

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY274381
Inspection date	18 December 2007
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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2004. She lives with her mother, father, adult brother and her son who is aged two years, in the town of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. The childminder works alongside her mother who is also a registered childminder. The whole ground floor 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 five children at any one time, of these two maybe under five years. When working with another childminder together they are registered to care for a maximum of six children, of these five may be under five years. The childminder's are currently minding four children under five and five children over five before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has a cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is supported well as the childminder follows effective health and hygiene procedures. For example, after each nappy change she sanitises the changing area and cleans her hands with an antibacterial gel. A clear sickness policy offers parents information about exclusion periods for children who are unwell, ensuring that other children are not placed at risk of infection and illness. Children are learning to follow good hygiene routines. For example, before eating and after playing in the garden they know to wash their hands. The childminder explains to them that this is to prevent the spread of infection.

Children benefit from eating nutritious and freshly prepared snacks and meals. For example, at snack time the childminder offers the children a choice different fresh fruits such as grapes, oranges or bananas. At the start of each week older children write a list on the blackboard in the kitchen of the snacks that they would like. This promotes their independence and encourages them to think about foods which are good for them. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure that she is familiar with any special dietary requirements and she is happy to provide suitable foods to meet these needs. For example, soya products are used in cooking activities to replace dairy products. This enables all children to eat the foods which they have made.

Children have regular opportunities to be physically active and to enjoy the fresh air. The childminder aims that each day the children will take part in some form of outdoor physical activity. This includes going for walks, visiting the park or playing in the childminder's garden. In the garden, children have access to a wide variety of resources which promote and develop their physical skills. For example, they ride in push along cars, ride bikes and play in tents and tunnels.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and child-orientated environment. Their art work is used to create large wall displays in line with the current theme or topic. For example, currently there are displays of snowmen, snowy days and robins as part of a Christmas and winter theme. The children also make posters and signs to decorate the room. Recently they have made a sign which says 'reading corner' which the childminder's have displayed in the book area. In the playroom children have access to, and use a wide range of age-appropriate toys and resources.

Children play safely as the childminder carries out regular risk assessments. This allows her to identify potential risks to children and ensure that safety equipment is still in place and in working order. For example, smoke detectors are tested on a regular basis and a written record of these checks is kept. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe as they routinely talk with the childminder about keeping safe in the event of a fire at the home. In addition, the older children regularly practise the childminder's fire evacuation procedure.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues. She is fully aware of her role and responsibilities with regard to child protection and parents are informed about this responsibility through a written child protection policy. The childminder has a copy of up to date procedures which are in line with Local Safeguarding

Children Board guidelines. This document will support her in the event that she needs to make a referral.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children take part in many creative activities such as exploration with paint, dough, water, sand and collage materials. These activities help them to represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. For example, on the day of the inspection young children enjoyed making collage pictures with rice and spaghetti. Children take part in musical activities such as singing and playing musical instruments which contribute to developing their communication skills. Children also enjoy trips out with the childminder particularly during the school holidays. Recent trips have included visits to the beach, an indoor play centre and the zoo. Children evidently enjoy the activities on offer and some of the older children have just made a 'What I like doing with my childminder poster'. They have included pictures of them taking part in activities. Children list some of their favourite activities as 'making things', 'playing in the garden' painting' and 'eating popcorn'.

Children enjoy playing with a varied range of toys and resources which are appropriate to their age and stages of development. The childminder organises toys in the playroom so that children can access them easily and independently. As a result children take part in a good balance of adult and self-led activities. For example, as they take out a play hammer and tools they announce 'I'm going jobing' before pretending to mend toys. Each week the childminder plans a varied range of activities for the children to ensure that they are interested by the activities on offer. When planning these activities the childminder uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children take part in a range of activities which help them to learn about diversity and the needs of others. For example, to celebrate Chinese New Year they made lanterns and pandas. In addition, each year the children help to raise money for Children in Need. This year they made cakes, which they sold. Children are introduced to their local environment through visits and walks in their community.

Children are known and valued as individuals as the childminder discusses their individual needs carefully with parents during settling in visits. The childminder has a suitable understanding of caring for children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example, she recognises the importance of seeking information from parents in order to meet these needs. Children behave well and respond to the childminder's requests. They are developing an understanding of sharing and taking turns. Whilst younger children are reminded to share popular role play resources older children learn to take turns as they play group games such as 'Ker plunk'.

Children benefit from the positive and professional relationships between the childminder and their parents. Parents of young children are kept well informed of their child's care through a daily contact book that the childminder records significant information in. All parents' written permissions for relevant aspects of the service enable the childminder to work in partnership to meet the needs of the children. Parents have recently completed a questionnaire to help the childminder evaluate the effectiveness of the provision. The feedback from parents is

complimentary. An Ofsted poster is displayed so that parents know who to inform if they have concerns. However, the childminder is not fully aware of the procedures she must follow if a complaint is made against the provision.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder takes overall responsibility for maintaining appropriate records and developing the setting's portfolio of policies for parents. All of the required documentation is in place and is stored appropriately so that it is easily accessible, whilst remaining confidential. The childminder has a generally good understanding of the National Standards which is reflected in the setting's policies. However, she failed to inform Ofsted of her change of address and this is a breach of regulations.

The childminder is committed to continuing her professional development. She holds a recognised childcare qualification and continues to attend short courses to extend her knowledge the field of childcare. For example, she has recently completed courses in food hygiene and first aid and is booked on more courses. The childminder works well as a team with her co-childminder. For example, whilst one childminder prepares lunch the other childminder interacts with the children, reading stories to them. This ensures that children receive good levels of attention at all times. Together the childminders create a welcoming environment for the children. For example, one room in the house has been converted into a playroom, which is decorated with children's art work. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that all records relating to childminding activities are readily accessible on the premises and available for inspection at all times. This had particular reference to the registration system and written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice for their child. Children's health is now supported more effectively as this written consent is in place. This ensures that children receive appropriate care should they become ill or have an accident. The childminder has also improved her systems for recording children's attendance to ensure that there is an accurate record of their times of arrival, departure and any absences. This promotes children's safety in the event of an emergency.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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 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):

- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of significant events
- develop knowledge and understanding of the changes in regulations on 3 October 2005, with regard to keeping a complaints log and ensuring that it is available on request.

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