

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222463
Inspection date	27 September 2007
Inspector	Margaret Elizabeth Roberts

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 15 and 17 years in Ely, Cambridgeshire. All areas are 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 10 children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group, takes children to the local library and the local park. The childminder has a cat, a rabbit and a guinea pig. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted well because the premises and equipment are clean. The hygiene practices that the childminder implements such as providing children with paper towels to dry their hands and separate bed linen helps to prevent the spread of infection. Children are encouraged to learn about personal hygiene through the daily routines. They are reminded to wash their hands before eating, after playing outside and petting the animals. The family pets

do not pose a health risk to children because they are regularly wormed and vaccinated. Children's medical needs are satisfactorily met most of the time because the childminder is trained in first aid. However, although there is a first aid box available the contents are minimal and not all parents have given written permission for the seeking of any emergency medical advice or treatment. Therefore children's medical needs are compromised.

Children are normally served meals that are provided by their parents, with healthy snacks such as dried fruit being offered by the childminder. Children's dietary requirements are discussed with parents and recorded on their personal detail forms or displayed in the kitchen area. Fresh drinking water, squash or milk are available so that children do not go thirsty.

Children's large physical skills are promoted through outside play in the garden where they have access to a range of equipment. They have opportunity to run around at a nearby local area where they enjoy the freedom of running down the hillside. Their eye-hand coordination skills are encouraged through activities such as threading or using small tools when playing with the dough.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter an environment that is warm and welcoming. They have access to all of the premises which offer the necessary facilities. Babies are able to sleep undisturbed upstairs in a travel cot, where they are checked on regularly by the childminder to ensure their safety. The outside area is fully enclosed and the gate is chained and padlocked so that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. Children have access to a range of safe and well-maintained furniture, equipment and toys that help to meet their varying needs.

Children play safely because the childminder has taken reasonable steps to ensure that any hazards to children are minimised. For example, cleaning materials in the kitchen are kept in a high level cupboard and medicines are inaccessible to children. Electrical sockets are hidden behind furniture and there are no trailing flexes for children to trip over. Children's safety is further promoted because the childminder has fire fighting appliances in place. The home is fitted with smoke alarms on each level, a fire blanket and extinguisher are available. The childminder has devised an emergency escape plan but does not practise it. As a result children's safety with regard to procedures in the case of an emergency is at risk.

Children can be protected should abuse or neglect be suspected because the childminder has some awareness of safeguarding children. She has undertaken training and has the local guidelines, with emergency contact numbers detailed, to which she can refer to.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are content and settled in the childminder's care who works at their level, sitting on the floor with very young children, supporting them in their play. Children are able to make decisions about their play because the childminder provides a range of age appropriate activities. For example, babies have access to shape sorters and large building blocks. Older children are able to choose freely from toys and activities that are readily available in low storage boxes or shelving which help to promote their imagination and social skills. The childminder explains that some of the school age children thoroughly enjoy making a 'quilt' into a den where they play happily together for periods of time. Very young children enjoy their play and babies

communicate by making themselves understood through using different noises such as 'gurgling' and other baby language. The childminder encourages children's independence by reminding them that they are able to operate simple toys such as the musical toys.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are met through discussion with their parents. The childminder ensures that all children have access to a full range of activities which helps them to learn about equality. Children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcome to attend and their needs catered for through working closely with their parents. The childminder is pro-active in her care of children and if additional needs were recognised these would be discussed with parents so that appropriate action could be taken.

Children benefit from the clear and realistic boundaries that the childminder has established. Simple house rules such as which rooms they are allowed to go into and the reinforcement of these rules means that children know what is expected of them. Children's parents are made aware of the techniques that are used through the positive policy that the childminder has developed.

Children's well-being is promoted through the relationships that the childminder builds with their parents. Written agreements are in place and parents are provided with good quality information that ensures they are aware of what they can expect from the childminder. Good communication and permission obtained for a variety of activities from parents means that children are given appropriate care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's welfare is promoted because the childminder has the appropriate experience and uses the knowledge gained from attending further training. Children's needs are met through the generally effective organisation of resources and space. For example, toys are presented on the floor and furniture is moved to ensure that children are able to play in the maximum space available.

All relevant documentation is in place, and the childminder uses her computer to record children's attendance. However, this method of recording does not accurately reflect the times when minded children are on the premises and therefore children may not be easily accounted for. The childminder has produced a set of policies and procedures which helps her to carry out her work and has a satisfactory impact on the care children receive. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint; to ensure that all the necessary signed parental permissions are in place where appropriate, especially those relating to outings and seeking emergency treatment or advice if parents cannot be contacted; to improve knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and to improve knowledge and understanding of special needs.

The childminder has made satisfactory improvement. Children's safety has been improved because written permission has been sought from parents to allow the childminder to take children on outings and courses have been attended to update the childminder's knowledge of safeguarding children. Children's medical needs in an emergency can be met because parents have given permission for seeking advice from a general practitioner for their child. Children who may have special needs can now be cared for more appropriately because the childminder ensures that she is fully aware of any disabilities through working closely with the parents of the children she minds.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- request written parental permission from all parents for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment
- ensure that the contents of the first aid box contain items that are determined in the first aid training course
- practise the emergency escape plan
- further improve systems for recording children's attendance to ensure that an accurate record of the hours that children attend is maintained.

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