



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	259640
Inspection date	13 September 2005
Inspector	Veronica Sharpe
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

the time of the inspection there were no children in receipt of nursery education. Ofsted judges that the provider remains suitable to provide nursery education.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

This childminder lives in Cambridge and has been registered since August 2001. She lives with her husband, who is registered as her assistant and their children aged 10 and 7 years. She is registered to care for a maximum of 5 children aged under 8 and is able to offer overnight care for 1 child. There are currently 5 children on roll, none of whom are receiving nursery education funding.

Children mostly use the downstairs area of the home and there is an enclosed garden for outside play. Local amenities such as a school, pre-schools, library, shops and play areas are in walking distance.

The childminder is a member of an accredited childminding network and belongs to the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn the importance of good hygiene practice through consistent daily routines, for example, they wash their hands after using the toilet or before eating. Babies benefit from sound procedures when nappy changing that minimise the risk of cross-infection. Clear and well written policies keep parents informed about the need to exclude children with infectious illnesses, which helps promote children's continued good health.

Children enjoy a good range of healthy meals and snacks that take into account any special dietary requirements. A cooked dinner is offered every evening and children enjoy a family meal where they learn to eat a variety of fresh vegetables that are good for them. Snacks are varied and ensure children make healthy choices, such as rice cakes, bread sticks or fruit.

Children learn about the benefits of an active lifestyle in the garden. They jump and bounce on the trampoline, which develops their confidence and co-ordination and use wheeled toys or balls and bats. They visit the recreation ground where they climb, scramble and swing on the large equipment. So they learn what happens to their bodies when they are active or at rest, they listen to their heartbeats with a stethoscope, or recognise they are hot and thirsty after exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children choose from a good range of safe and well maintained equipment, which is appropriate for the age and stage of development. So that children are kept safe resources are organised on low level shelving or in boxes and are easily accessible. Children play safely in the garden where hazards are minimised, they understand the strict rules for using some of the equipment, for example the trampoline, which further enhances their safety.

Children learn about safety outside the home because the childminder explains about rules such as how to cross the road at the Pelican crossing, this enables children to develop their own awareness of danger.

Children's safety and welfare is enhanced as the childminder has a secure understanding of child protection issues and the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures. Written procedures ensure parents have a good understanding of the childminder's responsibility to keep children safe from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy warm and positive relationships with the childminder and are settled and happy. They enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities, such as cooking or dressing up and make independent choices from a very good range of accessible resources. Visits to activity groups or to the local recreation ground enable children to socialise and develop relationships with their peers.

Younger children benefit from the calm and attentive support of the childminder, who listens to them and helps them play. They choose from the wide range of age appropriate resources, such as shape sorters or musical toys that are interesting and promote their continuing development.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There are no funded children on roll. The childminder has a sound understanding of how children learn and is developing her knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. She plans a satisfactory range of activities and experiences that cover the areas of learning. Children choose their own resources, which are organised so they are accessible. Adult led activities, such as cooking are balanced by a good range of free-play activities where children follow their own interests. At present planning is informal and is based largely on the key activities. This means that some learning is not planned for and may limit the range of activities that ensure children progress well. The childminder's limited knowledge of the stepping stones and how they are used to monitor children's progress hinders her ability to provide an effective system of assessments that ensure children are moving on to the next steps in their learning. She provides some evidence of children's learning through photographs and samples of their work, which are shared with parents.

Children enjoy a wide range of free-play activities and socialise frequently with their peers through visits to local groups. As a result they learn to share and play together harmoniously. They learn about their local environment on walks and visits and share important events, such as birthdays with their peers. Children learn about the wider world through books, television programmes and discussion with the childminder. A range of books that reflect children's ages and interests are accessible and routines enable children to read independently or together with the childminder. Drawing and writing materials are available, which enables children to practise their pre-writing skills. Activities such as messy play or cooking enable children to learn how to count, estimate and speculate and they explore taste, texture and colour.

Physical skills are promoted well. Children enjoy the equipment in the garden, such as the trampoline where they bounce, jump and learn to take turns. At the recreation ground children run, climb and scramble using more challenging equipment. Resources such as small construction develop children's hand-to-eye co-ordination and enables them to build in three dimensions. Children's imagination is stimulated by the range of dressing up clothes and small world toys so they can invent their own scenarios.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about the wider world through visits to local community activities and enjoy a range of resources that reflect other cultures and lifestyles. They take part in activities, such as food tasting that enables them to appreciate other children's experiences. Children who have English as an additional language are well supported because there is good communication between parents and the childminder.

Children are well behaved and have a clear understanding of their boundaries. Children respond well to praise and encouragement from the childminder, who is calm and positive. Older children begin to share and negotiate successfully with the childminder's guidance.

Children benefit from the positive partnership between childminder and parents. So that children are well cared for parents are questioned about routines and children's likes and dislikes prior to placement. This ensures children have continuity of care and their individual needs are known and met. Children's welfare is enhanced as parents and the childminder share information daily. The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents receive regular verbal feedback about their children's progress and welfare, however, they do not contribute to assessments of their child's learning. Children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are secure and content in the childminder's care, she ensures they have a well-organised environment and provides them with support and affectionate care. Children move around the home with confidence and enjoy their time with the childminder and her husband. The provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

So that children are well cared for the childminder attends a variety of training courses to enhance her practice. For example she has just completed the 'Extending Childminding Practice', which is a Level 3 qualification.

To promote children's health, safety and welfare the childminder has a comprehensive range of written policies and procedures, which are used effectively. These are shared with parents and contribute to the continuity of care. All documentation, such as parental consents have been obtained and are securely stored with regard to confidentiality. These are easily accessible so children can be cared for appropriately, such as in an emergency. Documentation that informs parents about the provision of nursery education is limited.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has updated records to include consent to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. This ensures children are treated appropriately in an emergency. She keeps the register up to date so there is an accurate record of children's attendance, including times of arrival and departure. Parents receive comprehensive written

information which includes a range of policies and procedures to support the childminding practice. This enables parents to have a clear idea of the type of care offered and promotes children's health, safety and welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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):

- devise and practise an emergency evacuation procedure so that the risk to children is minimised in the event of a fire

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further improve planning using the stepping stones so that children benefit from a wide variety of activities that cover the six areas of learning
- develop the assessments of children's learning to help children move on to the next stage in their learning. Ensure parents have good opportunities to contribute so there is a clear picture of progress.

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