emergency evacuation plan so that children are aware of appropriate actions to be taken in case of fire.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk