

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY275212
Inspection date 26 July 2007
Inspector Jean Goodrick

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 has been registered since February 2004. She lives with her family, which includes one child under eight years of age, on the outskirts of Cambridge. The childminder uses mainly the downstairs area of her home for childminding. There is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years of age at any one time. She is also registered to care for one child overnight. The childminder is currently caring for two children under five years. She walks to and from local schools. The family have a pet dog.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA). She attends local toddler and childminder groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Physical activity and plenty of fresh air are highly regarded. Children have outings in the local community and they regularly enjoy playing in the well equipped garden, the trampoline being a great favourite. Children develop new physical skills according to their stage of development using a wide range of suitable toys and equipment. There is plenty of space for children to crawl and pull themselves up on sturdy furniture while learning to walk. Children have excellent opportunities to develop their hand-eye co ordination and fine motor skills as they roll out the gingerbread men, use the mouse on the computer and make marks with chalk. They rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Children's emotional needs are very well met and they learn about their feelings as, for example, they read 'Bad mood bear' and 'Happy dog, sad dog'.

Children benefit from the childminder's excellent knowledge and understanding of childhood nutrition. They enjoy healthy snacks, help to chop up the fruit and choose fruit and vegetables at the local shop. Young children are regularly offered drinks so that they are well hydrated. Parents are shown examples of menus and they receive daily written information about their children's routine. Meal and snack are pleasant occasions where children learn social skills.

Children thrive because the childminder has a highly effective approach to health and hygiene. Thorough procedures and documents are in place to ensure that individual children's needs are very well met. The childminder has a current first aid certificate so that she is confident to take appropriate action for the welfare of the children. She provides a good example to young children and ensures that their hands are washed before meals and children use their own towels. The childminder reduces the risk of cross-infection by ensuring that her home is always clean and very well-maintained.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

All children have access to an excellent range of quality toys and resources, which are suitable for their ages and stages of development. Resources have been carefully chosen to support children's play and are regularly checked for hygiene and safety. Children make their own choices and are able to follow their own interests. The childminder extends her resources by making good use of the library and the 'pack on the back' scheme. Space is used creatively to provide a broad range of activities both indoors and outside.

Children are very well protected because the childminder has all the required procedures and documents in place to promote their safety and welfare. The childminder attends relevant training and has a very good understanding of Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Parents receive written information so that they are clear about her responsibilities.

The childminder identifies and minimises risks for children in the well-organised home, for example, the fire blanket is easily accessible and stair gates are used effectively between rooms. The trampoline has a safety net and children are well supervised outside. This means that children are able to move around the premises safely, freely and independently. Appropriate car seats are used on outings. The childminder also has a written emergency evacuation plan for night and day time which is practised and shown to parents. Children's safety on outings

is a priority as, for instance, the childminder always carries children's emergency contact details and children learn about road safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder and establish warm and affectionate relationships with her. The childminder has an exceptional understanding of child development and uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework as a reference tool, which enables her to offer flexible, high quality care which is suited to each child. Children, including babies and toddlers, enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities which contribute to their progress. They take pleasure in stories and books, messy play and imaginative games and they learn to take turns as they play board games with the childminder and other children. Children explore the natural world as they read 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and watch their own butterflies emerge. They obviously enjoy the presence of the childminder's children giving the baby a cuddle when she is upset.

Children benefit from a secure routine with regular outings to groups in the local community where their experiences are extended and they develop their social skills. Children also have fun outings in the school holidays such as going to Shepreth Wildlife Park and Planet Zoom sometimes with other childminders and their children.

Children's communication skills are extremely well supported through high quality interaction with the childminder as she encourages them to use new words and talks about what they are doing as, for instance, they decorate 'bug rocks' and as they set out the train set. The inspector is generously given a 'bug' creation to take home with her. Children have excellent opportunities to make links in their lives as they talk about their holidays showing the childminder their holiday photos on the computer. Children of all ages pursue their own interests and make decisions as they choose from an accessible range of toys and resources.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs and characters are well understood and respected by the childminder. All children are welcomed and included in the provision so that they have a strong sense of belonging. Excellent links are made between the children's families, the pre-school, and the childminder so that transitions are smooth and children feel secure. The childminder is developing a meaningful range of resources and activities to promote a positive view of the wider world, and to help children understand their similarities and differences. Families and children with English as an additional language receive respectful support as, for example, the childminder learns a few words of their first language. The childminder has attended relevant training and has experience of working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She works in close partnership with all those involved.

Children behave well. The childminder has a clear and consistent approach to behaviour management, which means that children know what is expected of them and they feel secure. For instance the childminder uses age appropriate strategies for children according to their level of understanding and gives thoughtful consideration to the reasons for any difficulties. Children develop independence in their self-care and learn to take responsibility as they help to tidy up between activities.

The excellent partnership with parents and carers contributes significantly to the children's care and well-being. The childminder gathers and shares extensive and clear information for parents, including a journal for each child, so that parents are well informed of their children's achievements and progress. Excellent use is made of photographs. Parents also contribute to the journal, for example, with information about their holiday. They report that the childminder is 'supportive, encouraging, creative and full of good humour' as well as 'very professional'. Therefore there is very good continuity of care for the children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from the childminder's exceptional knowledge and understanding of child development, and of her legal duties. She regularly attends training and is open to new learning to improve her practise for the benefit of the children. All required documentation is in place and reviewed which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being. The written policies and procedures are shared with parents, which means they clearly know about the provision and the care their child receives. Children are never left with anyone who has not been vetted.

Children's care is greatly enriched by the childminder's excellent organisation of time, space and resources. Space is used creatively to provide an excellent range of activities which promote all areas of children's development. Consistent routines and effective support ensure that children feel secure so that they can explore and investigate and enjoy their time with the childminder. Children really enjoy the activities provided and receive sensitive supervision so that they have time to follow their own interests and ideas as well as active engagement with the childminder.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was agreed that safety would be improved by making the bunk beds in an upstairs bedroom inaccessible to children. Children play in the downstairs area of the childminder's home. They use the toilet upstairs and sometime sleep in a cot in a different bedroom. Therefore the bunk beds are inaccessible 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

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 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