



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY295272
Inspection date	06 September 2005
Inspector	Pamela Abram

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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2004. She lives her husband and their two sons aged 5 and 7 in a Cambridgeshire village. The family has several pets.

Minded children use the ground floor rooms and the enclosed rear garden. The childminder makes use of local amenities, including pre-school activity groups, park, toy library and shops.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 4 children and currently has 3 children on roll.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home. They learn how to take care of their own personal needs and understand the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines. For example, they talk with the childminder about why they wash their hands before eating, after messy play and after using the toilet to stop germs spreading. The bathroom is arranged so that children can easily reach the basin to wash their hands. This enables them establish good habits from a young age. Children of all ages are able to eat, rest and play to suit their individual needs because the childminder takes account of their home routines.

Children are well nourished and begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. Their individual needs are met well because the childminder takes account of parents' wishes and children's personal preferences to ensure that they have nutritious meals, snacks and drinks. They develop healthy eating patterns because the childminder offers lots of fruit and vegetables and talks with children at mealtimes about the foods they are eating. Children have opportunities to develop independence in meeting their own needs, for instance, by getting water from the dispenser whenever they need it.

Children enjoy activities indoors, as well as during walks and outings, to promote their physical development, health and well-being. The childminder uses her experience and knowledge of child development to ensure that all children participate in a range of physical play experiences. She ensures that children have plenty of fresh air and exercise by including walks to and from local activities each day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to move around safely, freely and independently because the childminder identifies and minimises most risks in the home. Children are encouraged to learn how to keep themselves and others safe. For instance, games with small pieces are kept out of reach to make sure that areas used by babies and toddlers are free from hazards. Older children can reach these items safely from shelves in the playroom and are reminded to put them back after use. However, the fire blanket is not secured in a suitable location to ensure that it can be used effectively. The presence of barbecue lighter fuel that had been left in the garden has an impact on children's safety.

The selection of toys, furniture and equipment provided by the childminder creates a welcoming environment where children can eat, sleep and play in comfort. Toys are organised to offer children easy access to them so that they are to choose some items for their own use which promotes independence. The childminder monitors and supervises the use of certain resources to ensure that they are used appropriately to meet each child's stage of development. Older children are encouraged to take

responsibility and consider the safety of younger children by placing items with small pieces out of reach after using them.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted by the required procedures and documents that the childminder has put in place. For example, she holds a current first aid certificate and has an understanding of her role regarding child protection, in line with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and confident in the childminders home. She makes it welcoming for them by setting it out ready for their arrival each day. Children are well supported by the childminder, often on an individual basis. They relate well to her and have opportunities to try new activities and learn through first hand experiences, such as when using a different type of painting technique for the first time. A child was given time to try this herself initially and the childminder skilfully judged when to step in to offer a helping hand so that the experience was a positive, enjoyable one.

Children's personal, social, emotional and intellectual needs are fostered well because the childminder understands how children develop. They are motivated and initiate some of their own activities and begin to gain independence because of the way the childminder organises the space, resources and equipment. Children have regular opportunities to socialise with other children through attendance at local toddler groups and other events. The childminder talks and listens to children and gives them plenty of encouragement as they develop their early communication skills so that they feel valued and able to share experiences with her.

Daily routines are planned flexibly to ensure that children have a balance of active and quiet times during the day, in accordance with their own needs and interests. The childminder responds appropriately to the individual needs of all children in her care. The genuinely warm, responsive interaction demonstrated by the childminder boosts children's confidence and contributes to their well-being.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into the setting and are valued and respected as individuals. Consequently they feel secure and settled in the childminder's care. The childminder has established positive relationships with parents and they exchange information regularly about the children's care and progress. This ensures that all parties are well informed and enables the childminder to have up-to-date information about children's needs. She is therefore able to offer routines that are consistent with children's experiences at home so that they have continuity of care.

Children feel at ease because the childminder involves them in the daily routines and shows them where the toys are kept and where to keep their personal belongings.

They receive good levels of support to help them make progress at their own pace. Attendance patterns mean that the childminder usually has only small number of children present, so she has time to give each of them attention, sometimes on an individual basis. She works with parents and has strategies in place to support children with special needs and uses a patient, attentive approach to help all children feel valued. This boosts children's confidence and helps them to develop self-esteem. Children learn about their local community during outings and walks in the village, but there are few resources which reflect positive images to help children develop awareness of diversity within the wider community.

Children behave well in response to the consistent, positive methods used by the childminder to help children of all ages understand the rules. The childminder uses praise and encouragement to help children understand how to share, take turns and play together harmoniously. Children are encouraged to show care and concern for others and have opportunities to look after pets. They respond sensitively when the childminder shows children how to stroke the kittens, explaining that they need to be handled carefully because they are small and fragile.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at setting, achieve well and make progress because the childminder creates a well-organised environment, where they can have fun as they play and learn.

The childminder demonstrates a secure understanding of her role and responsibilities and has attended some training to support her work. She uses appropriate forms of record keeping and has procedures in place to promote the welfare, care and learning of children.

Parents are well informed about the care and attention that their children receive because the childminder shows them her policies, procedures and other useful information, as well as talking to them regularly about their child's activities. This contributes to the continuity of children's care so that they feel secure. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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):

- ensure that the fire blanket is secured in a suitable location in the kitchen so that it can be used effectively
- assess the risks to children presented by accessibility of barbecue lighter fuel in the garden and take action to minimise the risks.

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