

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY342229
Inspection date	17 April 2008
Inspector	Christine Linda Tomaselli
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 outstanding. 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 October 2006. She lives with her partner and their two children aged five and three years old in a village near St. Ives, Cambridgeshire. Most of the childminder's bungalow is used for childminding with one bedroom for some activities and sleeping. There is an enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding four children under the age of five years, two children aged five years old and one child over eight years old. All children are on part-time contracts. The childminder walks to the local pre-school and school to take and collect children. The childminder takes children to local parent and toddler group, children's gymnastics sessions, visits to the garden centre, The Mill and trips around the village which includes the river to feed the ducks, swings and playing fields.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in a warm, child-friendly home where the importance of good hygiene and personal care is thoroughly promoted through the childminder's superb daily routines. All children happily wash their hands and they are provided with individual flannels and towels. Antiseptic hand wipes are used when the situation requires this, for example, on outings. Children are encouraged to undertake personal hygiene routines themselves; for instance, by encouraging the use of their hand to cover their mouth when coughing or the use of tissues to wipe their own noses and putting the tissue in the bin. The childminder's excellent hygiene routines ensure that there is little opportunity for cross infection, for example, through the use of different coloured chopping boards for the preparation of different food products and the use of different coloured cloths for cleaning tasks in the kitchen.

Children's accident and medication records are completed correctly and shared with the parents to ensure they are kept informed on matters concerning their child. The childminder has a basic first aid certificate and an appropriately stocked first aid box. Her first response to any accident ensures the children's well-being is given priority. A clearly written sick children's policy states that children do not attend when they have something contagious which helps prevent the spread of infections.

Children benefit from the childminder's excellent knowledge of healthy eating and as a qualified chef she is fully aware of the correct foods that children need to establish healthy growth. Meals are home cooked with the use of organic foods where possible. Children enjoy a good and varied range of fresh fruit and vegetables as part of their daily diet and are encouraged to try new foods. They know that they stay healthy if they eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day and are reminded by the use of an interactive '5 a day' magnetic picture board. Children have their own vegetable garden to encourage an interest in gardening and healthy foods. They learn about the source of the foods they eat, from growing to being on their plate. Children take part in activities to prepare their own lunch, for example a pizza, using healthy toppings. During this time lots of discussions help children understand about healthy eating. Drinks are offered regularly to young children and older children request drinks when they want them.

There are ample opportunities for all children to practise and develop their physical skills as they benefit from a range of physical activities every day. These include being outside in the fresh air which contributes to healthy living. Children actively and enthusiastically undertake the challenges; for instance, going to the Olympic Gym sessions and lots of nature walks around the village. Children experience lots of physical activities that include ideas from the 'Top Start' programme, a course the childminder attended, to help with their physical development. Children benefit from and thoroughly enjoy using many resources to promote their physical development in the childminder's home, this includes ball games, dancing, a climbing frame and slide. Younger children have access to ride-on toys in the garden. Children with different special needs are included in as many physical activities as possible as the childminder has attended training to help her adapt or modify activities to include all children. As a result all children learn about healthy living and get lots of physical exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy a very safe, secure, rich child-centred environment where risks are identified and minimised, due to the childminder's use of risk assessment, excellent awareness of safety and recognising potential hazards. This enables children to move around the home and garden safely. Children learn about staying safe through regular routines; for instance, when out walking they learn about road safety and how to be safe around traffic. Older children are encouraged to fully interact with the younger children and are aware they need to be supported in learning to keep themselves safe with reasons given as to why. Children learn from observing the childminder as she practises excellent safety procedures, for example, when ensuring the security of her premises. The childminder's welcoming personality and a 'HELLO' poster in the kitchen, with children's individual names on it, greets them each day as they arrive. Individual space for their personal belongings, for example, low coat hooks, contributes to the children's independence in completing tasks for themselves safely. All these help to make children feel extremely welcome.

Children regularly take part in fire drills ensuring that they would know what to do if there was a real fire. The childminder ensures that all fire equipment is in working order and exits are clear to ensure the safety of the children is maintained at all times. Children freely make choices from the extensive range of toys and resources available, most of which are stored and displayed safely within easy reach of the children. Children use toys and equipment that are cleaned regularly and are appropriate to the stage of development of each individual child. Children's furniture, in particular for toddlers and babies, is well provided for and safe. The childminder uses regular risk assessments to ensure the safety of all equipment used.

All required documentation is in place to ensure that children's welfare is promoted and that parents are kept fully informed of matters associated with their child. Parents' consent is obtained as required. Children are very well protected by the childminder who has undertaken training and has a very clear understanding of child protection procedures and is confident to be open with parents where appropriate. She has an excellent written policy on child protection, is aware of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the contact for her local authority. She has various publications which she shares with parents to ensure they understand her duty. A notice at child height is displayed with details of 'Child Line' should any child feel they need to talk to someone in confidence.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and confident in the childminder's home and are reassured by the excellent attention given by the childminder. Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and become immersed in the extensive range of activities available. Babies and toddlers receive plenty of cuddles and attention to help them feel secure while older children are encouraged and excitedly involved in all that the childminder provides for them to do. The childminder displays pictures of all the children and their work to ensure they develop their self-esteem and become happy with themselves as a person.

