



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	222265
Inspection date	23 September 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 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 1993. She lives with her husband and 2 children aged 14 and 17 years in a village North of Huntingdon. Most 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 6 children at any one time and is currently minding 1 child under 5 all day full time and 4 children over 5 before and after school. The childminder walks to local playgroups and schools to take and collect children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's well being is safeguarded by well maintained accident and medication records. Parents are given a copy of the childminder's sickness policy which contains clear guidelines for their children's attendance when unwell to help them ensure there is no risk of cross infection. The childminder has maintained a current first aid qualification and has obtained consent from parents to seek medical advice or treatment for their child in an emergency. These ensure that in the event of an emergency all children would be treated appropriately and promptly.

Good promotion of hygiene procedures by the childminder ensures that children stay healthy and begin to understand good hygiene practices. Children are developing independence in self care skills but confidently ask for help when they need it. Children are aware of the reason why they need to wash hands before handling food and after using the toilet.

Children begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They are consulted about when they would like to have drinks and snacks, allowing them to become aware of their bodies needs. Parents provide most snacks and meals for their children, if the childminder does provide additional snacks she ensures that all parent's wishes regarding their children's diet are respected, so that children are provided with balanced and healthy foods.

Children enjoy a range of activities, which contribute to their good health. Garden activities such as riding bikes, chalking and playing football along with regular visits to the local park and playground improve children's physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder safeguards and promotes children's welfare. Good use is made of space in the home to create a child-centred environment in which children feel welcome and secure. Children are able to play in safety in the areas of the home used for childminding because the childminder has identified potential risks to children and has taken action to minimise dangers, for example, in the kitchen all dangerous substances are kept in locked cupboards, preventing children accessing them. The organisation of well maintained and safe toys and equipment in the playroom allows children to move around safely and freely to independently access resources.

Children are protected as the childminder ensures that they are not left alone with anyone who is not vetted. She has a good knowledge of child protection issues and an understanding of the correct procedures to follow if she had a concern. The childminder has a copy of the local Area Child Protection Committee guidelines and would use these for reference to help protect children's welfare.

Children learn to keep themselves safe. They develop an awareness of safety through practising codes for crossing the road with the childminder. Discussions about fire safety ensure that children are aware of what they may need to do to keep them safe from harm in an emergency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and secure with the childminder. They enjoy their time in her care and have formed warm and affectionate relationships with her. This contributes to their sense of belonging. Children's play and learning is encouraged by the provision of developmentally appropriate toys and activities. Children get pleasure from creative activities such as, painting, drawing, chalking and playdough. They also enjoy dressing up as disco cowboys, footballers, queens and shop keepers. The support of the childminder in all activities ensures that children are purposefully occupied and learn through their play. She asks children appropriate questions to make them think and develop their knowledge, for example when children talk about crabs that they have seen she tells children that they are called hermit crabs and talks to the children about where she has seen them.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is promoted when they share their creations with their parents or put them on display in the playroom. They talk confidently about their pictures and what they have drawn. Children's independence skills are encouraged as they are given opportunities to take themselves to the toilet and to select equipment. The way the space and resources are organised helps children to take initiative about how they spend their time in her care. Children's communication skills are developing well, they use language effectively in their play discussing the activities they are undertaking with the childminder. When setting out animals and the farmyard children narrate what they are doing and use lots of mathematical language to discuss the positioning of animals and buildings.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a strong partnership between the childminder and parents. The childminder talks to them frequently and shares the children's achievements with them. This contributes positively towards the children's care, well-being and feelings of security. The childminder provides parents with written information on her policies and procedures and has recently sent them a questionnaire to help her evaluate and improve her practice. Written feedback from parents demonstrates their high regard for the childminder, the care she provides and the support she offers to the children and their families.

All children have equal opportunities to access activities and resources that meet their individual needs, so that they can become confident and independent. They play with small world figures and role play equipment that represent the different members of society, helping them to learn about the world that they live in.

Children behave well and show a good understanding of appropriate behaviour, for example, always sitting at the table for snacks and meals and helping to tidy away activities. The childminder uses a range of age appropriate strategies to manage behaviour, she uses distraction techniques with younger children and reasons for why behaviour is inappropriate are always discussed with older children. This ensures that children are learning right from wrong and take responsibility for their behaviour. The childminder's written behaviour policy is shared with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder's previous experience of working in a nursery in addition to her experience of working as a childminder for twelve years has enabled her to gain a good understanding of child development and how children learn through their play. As a result she provides activities that are of interest to children and promote their all round development. The childminder is keen to attend further training on child protection and on the Birth to Three Matters Framework, the knowledge she will gain from undertaking these courses will help her to develop her practice for the children that attend.

Children are cared for in an environment that is welcoming to them and their parents. The childminder has effectively converted a room in her home to a playroom. The room is welcoming to children and parents, resources are easily accessible and children's art work and photographs of them playing are displayed. This means children feel valued and are confident to initiate play and explore the environment.

The childminder effectively uses policies and procedures to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. The childminder and parents share information regularly so that both parties are well informed about the service and the children's activities. This contributes to continuity in the children's care. Appropriate documentation is in place and is used effectively to ensure care needs are met. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has made good progress since the last inspection. She has improved children's safety by ensuring that the garden is secure and that all hazards have been removed. Children's safety in the event of a fire has also been improved as the childminder has ensured that her fire blanket is easily accessible in the kitchen.

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure more supporting information was recorded on accident and incident records. She has updated these forms and they now contain all of the relevant detail, this is promoting children's welfare. The childminder also agreed to keep Ofsted informed of any significant changes to the premises, there have been no changes since the last inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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 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):

- continue to attend further training to develop the provision for all children.

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