



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 258113
Inspection date 09 March 2006
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 2001. She lives with her partner and 2 children aged 8 and 11 years in village close to 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 three children under five part-time and three children over five before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder creates a very clean and hygienic environment for children. They thrive on account of the childminder following extremely efficient and purposeful procedures and practices, which she has devised to support the children's health, hygiene, nutritional and physical needs. She follows good hygiene procedures when changing nappies and provides all children with their own bed sheets and flannels. As a result children are very well protected from the risk of cross-infection.

Children are developing their understanding of keeping healthy through the excellent range of meaningful experiences provided by the childminder. Younger children are beginning to learn about personal hygiene routines by using their individual flannels, which have their names embroidered on them, to wash their hands and faces after lunch. Older children learn through activities with the childminder. They help to prepare foods when cooking and use this as a time to discuss why it is important to wash their hands, tie back their long hair and wear aprons and chef hats.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of nutrition and how she can support children's health by ensuring that her menu covers all main food groups and provides children with a healthy diet. The childminder provides children with freshly prepared nutritious snacks and meals that promote healthy eating. They are well planned and balanced to take account of children's individual dietary requirements, likes and dislikes. A sample menu demonstrates to the parents the choices of food that are available. It includes chicken risotto and cod steaks with vegetables. Children are able to help themselves to easily accessible drinking water, milk or low sugar juice throughout the day.

Children have excellent opportunities to learn about healthy eating. Children enjoy taking an active part in cooking with the childminder and like to help her prepare vegetables at tea time. Through support and discussion with the childminder, cooking food such as a turkey stir fry helps children to think about foods which are good for them and keep them healthy.

Children take pleasure in a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. Each day there are opportunities to walk to the local school, park and play outside on wheeled toys which help them to develop their co-ordination and physical skills. The childminder has developed good routines for sleep and rest times, which ensure that children are well rested.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and very well cared for in premises that are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. The childminder has created a playroom which is brightly decorated with children's art work and Mr Men characters which have been painted

at children's level around the room. This creates an environment which is welcoming and child centred. The childminder ensures that the environment gives children good access to a comprehensive range of facilities that successfully promotes their development in all areas. Resources are stored on open low-level shelving and open toy boxes, which allow children to access them safely and independently. Toys and equipment are in good condition and checked regularly by the childminder to ensure that they are clean, safe and in good condition.

Children's safety is well promoted because the childminder takes positive steps to promote safety within the home and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents. For example, she has a written emergency plan which outlines how children would be protected in the event of an emergency. She has given thought to the suitability of the adults children would be left with if she was unexpectedly unavailable. This is helping to keep children safe.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe because the childminder encourages them to begin to understand about safety issues both within the setting and outside. For example, in the home, children discuss and practise the childminder's fire evacuation plan and are learning about when to call 999. To keep children safe outside of the home, the childminder talks to them about 'stranger danger' and road safety.

Children's welfare is well protected because the childminder is very clear of her role and responsibilities in the protection of children. She has recently completed a NSPCC child protection course which has updated her knowledge and understanding of recognising signs of child abuse. Parents are kept informed about the childminder's responsibility to report concerns through her written child protection policy which they receive when their child starts attending.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy to attend and relish the time that they spend with the childminder. They benefit from being cared for by a childminder who is cheerful and enthusiastic about her job. She interacts well with the children and shows that she is genuinely interested in them by joining in their play, listening to what they say and responding appropriately. Children show great pleasure and pride in their achievements and are keen to share their drawings with the childminder. The childminder displays children's artwork in the playroom, thus creating an environment which is welcoming and promotes their self-esteem.

The childminder uses her experience and knowledge of how children learn to plan and provides a wide range of stimulating activities and play opportunities that promote children's development in all areas and ensures that they have fun whilst learning. Children engage eagerly in purposeful, first hand experiences such as creating a bus from a large television box.

The range of toys, books, games and creative materials is very good and offers children a wide variety so that there is always something to capture children's

imagination. For example, children enjoy imaginative play, dressing up in a wide selection of role play outfits pretending to be Spiderman, pirates and flower girls. The childminder's use of local library's and toy lending schemes extends the play opportunities available to the children to ensure that they have fun and spend their time purposefully engaged in activities. Children often attend the library with the childminder and are able to choose books which interest them or support topics they are learning at school. The childminder is aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and is using it to further extend and develop her practice for children under three.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individuality is respected. The childminder understands how she can adapt activities and offer extra support to enable all children to participate at an appropriate level, and those who speak English as an additional language are fully integrated. The childminder provides additional resources such as dual language books to enable all children to feel included and develop a sense of belonging. The childminder provides a meaningful range of activities and resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. For example, children have recently made flags for the countries they are from, writing the word 'hello' in the native language.

Children behave well, learn to play harmoniously with others, to take turns and share because the childminder uses positive methods to help them understand rules. For example, older children have developed a set of house rules, these are clearly displayed. This ensures that children feel valued, included and helps them to take responsibility for their behaviour. The childminder has a written behaviour policy in place, which clearly explains the behaviour management strategies that she uses to suit children ages and level of understanding. This helps to develop consistency so that children begin to learn right from wrong.

Children's care is promoted well through the childminder's recognition of the importance of working in partnership with parents. The childminder provides parents with detailed written information on her policies and procedures and periodically asks them to complete a questionnaire about the care that she provides. Written feedback from parents demonstrates their high regard for the childminder, the care she provides and the support she offers to children and their families. This positive relationship strengthens links with children's homes giving them as sense of stability and acceptance.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. They are cared for by a knowledgeable and skilled childminder who is constantly reviewing her practice and who gives up-most priority to keeping children healthy. Children are

relaxed, happy and at ease in the childminder's extremely well organised home. Space and resources are well thought through and planned, to maximise play opportunities for children in order for them to develop to their full potential and at their own pace. For example, whilst younger children play in the playroom, older children who attend after school use her lounge to play with toys which contain small pieces. All resources are well set out so that children can access them independently allowing them to make choices and decisions about how they spend their time.

The childminder has a dynamic and professional approach with parents and children. Verbal and written information is provided on a daily basis about their child's progress and achievements. This contributes to a trusting relationship which impacts positively on the children. The childminder's extremely well organised documentation and records are maintained in line with the National Standards and are used effectively in all areas to promote the care, welfare and learning of each child. The childminder has an extensive range of well written policies and procedures which are individual to the setting, robust and fully reflected in her high quality practice.

The childminder is committed to keeping her knowledge and practice up to date and in line with current guidelines. She has achieved this by attending various training courses and by using the internet to share information with other childminder's and to research different areas of her practice such as keeping children healthy. This has greatly increased her knowledge and awareness of how she can continue to improve the provision for all of the children in her care. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to keep a record of social services contact numbers to ensure that if she had concerns about a child's welfare she would be able to take action promptly. The childminder now keeps these contact numbers easily accessible by storing them on her mobile phone. This promotes children's safety and welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004. 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

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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):

- continue to use 'Birth to three matters' to further develop the provision for children under three.

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