



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 222831
Inspection date 16 August 2005
Inspector Marianne Gascoyne

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 1999. She lives with her husband, one child aged 13 and two adult children in the village of Somersham, near Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. The whole of the childminder's house, except the ground floor office, is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding two children under five, on a part-time basis and one child over five during school term times only. She also cares for children over eight. The childminder walks or drives to the local schools to take and collect children. She

attends the local pre-school activity group and toy library.

The family have a pet cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn good hygiene procedures by reminders to wash their hands at appropriate times as part of the daily routine. The sickness policy protects children from the risk of cross-infection, for example, by giving clear guidelines to parents about attendance when sick. Children are potentially exposed to this risk by the childminder not using a washable surface when changing nappies. All the necessary documentation is in place to safeguard children by recording accidents and medicine administered. Children receive appropriate treatment following accidents when the childminder uses the knowledge gained on the first aid course. Some of the dressings in the first aid box are out of date which could expose a child to infection. Children's well-being would be safeguarded in a medical emergency as parents have given their consent to seek emergency treatment. Older children learn to keep themselves safe in the sun by applying their own suncream.

Children are generally well nourished with snacks and nutritious meals cooked by the childminder. Their dietary requirements, likes and dislikes are respected and children provided with meals they enjoy. Menus are planned to give children a variety of foods. Children are able to access drinks at all times to ensure they do not become dehydrated.

Children are taken to the park and on walks on a daily basis to ensure they gain a positive attitude towards physical exercise and improve their physical skills. Children are able to rest and sleep in comfort; the childminder is sensitive to meeting their individual needs and they turn to her for support.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Effective use is made of the open plan ground floor rooms and garden to provide an environment in which children feel confident and are generally safe and secure. The environment has been adapted to ensure younger children are able to choose to move inside and out safely. Children's safety is assured when playing outside by assessment of risks to minimise danger, following landscaping of the garden. Toys and equipment are easily accessible to provide children with choices.

Children develop an awareness of safety in an emergency as they practise the fire evacuation procedure, and explanations help children to understand how to keep themselves safe when walking with the childminder. Procedures for the care of the children in an emergency ensure they would be protected by being cared for by

suitable people.

Parents are aware of the childminder's responsibility to protect children. The childminder's knowledge of child protection procedures is not secure enough to safeguard children if she had any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Very young children are helped to learn to communicate by the childminder's interaction with them. She sits with them at the sandpit and talks about what they are doing to encourage play. She is sensitive to the children and they are able to make their needs known through non-verbal means. Children are happy and confident in the childminder's care and relate well to her and each other. Their confidence and self-esteem is bolstered by praise and encouragement given.

Children acquire new skills and are provided with challenges as younger children are encouraged to play with the construction toy and older children learn new board games or how to sew. Children are interested in the activities available and able to choose toys and equipment which attract them.

The use of a tent in the garden to provide a secure place for children to play without interruption means the needs of the wide age group of children attending are able to be met. Play opportunities are not planned to ensure they provide for all aspects of individual children's learning and development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are relaxed in the care of the childminder who has obtained all the necessary information from parents to help her ensure it is appropriate and children's individual needs are known. They are aware of their own needs and able to make them known to the childminder. They are helped to learn to respect each other by the childminder, who uses their experiences and resources to promote a positive awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. All children are valued and they demonstrate a sense of belonging by the ease with which they relate to the childminder.

Children behave well and are learning about acceptable behaviour by strategies used which are appropriate for their stage of development. They are given explanations of the small number of house rules which are written for the protection of all the children. They are not involved in setting the rules. Children learn good manners at mealtimes.

Children's well-being is safeguarded by clear information given to parents regarding the care their children receive and enhanced by regular discussion which ensures parents are informed about the activities undertaken.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and confident in the care of the childminder who provides a warm and caring environment. Children and parents have benefited from her attendance on a Counselling Course which helped in dealing with trauma in their lives. The childminder has a lack of awareness of the need to make sure all adults in the household are vetted in order to protect children.

Attendance on a business course has helped the childminder ensure that all the documentation is in place to safeguard children. A lost or uncollected children policy would mean appropriate action would be taken and parents advise the names of people with consent to collect their children in order to protect them. She is aware of the need to ensure any agreement with parents is in writing to safeguard children. The childminder ensures all the documentation necessary for children's health and well-being is in place.

Overall, the needs of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection made an action to improve the safety of the rear garden in relation to loose brickwork and accessible damaged wire netting to prevent accidents/injuries to children. The wire netting for trailing plants has been removed from the wall and bricks removed. In addition the glass in the window of the shed has been replaced with flexi-glass and a padlock fitted to the tool store to ensure children can now play safely in the garden.

The childminder was asked to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. Parents have now given their consent to ensure children's welfare would be safeguarded by receiving appropriate treatment in such an emergency.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 Ofsted has received one complaint regarding the childminder. This related to Standard 6: Safety regarding the use of a motor vehicle. The childminder had let two children share one seatbelt. Ofsted investigated by telephoning the childminder to discuss her action. The childminder admitted that this had taken place. She is now fully aware of the implications and has stated she will make alternative arrangements to take children to school if she does not have enough seats in her car. Ofsted are satisfied that the childminder will take appropriate action in the future and she therefore remains qualified for registration.

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):

- ensure good hygiene procedures are followed at all times when changing nappies
- develop knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures
- ensure the vetting procedure is completed for all members of the household over the age of 16 years.

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