

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY307561
Inspection date	17 April 2008
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 good. 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 2005. She lives with her husband and one child aged fourteen years in Ramsey, Cambridgeshire. The whole of the childminder's house is 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 two children under five on a part-time basis and three children before and after school on a part-time basis. The childminder walks and drives to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. The family have one pet cat and also keep tropical fish.

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's health is promoted well and positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. For example, children are encouraged to wash their hands before meals, before cooking activities and after playing in the garden, using liquid soap and paper towels. The childminder ensures that nappy changing procedures are hygienic and washes her own hands between changes. All of these practices reduce the risk of cross-contamination. All records in relation to accidents that children have or medication that needs to be administered whilst in the childminder's care are well maintained. The childminder has completed a suitable first aid course which enables her to deal effectively with accidents. A written sick policy is shared with parents so that appropriate care can be offered when children are ill.

Children enjoy many opportunities to experience physical activity all year round. They use the swings and equipment in the childminder's spacious garden and outdoor area and regularly visit local parks which provides further opportunities to develop physical skills such as climbing. Children visit many local toddler groups and venues that offer soft play fun such as bouncy castles and ball pits.

The childminder works with parents to meet children's dietary needs. For example, some parents provide food for their children whilst the childminder is happy to also provide meals. The childminder is mindful of encouraging children to make healthy choices and encourages younger children to try different snacks such as grapes and strawberries. Sample menus are displayed for parents and children's individual preferences are taken into account as the childminder plans her menus. Children are encouraged to take an interest in food. For example, they grow their own fruit and vegetables and talk about their growth and where they have come from. The childminder makes sure that children are well hydrated, ensuring they have access to frequent drinks throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a homely, well-maintained environment. They move freely around and access toys and resources of their choosing from the lounge and dining room. There is a good range of toys and equipment to support children's needs and these are regularly checked to ensure that they remain in a suitable state of repair and cleanliness.

The childminder has taken positive steps to minimise risks to children's safety. For example, socket covers are in place, bathroom cleaning materials are kept out of children's reach and stair gates prevent access to the stairs or kitchen unless supervised. However, although always supervised in the kitchen, there are detergents and knives stored in a low level cupboard and drawer which children can potentially open and access. This does not completely minimise the risk to children's safety. In the event of a fire, children are well protected. For example, a fire blanket is mounted on the wall of the kitchen, smoke alarms are in place on both floors and monthly fire drills are practised by children.

Children's welfare is well safeguarded as the childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of the symptoms of child abuse and the procedures to follow should she have concerns about a child in her care. She has all the relevant documentation and information

guidelines to support her and a written policy informs parents of her responsibilities towards protecting children from harm and neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are provided with a good range of activities both in the childminder's home and through regular attendance at many local toddler groups. The childminder uses a local toy library regularly so that children's interest is maintained in the range of activities that she offers. This ensures that they enjoy their time in the childminder's care. Children share warm relationships with the childminder as she spends much of her time with them, interacting and supporting their play. For example, she asks questions during stories and play to encourage children to think and extend their knowledge. They are confident as they eagerly share their ideas, books and toys with the childminder. Younger children's language development is well promoted through favourite stories where they join in with key words and phrases. They have opportunities to be creative through painting, gluing and drawing activities with further opportunities for these types of activities offered at local groups. They learn about the world around them whilst out on walks, talking about the seasonal changes and weather. The childminder makes good use of spontaneous learning opportunities such as a helicopter flying by to promote children's curiosity, language development and interest. The childminder is knowledgeable about child development and uses this to aid individual children's learning. For example, labels are attached to key objects around the room to encourage older children with their reading skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of equal opportunities and applies this to her practice. For example, all children are treated as individuals and the childminder is careful to respect their preferences and choices, for example, at mealtimes and when borrowing resources from the toy library. This ensures that children's individual needs are met. Children are beginning to learn about different cultures and beliefs from frequent trips into the local community and using a suitable range of resources in the childminder's home that reflect diversity.

The childminder has a very positive attitude towards caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and has undertaken further training courses to ensure that she is able to meet and effectively support the needs of all the children in her care. Children benefit from the close relationships that the childminder shares with parents to ensure that all children are fully included in the provision. The childminder demonstrates a secure knowledge of behaviour management and as a result, instances of inappropriate behaviour are few. Written house rules encourage older children to respect others and this enables them to understand what is expected of them.

Parents are clear about the services and activities provided by the childminder as clear contracts are maintained and a good range of permissions are obtained regarding activities. Each child has a notebook which details their day, food intake and any nappy changes and this, together with daily discussions, ensures that parents are kept up to date about their children's routines. The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of complaints procedures. However, the existing written policy for parents regarding complaints, lacks sufficient detail to ensure that they are clear about procedures and whom to contact if they are unhappy with how a complaint

is dealt with. Feedback forms provide parents with an opportunity to comment on the care offered. Those seen speak highly of the care provided for their children by the childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's positive attitude to undertaking further training workshops to underpin the good quality of care offered. The childminder's organisation of her time, space and resources ensures that children receive a balance of activities both inside and outside of her home. Younger children benefit from the one-to-one attention during school hours which results in them making good progress in particular areas such as their language development.

Children's exact times of arrival and departure are recorded. However, this is in their daily notebooks which does not always stay with the childminder or on a white board which does not constitute a permanent record. This means that there is not a completely secure system for recording children's attendance. A good range of written policies are in place and professionally presented. These underpin the childminder's good practice and most are up to date with good detail. Children's records are maintained confidentially in individual files. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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:

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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):

- minimise risks to children in the kitchen, this relates specifically to the storage of detergents and knives
- establish and maintain a secure record of children's attendance

- develop the existing complaints policy to include further detail, this relates to the recording of complaints, the correct address and telephone number for Ofsted and a time scale within which complaints will be acknowledged.

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