All children play extremely well together, enjoying each other's company and the full support of a childminder who is exceptionally committed to caring for children. Toddlers are growing in confidence and independence as they start to move around the floor and play with the toys available. The childminder spends time talking to and getting to know the children so that she

can plan and present activities to meet their individual needs. The childminder is very confident in her communication with the children turning every opportunity into a learning experience. This contributes to children's understanding of numbers, letters, shapes and size. The childminder's use of descriptive words like, 'yummy', 'delicious' and the colour of an item encourages children's vocabulary. Children are encouraged and supported in making choices, for example, deciding what topping they would like on their pizza. Children become independent as they eagerly choose activities and resources that are readily available to them on low level shelving or set out on the floor. The childminder's highly effective interaction with the children ensures that children are happy to communicate their thoughts, wishes and feelings fostering their self-esteem. Children enjoy creative activities, including listening to and singing rhymes. They involve the childminder, who acts out being a creepy crawly, such as a daddy long legs. This creates lots of laughter for the children and childminder. Children fully enjoy games with the parachute and making dens. This helps to develop their imagination and construction skills. The childminder has started to introduced the use of some sign language for the younger children as a form of communication. Children are encouraged to learn how to share and take turns.

The childminder takes every opportunity to help children learn. This may be when providing table mats that show interesting subjects to discuss, for example, the solar system, different cultures and land and water plants. This opens up lots of conversation and further interesting learning for the children. Having an area of garden to plant and grow seeds helps children understand how things grow and become ready for them to eat. The childminder takes every opportunity to seek new ideas to help children learn about and value difference in our society and beyond.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder is committed to ensuring children learn about, understand and respect differences between individual people and communities. Children have opportunity to access many activities and resources provided by the childminder to help their learning and understanding about different lifestyles. For example, the childminder uses toys to positively promote different cultures, activities to learn about a range of festivals and sign language to support communication when appropriate. Children feel valued and respected by childminder who is sensitive, caring and willing to learn about differing identities. Children with special needs are supported by the childminder who is committed to ensuring that all children are included in the day's activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered extremely well by a childminder who is keen to work closely with parents to find out what she can about their family life and make it part of the child's every day.

Children behave extremely well in response to the praise and encouragement from the childminder. Children are involved in setting house rules themselves with the support of the childminder. These are displayed in writing and picture form to help younger children understand. The childminder encourages children, in every task they do, to be sharing and caring of others, for example, sharing the topping for the pizza. Her distraction techniques work extremely well when she needs the children to do something, for example, she tells a rhyme about rumbling tummies and dances to help get the children to the lunch table. Children are aware of the routines and boundaries within the childminder's home which contributes to children's good behaviour.

The childminder has developed an excellent partnership with the parents of her minded children. She has developed a professional initial 'Welcome Booklet' and an excellent information pack for parents. Her clear written policies and procedures and working closely with parents ensure that children benefit from a consistent approach in her care. The use of a daily diary for younger children ensures that parents are kept informed each day of important matters that concern their children. The childminder has superb recording procedures in place to acquire appropriate information on children's needs as they begin being minded by her. She shares information with parents about their child's achievements. The childminder provides written and verbal opportunities for parents to comment on the education and care of their children. Children benefit from the two-way sharing of information between parents and the childminder, for example, through a progress file. This enhances children's learning potential as both parent and childminder work together to help children develop.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Overall, children's needs are met. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the care and educational needs of children and has attended an extensive range of training to enhance her knowledge and practice. She has a proactive approach to her own professional development and feels ongoing training is necessary to keep herself up to date and in the children's best interest. She plans to attend training to cover 'Keeping your finger on the pulse' and 'Rhyme sacks', both of which she feels will contribute to the care and education of the children in her care. The childminder is aware of the Early Years Foundation Stage and attended a briefing session. She is very committed to this and is currently working to begin to include this in her day-to-day organisation to support her practice for caring for children in this age group. She is also working towards a Foundation Degree in Early Years Childcare.

The organisation of the children's day takes account of the ages of the children attending and their individual needs fully and this includes older children needing to complete homework. Children are taken out to pre-school groups, various outings and walks in the local village to the river to feed the ducks. These outings together with good, stimulating home-based activities gives them a variety of learning opportunities and experiences. Children's routines, such as sleep and meals are planned very well into their day to ensure their welfare is promoted. The organisation of the notice boards and entrance hall for parents and children is excellent and makes all feel welcomed and informed.

The childminder maintains excellent documentation and information. She uses some standard recording materials provided by the National Childminding Association. She has extended this by introducing some self-designed forms for additional information and details that contribute to the care and education of the children and the management of her business. For example, she records additional parent consents where suitable and uses a daily diary for babies to ensure parents are kept fully informed of what their day has been like. Documents are organised well and stored confidentially. Through discussion, the use of daily diary books for the younger children and progress books the childminder keeps parents fully informed about matters concerning their child to ensure consistent care.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the childminder was registered, 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 have procedures for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and to keep a record of complaints and their outcome.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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