

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY343888
Inspection date	01 August 2008
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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since June 2007. She lives with her family which includes grown up children, in a village on the outskirts of Cambridge. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home 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 under eight years of age at any one time. She may work with an assistant or with another childminder. The childminder is currently caring for four children under five years and three children over five years on a part-time basis. She also cares for one child who is over eight years of age. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has a dog, two cats, some canaries and a snake as pets. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children's health is promoted and they are protected from infection by appropriate hygiene procedures. For example, children wash their hands before meals and after touching the family pets. The childminder has a current first aid certificate so that she is confident to take action for the welfare of the children. However, the required medication and accident records are not always completed which may affect continuity of care for the children. The childminder does not always obtain written parental consent to seek emergency treatment and advice and this has the potential to adversely affect children's welfare.

Children learn about a healthy lifestyle as the childminder gives a high priority to physical exercise in the fresh air. They have regular opportunities for outdoor play in the garden in all weathers. There is a well equipped sheltered area in the garden where they enjoy, for example, playing in the water tray and the play house. Children walk with the childminder to local activities and the local schools.

Children benefit from the childminder's suitable knowledge and understanding of nutrition. The childminder negotiates with parents and provides drinks, meals and snacks which include healthy options. For example, children sit together and enjoy a snack of raisins, carrots and cucumber. They are offered drinks throughout the day. Children's individual dietary needs are recorded and this ensures their nutritional needs are met. Younger children receive plenty of cuddles and emotional support. Children rest and sleep according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a warm, welcoming environment. Children are well supervised and have plenty of space to move around safely in the childminder's home, with some opportunities to select resources independently. The suitable range of toys and resources are checked regularly to ensure that they are clean and safe. The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of safety issues and she has minimised risks in the home to ensure children are safe. Safety gates are used effectively, for example, in the kitchen. Smoke alarms are tested regularly and there is a fire blanket in the kitchen. The pond in the garden now has a cover.

Children learn how to keep safe as the childminder helps them to understand about dangers, both indoors and outdoors. They put toys away when they have finished with them, and they learn about road safety on local walks. The childminder has evacuation plans for an emergency and a backup person is available. The childminder is generally conscientious about safeguarding children but she does not have relevant telephone numbers and information about local Safeguarding Children Board procedures accessible so that she is clear about the action to take for the welfare of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and happy in the childminder's home. They enjoy warm affectionate relationships with her and she is attentive to their needs. Older children really enjoy the company of the childminder's daughter during the holidays saying their favourite activities are '40/40'

and drawing. All children thoroughly enjoy the regular outdoor activities in the large garden, such as playing in the water tray, 'driving' the push along car, and feeding the fish. Younger children have time to potter, watching the butterflies and dragon flies and learning about the vegetables and fruit growing in the vegetable plot. The childminder listens and responds to the children and encourages their communication skills.

Children have a satisfactory range of resources indoors and outside which enable them to make independent choices. They have consistent routines throughout the day, which allows times for meals, rest and active play so that they are secure. The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of the developmental needs of the children who attend, which enables her to offer a range of age-appropriate activities. She attends relevant training to improve her practice for the benefit of all the children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

The childminder provides a warm welcome to all children. Children have a good sense of belonging as the childminder knows them and their families very well. They form trusting relationships with the childminder and with each other. They learn about the wider world on local outings. The childminder has limited resources and activities which help children to learn about their differences and similarities. She is not currently caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but she is open to new learning and willing to work with parents and other agencies to meet children's needs.

Children generally behave well. Good behaviour is encouraged and children learn to take turns, share and cooperate together, for instance as they play with the play dough. They feel secure with consistent boundaries as the childminder helps them to understand expectations of behaviour. Parents are kept informed through daily discussions which enable them to share their children's experiences and achievements. However, parents are not always asked to give written permission, for example for outings and sun cream or sign relevant records such as medication which has the potential to affect the welfare of the children.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The childminder generally uses time, space and resources satisfactorily to provide a caring environment for children with a suitable range of age-appropriate activities both indoors and outside. Children benefit from basic routines, including regular outings, which help them to feel secure and they have time and space to rest and be active.

Children receive plenty of individual support and attention. However, the childminder does not rigorously follow procedures and keep records which contribute to the health and safety of the children and ensure good continuity of care. The register does not include the times of children's arrival and departure. Children are suitably protected because the childminder never leaves them with anyone who has not been vetted. However, parents do not give written consent for their children to be left in the sole care of an assistant which is a condition of registration on the childminder's certificate.

Overall the needs of the children are not met.

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:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children
- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment
- develop resources and activities which help children to learn about their differences and similarities
- obtain written permission from parents for leaving their children in the sole care of an assistant
- ensure that the booklet 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' is easily accessible together with relevant telephone numbers
- ensure that accident records are signed by parents
- keep a record of children's hours of attendance.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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