

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222624
Inspection date	12 June 2008
Inspector	Clare Elizabeth Pook
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 1996. She lives with her husband in a Fenland town in Cambridgeshire. The whole of the bungalow is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five and three children over five on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children and attends the local toddler group.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are being cared for in a warm and clean environment where the childminder practises good hygiene routines, which helps to minimise the spread of infection. She encourages children

to do the same. The childminder explains why it is important to wash hands to the children. As a result, the children are learning about good personal hygiene skills.

Records are maintained to ensure children's individual medical and dietary needs are met. The childminder has now completed her first aid course and obtained permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment enabling her to provide appropriate care if they are ill or need emergency treatment. The childminder ensures that she has contact details with her when she is out to contact parents if necessary. This helps to ensure the childminder provides children with the good care and attention. Accident and medication records are in place, however, no entries have been made as yet.

Children have good opportunities to understand the benefits of having a healthy diet. They are well nourished and offered healthy snacks such as breadsticks and fresh fruit. The childminder takes account of children's preferences and parental wishes regarding meals. Drinks are readily available and accessed independently by children when they are thirsty.

Children are learning about the importance of keeping their body healthy and fit through daily walks and visits to the park. The childminder talks to the children about the effects of exercise on the body which further develops children's knowledge of how to live a healthy lifestyle.

Children under three years are cared for appropriately. They have space to move about, play and pull themselves up as well as being able to rest and sleep according to their individual needs. The childminder encourages the babies to crawl and, therefore, promoting their physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and generally safe indoor and outdoor environment. They have access to a suitable range of toys and equipment that meet safety standards and are appropriate for most ages and stages of development, however, toys and equipment for young children and babies are limited thus limiting their potential for development and stimulation.

The childminder is aware of possible hazards and reduces the risks to children. Socket covers and safety gates are used where appropriate. Fire alarms are checked regularly and a fire drill is practised with the children so they know how to escape in the event of a fire. Children are kept safe on outings because the childminder has effective procedures in place. For example, she talks to children about road safety and helps them to learn safe practices such as finding safe places to cross and learning the green cross code.

The childminder has suitable knowledge and understanding of child protection. She is aware of the signs of abuse and the importance of contacting professionals if she has concerns for a child. Parents are made aware of her duty to child protection in her policies and information she provides to them.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's home, this enables them to make progress in their development. The childminder plans a suitable range of activities to help children learn.

Children also benefit from a range of outdoor experiences such as going for a walk, visits to the park as well as playing in the garden. The childminder accesses several toddler groups where children experience messy play and interaction with other children.

The childminder interacts well with the children encouraging conversations. Children are occupied in their play and generally behave well. Children contently play with stickle bricks and the cars. The childminder keeps photographs of activities and visits she has done with the children to share with the parents. These include visits to the wind turbine farm and trips to the seaside, as well as playing games in the garden such as swing ball.

The childminder has a reasonable understanding of how children develop. She is aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and has attended training on the new Early Years Foundation Stage training.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy and benefit from warm relationships with the childminder. Children generally behave well. The childminder is calm and consistent in her approach and encourages children to share and take turns fairly. Children listen and respond well towards her. Children are polite and remember to say 'thank you' at meal times. The childminder's good use of praise and encouragement promotes children's confidence and self-esteem. Children are developing some awareness of other cultures through exploring books, however, the childminder's knowledge and understanding of how to introduce diversity to the children is limited.

Children are looked after according to their parents' wishes. Parents speak highly of her. Parents are kept informed of the childminder's practice through discussions with the childminder and through her portfolio which contains several policies. Written agreements are in place with parents including all necessary consents required by the National Standards. Daily conversations ensure that parents are kept well informed about their child's day. The childminder has begun to keep journals of what the children have been doing to keep as a keepsake for parents. This contributes positively to children's well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and relaxed in the childminder's care. The childminder has a suitable understanding of the National Standards for childminding and is showing a commitment to developing her practice. She has completed several training courses and has been working closely with her childminding development to improve her practice which enables her to enhance the provision for all of the children who attend.

The childminder organises her day appropriately to provide children with a balance of activities and experiences both indoors and outdoors as well as attending local groups and going on visits. All documentation and written consents set out in the National Standards are in place to support children's care and well-being.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has made good improvement since her last inspection. She has worked hard to develop her practice and raise her standards. She has now completed her first aid course and consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is now obtained from parents enabling her to provide appropriate care for children in an emergency or when they are ill. The childminder has produced a range of policies that reflect her practice. This included a complaint policy which is made available to parents so they are aware of how to raise concerns directly with the childminder or through Ofsted.

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):

- develop opportunities for children to explore diversity and the world around them
- ensure there is sufficient and suitable equipment for younger children to help develop their skills.

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