



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222611
Inspection date	19 December 2005
Inspector	Heidi Falconer

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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1998. She lives with her partner and 2 children aged 14 and 15 years in a village on the outskirts of Cambridge. The whole of the ground floor of the house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor 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 all part time and one children over five during school holidays. The childminder walks to local toddler groups to take children. The family have a dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they follow effective hygiene routines to ensure that their health is promoted and that cross infection is minimised. For example, children learn good personal hygiene routines and wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. However, children are not learning about why they should follow these routines. The childminder's practice is generally supporting children's good health. She has maintained her first aid qualification and has obtained consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for their child. This ensures that in the event of an accident children would receive appropriate care promptly. All of the required documentation for recording accidents and medication are in place and shared with parents as necessary.

The childminder provides balanced meals and snacks for the children to ensure that they are well nourished. Children enjoy meals such as roast dinners with vegetables and at snack time they have fruit or raisins. Drinks are always easily accessible for children. The childminder reminds children to have them at regular intervals to ensure that they are well hydrated and do not become thirsty.

Children have some opportunities to enjoy physical activity. They build with Lego and younger children have plenty of space to roll, crawl and pull themselves to standing. However, during the winter months large physical development is less well supported for older children. They use the garden on request but it not used regularly. Some days children go for walks with the childminder in the local village, this ensures that they get some exercise and fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a generally safe environment where most potential risks have been minimised to protect them accidental harm. A stair gate prevents children having unsupervised access to the upstairs of the house and the childminder ensures that children do not have unsupervised access to her dog. The dog is kept in a separate room or in the rear garden whilst children are on the premises. This ensures that children are able to move around freely and independently. The garden is kept secure when children use it. However, there are times when the premises are not secure, allowing people to walk in unannounced. This compromises children's safety.

Children use suitable and safe equipment which is appropriate to their age and stage of development. The childminder explains safe practices, such as why older children should keep small toy parts away from the younger children, so that they don't choke on them. Older children use toys with small parts away from younger children or whilst they are sleeping. This helps children take responsibility for keeping themselves and others safe.

Children's safety in the event of a fire is generally well promoted. The childminder has smoke alarms, a fire blanket and an extinguisher in place to help her keep children safe. The childminder has a very detailed evacuation plan in place which clearly identifies all exits. However, this procedure has not been discussed with the children. As a result children are unaware of what to do if a fire broke out and how they could protect themselves.

Children are generally protected because the childminder understands her role in child protection and is aware of the appropriate procedures to put into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and confident in the childminder's care. Children of all ages make positive relationships with each other and play well alongside each other. The childminder helps the children to understand the need to share and play co-operatively together through clear explanations. Older children show concern for the younger children, giving them toys and books when they become upset. Trips to toddler groups provide children with opportunities to socialise and make friends with other children.

The childminder has a sound knowledge of child development. This means that the activities she provides support children's development. Children's language skills are being developed to enable them to express their ideas and thoughts. The childminder's responds to young children's 'babbling' during routines such as nappy changing which encourages them to communicate and become confident. Older children's language development is promoted by the support they receive from the childminder. For example, during games like snap, the childminder encourages children to recognise letters and the sounds they make. Children have some opportunities to try creative activities such as cooking and drawing. However, painting and other activities are less well supported.

All children show an interest in the play opportunities available, for example, they talk about the Harry Potter cakes they have made with the childminder and ask if they can repeat this activity. The way that the childminder organises the space and resources helps children to take initiative about how they spend their time in her care and develop their independence, for example, they freely access indoor equipment such as books, sewing cards and games from easily accessible storage. In addition, children are able to bring in favourite toys from home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are generally met well because the childminder has taken time to get to know the children and talks regularly with parents about their needs.

The childminder's procedures for settling in new children are aimed at meeting the children's individual needs. Therefore children settle quickly. The childminder has a flexible routine to the day, this allows younger children to rest in accordance to their needs.

Relationships with parents are friendly. They are made to feel welcome and are encouraged to share daily information about their child to exchange essential information such as their changing routines, sleeps and feeds. This is supporting children's well-being and ensures that their changing needs are identified and met.

The childminder provides children with opportunities to develop their knowledge about the local community in which they live, for example, they visit the local toddler group and go for walks around the village. Children have some opportunities to learn about diversity, through the use of books and dolls, however these resources are limited.

The childminder uses consistent and age-appropriate strategies for managing behaviour to help children learn right from wrong. Younger children are distracted using toys and equipment, whilst older children receive explanations as to why the behaviour is not appropriate. For example, children are asked not to sit on the arms of chairs because they may fall and hurt themselves. This helps children learn to take responsibility for their behaviour. Children are learning how to build effective relationships with each other and the childminder. They play alongside each other and are learning to share toys and resources.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are comfortable, happy and at ease with the childminder and in her home. The childminder's organisation of space and resources creates a suitable environment for children. This ensures that they enjoy their time in her care and are generally kept safe. The childminder uses her knowledge and experience of working with children to give them opportunities to initiate their own play and decide how they spend their time with her. She stores some of the resources in low level boxes so that children can access them independently.

The childminder has all of the required documentation in place to promote the care and welfare of the children who attend. The childminder holds a current first aid qualification. This supports her practice to ensure that children are well cared for. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to plan activities and increase resources to further interest and stimulate pre-school children and help develop them in their learning. The childminder has brought some additional equipment to support children's learning and enjoyment and is aware of additional resources she may need to obtain depending on the ages of the children she is caring for. This will further

develop children's play and learning.

Also at her last inspection she agreed to undertake an approved first aid course. The childminder has completed a course. This has ensured that her knowledge of emergency first aid is up-to-date, enabling her to administer appropriate care and treatment if children have an accident.

To help her manage children's behaviour the childminder was asked to attend training in behaviour management. The childminder has not attended a course but demonstrates a range of appropriate behaviour management strategies to ensure that children learn right from wrong.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1st April 2004 Ofsted has received one complaint relating to Standard 1: Suitable Person. We carried out an investigation on 10 August 2004. We found no evidence that the provider was not complying with the national standards. We took no further action and the provider remains qualified for registration. The complaint was not recorded in the complaints record.

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 attendance register accurately shows children's arrival and departure times
- ensure children are aware of the emergency escape plan
- improve the security of the premises so that people can not enter them unannounced.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the

procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk