

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222646
Inspection date	31 July 2007
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 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 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged 11 and 13, in a village south of Cambridge. 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 eight children under five part-time, and 13 children over five before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group with minded children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is significantly enhanced through diligent routines which are followed by the childminder. Rigorous procedures are in place to protect children from the risk of cross-infection. For example, the childminder's use of disposable gloves for nappy changing, and her thorough sanitising of the changing area after each use, effectively prevents the spread of infection. In

addition, children have their own named containers, which contain their individual flannels for washing their faces and hands after snacks and meals.

Children are developing an excellent awareness of healthy living and how to look after their bodies. In the bathroom, the childminder displays photographs of the children following effective routines for washing their hands. These pictures are numbered so that the children learn the correct order to follow. Children know when they need to wash their hands and do so unprompted, using antibacterial hand soap, and paper towels for hand drying. The childminder's paper towel dispenser is placed at a low-level to encourage the children to be independent in their self-care skills. Children are encouraged to have regular drinks particularly in warm weather. The childminder talks to them about why they need to do this, enabling them to develop an awareness of how they can keep themselves healthy.

Children eat a healthy and varied range of meals and snacks which are provided by their parents. The childminder encourages the parents to provide healthy foods for their children, in order to maintain their good health. The childminder has a rigorous system in place for ensuring that all food is stored appropriately. Children have their own named containers in the childminder's fridge, which contain their snacks and meals. This procedure ensures that children eat the food which has been provided to meet their individual dietary requirements. Through activities and posters on display, children are learning the importance of healthy eating. For example, the children recently played a game with the childminder where they had to choose foods which they thought would go in a health lunch box and foods which they felt would be in a healthy lunch box.

Excellent provision is made for children to play outdoors in the garden or at local parks. During outdoor play children have opportunities to practise their physical skills as they crawl through tunnels, balance on low-level stilts, roll hoops and use climbing equipment. To make physical activity fun and to provide sufficient challenges for the children, the childminder regularly creates obstacle courses for the children in her garden.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's welfare is protected exceptionally well as the childminder has a very good understanding of child protection issues. She has attended training in this area and is confident about her responsibilities; knowing what to record and who to share any concerns with. Parents are fully informed of the childminder's responsibilities through her written child protection policy.

Children play in a very welcoming and child-centred home. In the playroom the childminder displays children's pictures, posters and photographs, which create a rich learning environment for the children. Children enjoy looking at their pictures and photos and they are keen to share them with visitors. The childminder's home is very well equipped with furniture and different play resources. All items are of good quality, and they are checked regularly to ensure that they remain safe for the children to use. Children are able to self-select toys and resources in the playroom, which promotes their independence and decision making skills.

Children learn about keeping themselves and others safe through excellent activities and discussions with the childminder. For example, children describe with clarity the procedures that they must follow in the event of a fire. They understand where the fire exits are and where they must go once they have left the childminder's house. Children also understand that they

must not collect their belongings or re-enter the premises until the childminder has told them that it is safe to do so.

Children's safety is given high priority. Risk assessments are carried out and clearly documented. These checks ensure that effective action is taken to minimise children's risk of accidental injury. For example, finger guards are in place on doors, and a stair gate ensures that children only have supervised access to the kitchen. Fire exits are clearly labelled and smoke detectors are tested on a regular basis to ensure that they are in good working order. This enhances children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and relish their time in the childminder's care. They express their satisfaction and their affection for the childminder readily through the letters and pictures that they make for her. Children's experiences are enriched and enhanced by the skilful interaction of the childminder who uses her knowledge and understanding of how children learn to adapt and extend activities to suit individual needs. For example, whilst building marble runs, the childminder asks older children to think and predict where the marble will exit from their detailed constructions. This encourages the children to talk in great detail about the different routes that the marble will take and how they can alter the route of the marble, so that it will exit the run earlier. Whilst playing with younger children at this activity the childminder helps them learn to connect the tubes together, whilst talking to them about the different shapes and colours. The childminder takes time to listen to children and value what they say. She uses open ended questions to challenge and extend children's learning. For example, when reading stories such as 'Handa's surprise' the childminder asks the children to name their favourite fruits and to name some more of the unusual animals in the story.

Activities are extremely well organised and offer children a rich and varied range of experiences. For example, they go on walks with the childminder looking out for different numbers on doors and cars; they plant bulbs in the garden and make models with junk materials. Role play is thoroughly enjoyed by the children. They have recently turned a large television box into a bus, and used a wide range of resources to add details such as exit signs, a steering wheel and speed dials. The childminder ensures that all of her resources are readily available to the children so that they can extend and develop their play. For example, on the day of the inspection the children turned the bus into a house by draping it in sheets and blankets and adding a pop-up tent and play tunnel to create bedrooms. Children demonstrate that they are very confident, as they chat happily to visitors about photographs of different activities in scrapbooks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being in the setting. Parents are fully informed of all aspects of the provision through a detailed information folder which is shared with them prior to their child attending. This folder includes an extensive range of written policies, procedures, previous inspection reports, references, training and insurance certificates. References, cards and letters from parents are extremely positive and demonstrate their high regard for the care that the childminder provides. The childminder has created an area in her hallway where she displays information such as the ofsted poster for

parents and her registration certificate. All required written consents and agreements with parents are in place.

Children are treated with equal concern and are highly valued. They develop an excellent sense of belonging as there are many photographs of each child on different displays around the playroom. For example, the childminder has created a display of photographs which shows the children standing outside their houses. Children talk excitedly about their trips to the other children's houses and they enjoy pointing out their pets, who are also in some of the photos. The display also includes photographs of familiar places in the village such as the church, the shop and the local school. These pictures provoke many conversations and help the children to learn about the local community. Children learn about diversity and other cultures as they celebrate festivals and national days such as Chinese New Year and St. Patrick's Day. Resources reflect diversity and positively represent the children who attend.

Children behave extremely well, learn to work harmoniously with others and to share because the childminder uses very positive and age appropriate methods to help them understand the rules. For example, the childminder has developed a list of house rules, which contain simple explanations about why these rules are in place. For example, children know that some of these rules are in place to promote their safety. Children play together cooperatively to complete tasks such as using blankets and sheets to cover up the play bus in readiness for the house they are building. As they play they negotiate with each other discussing who will have each bedroom and what they will sleep on.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care and enjoyment is greatly enhanced by the childminder's exceptional quality of organisation. The childminder organises her day superbly in order to provide a balance of rich activities both in and outside The childminder's home is organised extremely well to allow the children to make decisions and pursue their own interests in a very safe environment. Children particularly enjoy being able to move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas, depending on which areas best suit their play.

Children benefit from being cared for by an experienced and skilled childminder who continually strives to improve her current excellent practice by regularly attending training courses. For example, she has recently attended courses on meeting outcomes for children, paediatric first aid and equalities. In addition, the childminder is currently studying for a level three qualification in children's care, learning and development, and she is will soon be a accredited as a network childminder. The childminder also regularly meets with other childminders to share good practice. The childminder uses the knowledge that she gains to evaluate and improve the quality of the care that she offers.

A wealth of detailed documentation is in place. Policies, records and procedures are clear and comprehensive, underpinning the childminder's outstanding practice of promoting positive outcomes for all children. All documentation is completed correctly and regularly reviewed, to ensure that it reflects current legislation. For example, the childminder has updated her complaints procedure, and has a system in place to record any complaints which she may receive. In addition, to an attendance register the childminder maintains a record of all visitors to the premises. 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 obtaining written confirmation to show that low-level glass panels were safe. The childminder has obtained this confirmation and low-level glass no longer poses a risk to children.

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

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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