

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY271754
Inspection date	07 December 2007
Inspector	Anna Davies
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 2004. She lives with her husband and their eight year old son in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. The children have access to a playroom as the main play area and the lounge area as an area for rest or sleep. In addition, children have supervised access to the kitchen and the downstairs bathroom. The upstairs of the property is not used for childminding purposes. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five on a part time basis. The childminder also cares for children aged over eight years. The childminder walks to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. The family have a pet dog.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning the importance of good personal hygiene. For example, they wash their hands before eating and after stroking the pet dog, using liquid soap and younger children wash their hands after their nappy has been changed. Nappy changing procedures are effective in preventing the risk of cross-contamination as the childminder ensures that she cleans the changing mat and washes her own hands, between changes. Written information is shared with parents about children who are ill. This ensures the good health of all children in the childminder's care. The children receive appropriate care if they have an accident as the childminder holds a valid first aid qualification and uses an appropriately stocked first aid box. This ensures that she is able to respond effectively in the event of a minor accident. All relevant documentation is in place to support children who are ill or who have an accident.

Children have regular opportunities to enjoy physical exercise and fresh air on their daily walks to and from school and during frequent visits to the extensive town park situated close by. Here they have opportunities to climb, use rocking equipment, play in the paddling pool and sand pit and to run and play ball games in the open spaces. In the finer weather, children make use of the childminder's fully enclosed garden. If the weather is unfavourable, children get sports equipment such as bean bags out inside and younger children regularly visit toddler groups with the childminder all year round. These activities ensure that children enjoy physical exercise and develop these skills, whatever the weather.

Children benefit from the childminder's good knowledge of healthy eating. The childminder provides a broad, balanced and nutritious range of meals for all of the children. For example, tomato and herb pasta or soup and baby cheeses. Food is prepared using fresh, organic ingredients. Children are given healthy snacks of raisins, fresh fruit or exotic dried fruit. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure that the dietary wishes for their children are followed. All children have access to drinks of water throughout the day and the childminder is very mindful about ensuring that they drink plenty, especially when they have had colds. This ensures that children are well-hydrated. Children are learning about healthy eating for example through discussions about vitamins in fruit that will help fight off colds. Younger children have their physical and emotional needs met as they are held closely when having their milk feeds and sleep according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in welcoming premises where some of their work is displayed for their appreciation. There is a suitable range of facilities to meet the children's needs. Children play with a satisfactory range of age-appropriate toys that are clean and in a safe condition. The childminder regularly checks these to ensure that they continue to be safe for the children to use. She minimises the risks to younger children by storing older children's resources on higher shelves.

Children's safety is generally promoted as the childminder takes some positive steps to minimise hazards. For example, younger children are suitably restrained when sitting in highchairs and detergents and cleaning products are stored out of the reach of children. However, large kitchen knives are stored in an open canister on the work top. Although these are inaccessible to the

younger children, they are within reach of the older children which potentially compromises their safety. Children are protected in the event of a fire. For example, evacuation procedures have been practised with the children and smoke alarms are in place on both floors. Children are beginning to understand about keeping themselves safe as they play. For example, they are encouraged to help tidy away toys so that they do not fall over.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and has attended recent training in this area. She is aware of the procedures to follow in the event that she has a concern about a child in her care and has most of the relevant documentation to support her in this event.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle readily into the care of the childminder. They benefit from a good range of planned activities both inside the childminder's home and at local toddler groups which they regularly attend with her. For example, children enjoy investigating and exploring corn flour, play dough and paint. The childminder offers children appropriate support during these activities, encouraging them to count and repeating key words and responding to their 'babbling' which promotes their language development. Younger children are encouraged in their physical development, for example, by walking with a push along trolley. They enjoy visits into the local community such as to the library and to the embankment to feed the ducks. This enables children to begin to learn about the world around them and gives them a sense of community. However, the range and accessibility of age-appropriate toys and resources at the childminder's home for younger children, is more limited. This impacts on their ability to become absorbed in activities of their own choosing and does not suitably promote their independence or enable them to follow their own play ideas.

Older children benefit from a good range of resources to freely select from and planned activities. For example, art and craft activities such as painting, creating New Year calendars and designing models with 'fimo', are offered which ensures that they enjoy their time at the childminder's house.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident and secure in their relationship with the childminder. They are treated with equal concern as they are all included in the planned activities that she provides. For example, whilst exploring play dough, the childminder holds the youngest children close to her when they are wary of the texture, so that they can still participate but feel secure. The childminder knows the children well and takes account of their individual needs. She ensures that they always feel included. For example, younger children are encouraged to help feed others their bottle of milk. Children are developing an awareness of diversity and similarities and differences in people, as they take many trips out into the local community and play with a suitable range of resources that promote this appreciation and understanding.

Although the childminder has not cared for minded children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, she is experienced in this area and demonstrates a very positive attitude to working alongside parents and together with outside agencies, to meet the needs of all children in her care. The childminder has a good understanding of behaviour management. She is very calm with the children and manages behaviour such as a reluctance to have nappies changed, in a

positive way which promotes children's self-esteem and encourages good behaviour. She shares house rules with the children and has a good understanding of effective strategies for dealing with incidents of inappropriate behaviour. As a result, children play well together and understand what is expected of them.

The childminder works closely with parents to ensure that children's needs are met. For example, she takes time to talk to them when they arrive in the morning which ensures consistency of care for the children. Written feedback is given to parents of younger children with regards their day; what they have eaten, when they have slept and details of nappy changes. This ensures that parents are kept up to date about their children's daily and changing routines. Children benefit from flexible settling in arrangements which are organised in accordance with parents and children's needs which ensures a smooth transition. A detailed complaints policy is in place and the childminder has a good understanding of how to record such complaints.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Space is used effectively to allow children opportunities to participate in different activities such as messy play and art and craft activities at the kitchen table and floor activities in the play room. Some children are able to make choices in their play as they freely access a good range of toys and resources from the shelving. This is currently much more effective for the older children. The areas used by children are generally safe which ensures that children can mostly move around freely and in safety. The childminder is committed to developing her practice, knowledge and skills further. For example, she has attended child protection and food safety training courses and has completed a Quality Assurance framework.

The childminder organises her day around the children's individual needs such as school runs, trips out to local toddler groups, younger children's individual routines and planned activities. These routines provide consistency and security for the children. A suitable range of policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents so that they are aware of the service that the childminder provides. The childminder has all of the required records and consents in place which enables her to meet the children's needs. All documentation is stored appropriately and well maintained to safeguard children's welfare and care. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to request written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. This is now in place and contributes to children's safety in the event of an emergency. The provider was also asked to extend the range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. The childminder now has a suitable range of resources that reflect diversity such as multicultural play figures and books and the childminder encourages children to celebrate some multicultural festivals such as Eid. This promotes children's knowledge and understanding of differences and similarities in people.

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 that all potential risks to children's safety are minimised. This specifically relates to the storage of knives
- extend the range and accessibility of toys and resources used for free play by younger children so that they can become absorbed in activities of their own choosing.

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