

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	258090
Inspection date	05 December 2007
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder lives with her husband and son aged five years in Little Paxton, near St Neots, Cambridgeshire. She has been registered as a childminder for six years. She is able to care for no more than five children aged under eight years at any one time. There is one child on roll at present who attends after school.

Minded children have use of the ground floor rooms, the bathroom and a bedroom, as well as the rear garden.

The family has a rabbit and some tropical fish.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing good personal hygiene routines as the childminder encourages them to wash their hands, which helps to protect them from cross-infection. Appropriate systems are in place to record any accidents and the childminder attends first aid training to update

her skills so children receive suitable treatment for minor injuries. Children enjoy fresh air and exercise as they walk home from school or visit the local parks. In good weather they use a traffic-free area in front of the childminder's home, where they join with other local children in active games.

Children enjoy snacks that are mainly provided by their parents. The childminder ensures children are well hydrated by ensuring suitable drinks are easily accessible. Any allergies are discussed with the parents and details included on the registration forms. This promotes children's health and safety.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop strategies to keep themselves safe as they help to tidy away toys to maintain their own play spaces. A fire safety plan has been developed so the childminder has a clear understanding about how to evacuate the children safely in an emergency. Smoke alarms are checked and working, which helps to keep children safe. Children play and move around in the home safely, but their safety is not fully ensured because the childminder does not always remember to keep the front door locked, which potentially puts children at risk.

Toys and equipment used by the children are safe and suitable for the age range attending. Activities that are hazardous, such as using the trampoline, are closely supervised with firm rules to keep children safe from harm. Children learn to keep themselves safe when out and about as they learn to cross roads with the guidance of the childminder.

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection, she attends training regularly to update her knowledge and keeps appropriate contact telephone numbers. This would enable her to refer any concerns about children's welfare to the necessary agencies.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and play happily in the setting. They benefit from warm and affectionate relationships with the childminder and show they are confident and at ease in the home. The childminder's family contributes to the relaxed and comfortable environment as they welcome minded children warmly and make them feel part of the family. Children confidently express their interests and ideas and make their own choices from easily accessible resources and activities.

The childminder joins in their games and helps them learn sharing and turn taking with fun games such as a three dimensional 'snakes and ladders'. Children chat easily together, they discuss visits to the seaside as they colour in pictures of ice-creams and remember a favourite 'singing programme' on the television. They say they enjoy their time with the childminder, such as going to the park to play football or sometimes watching television. They demonstrate their confidence as they sing songs they have learned for their school Christmas play and explain with actions and words the parts they are playing.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are sociable and show good behaviour; they are cheerful and polite and enjoy conversations with other adults. They play together cooperatively and enjoy helping each other put away or choose resources. Children have access to a reasonable range of books, toys and other activities that show diversity so they learn positive attitudes towards others. The childminder's positive praise and affection helps them feel good about themselves.

The childminder works in supportive partnership with parents and carers. They share daily feedback about children's well-being and use written contracts to agree childminding arrangements thereby promoting children's welfare. Verbal information about policies and procedures is shared with parents at initial meetings, however, the childminder is not clear about the regulations that require her to share procedures about complaints with parents and carers. This limits parents' ability to express any concerns they have about their children's welfare. The childminder is not currently caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but would collect necessary information from parents and carers in order to meet their needs.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Reasonable use is made of space in the home so children play or rest according to their individual needs. Resources are organised effectively so children make independent choices and follow their own interests. The childminder attends essential training, such as first aid so she is able to provide suitable care. She continues with professional development, such as attending child protection or basic food hygiene so she updates her knowledge and skills. Overall children's needs are met.

Essential documentation is completed and updated as necessary, details of allergies, medical needs or any special dietary needs are collected on placement to ensure children's needs are known and met. Daily records that help promote children's safety, such as the register, are completed as required and kept available. Most documents are shared appropriately with parents and carers, but the certificate of registration is kept in a childminding file, rather than on display. This means parents do not have easy access to the conditions of registration, which the childminder has to provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to continue with developing knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities and to develop the procedures regarding administration of medication and the recording of accidents.

Since then the childminder has improved her knowledge of equalities and she shows she meets children's individual needs. A reasonable range of resources, such as books, helps children learn about other cultures and lifestyles. Systems to record the administration of medication and accidents are in place. The childminder is aware that parental permission must be sought before medicine is given. This helps to promote children's health and 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 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):

- ensure the home is secure
- improve knowledge and understanding of the regulations concerning complaints and develop arrangements for sharing the procedure with parents
- display the registration certificate.

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