



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256520
Inspection date	11 May 2006
Inspector	Susan Cox

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 has been registered since 1985. She lives with her husband in a market town in Norfolk. The whole of the house is used for childminding with the exception of the main bedroom. 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 caring for six children at various times during the week. The childminder walks to a range of local facilities and also uses a car to transport children. The family has three cats and a rabbit. She attends the local childminder group.

The childminder supports children with special needs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted as they are cared for in a home that is clean with good standards of hygiene. The childminder is helping them learn how to manage their personal hygiene effectively as she reminds them to wash their hands after using the toilet, handling the pets and before eating giving the younger ones appropriate assistance so they do this properly. They understand this is to help keep them well and stop germs spreading. Children's medical needs are met as the childminder gathers relevant information from their parents and keeps her first aid training up-to-date. If children become unwell they are cared for in a sensitive manner and their parents consulted to agree what is best for them. However, the childminder has not yet obtained written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment to ensure children's needs can be fully met if their parents are not available.

Children's dietary needs are met as the childminder works with their parents and other health professionals to ensure they have appropriate meals and snacks. They enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables and know these are good for them as they discuss this and follow the poster for '5 portions a day'. Babies enjoy the closeness of being cuddled to be fed their bottle and toddlers are supported as they learn how to feed themselves, for example, having their own spoon to use but with the childminder helping them to ensure they have sufficient to eat. All children drink frequently knowing this is good for them.

Children make good progress with their physical development. Daily walks to and from school and a range of local facilities ensure they are frequently active in the fresh air. They enjoy visiting local parks where they use a range of large play equipment, under supervision, to practise climbing, sliding and playing games. They use sit and ride toys in the garden and at the local childminding group and exercise to music or play games inside if the weather is particularly bad so they continue to be active. Younger children are appropriately supported as they learn to become mobile. The childminder is mindful of their safety and organises space and resources, with good supervision, for them to develop these skills with appropriate support. A range of craft activities, construction sets and puzzles helps them develop fine motor control and the use of tools appropriate to their stage of development. This is helping them develop physical skills and learn how their bodies work. When they are tired they may rest according to their individual needs and as agreed with their parents. Little ones can sleep in a travel cot in a bedroom with older ones using the comfortable furniture to rest in the lounge.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment in which they can move around and play safely and independently. They have access to a wide variety of high quality and suitable toys and equipment which are appropriate and well maintained. Children confidently use the playroom moving to the kitchen and dining area as they wish to organise their play being supervised by the childminder to ensure this is safe. The playroom is particularly attractive with a range of posters focussing on various aspects of learning, photos

of children at play and samples of their work with certificates and information displayed clearly for parents making it interesting for all. The childminder ensures that all children have access to an excellent range of resources with them being able to make many of their own choices as she has considered the safety of storage to promote their independence. There are clear procedures for outings to minimise risks and she helps children begin to learn to keep themselves safe. For example, she discusses road safety with them and they practise this as they go out and about in the community. They regularly talk about safety in the home and there is a clear procedure for evacuating the premises although she has not practised this with the children. Learning appropriate safety strategies is helping the children prepare for future independence.

The childminder has taken the relevant action to minimise risks on her premises and supervises children effectively to maintain their safety. For example, her home and garden are secure and stair gates are well used to limit children to appropriate areas of the home. She has a good understanding of child protection issues knowing the signs that may cause concern and having the contact details displayed to enable her to make a referral if required to ensure children's safety is promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive and are making very good progress in all areas of their learning and development due to the caring and sensitive support they receive. The childminder has an excellent understanding of meeting their needs and encouraging them to be happy and well motivated as she exploits learning opportunities and taking the children's interests as starting points. Children are attracted by the rich environment in the playroom. They confidently and easily access the excellent range of resources organising their own play happily and working well together. For example, they play with a garage and range of vehicles sharing and taking turns and making up stories as they play. Later they decide to look after the dolls and chatter freely about the care they need then select Duplo to build complicated models and explain what these are. They are learning how to use their time in rewarding play with the childminder joining in to extend learning opportunities, for example, asking about a holiday which encourages children to recount their experiences. When talking about the weather they consider how to keep safe in the sun and wonder at freckles on their skin helping them to think about how they are all different. Children enjoy a good balance of activities. They are familiar with the routine of the day having free play often with a craft activity after snack time. Meal times are sociable occasions with all the children sitting together and the childminder using this time to develop social skills and table manners. She is currently helping older children manage their packed lunch and eat this in a reasonable time in preparation for when they move into school. This is part of an effective procedure to help them adjust to school. She also ensures they are not too tired to enjoy the afternoon school session by considering morning activities and has the school newsletter so she can share in their conversations about their experiences to support and reassure them. Attendance at a childminders group gives children opportunity to play with their friends and take part in a further range of craft and other activities. For example, they celebrated Divali increasing their understanding of our multi-cultural society and love group outings such as to the Dinosaur Park, Thrigby Hall and Wroxham Barns. Children explain that they like seeing the animals and playing on the large climbing apparatus when they go out with

their friends. Visits to local shops, to the library, cookery activities and walks where they listen to the birds songs plus playing in the park and meeting up with friends helps provide a stimulating range of activities for all.

Children are developing good relationships. They play happily together sharing and taking turns as a matter of course. Consideration for others is developing, for example, when a younger child becomes upset older ones find toys that they feel may make the child happy. This caring attitude is encouraged by the childminder's sensitive support for every child and the positive role model she displays so the children are learning from her good example. They are settled and confident in her care knowing that she will listen to them and value what they say and do. This is reinforced by the positive praise and encouragement that is freely given.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a strong sense of belonging, which means they confidently access play and learning experiences and settle quickly. This is encouraged as the childminder knows them well, is sensitive to their particular stage of development and supports them effectively. She has an inclusive approach that enables all children to take part in the full range of activities being flexible and adapting to meet particular needs as they arise. Children are developing positive attitudes to differences and similarities as they play with a good range of resources that promote equality and help them understand about our multi-cultural society.

Children's behaviour is good. They are generally polite, caring and play happily together. This is supported by the childminder implementing her written behaviour management policy well. She is calm and consistent in her expectations and fully aware of how children develop. For example, she does not always intervene immediately if children have a minor dispute but observes the situation to see if they have the skills to resolve the problem. If not then she sensitively helps them understand and this encourages them to learn appropriate strategies for the future. There is a very good partnership with parents and carers. This enhances the care and welfare of the children as they work effectively together to see all their needs are met. A flexible settling-in procedure enables children and parents to feel confident in the service provided in their own good time. A daily informal exchange of information is supplemented by a diary or notebook for parents and the childminder to record information to ensure they are fully up-to-date. This is also used to make sure information from school is passed on effectively. Although there have not been any complaints a system is in place to respond should any be received in the future. Parents have expressed their satisfaction with the service through letters available for the inspector at the inspection and through discussion.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit because the childminder is well-organised and plans her days so there is a variety of activities and opportunities for the children both in and out of her home. The play space is well laid out with older children sometimes having independence to use the playroom with general supervision appropriate to their stage of development. This gives them opportunity

to play away from the younger ones who may enjoy time with the childminder in the dining area which enhances the care for all. Record keeping is good with information readily at hand as required. She has attended a range of recent courses, including the 'Birth to three matters' training, and uses this knowledge and understanding to enhance the service she provides. Overall the needs of all the children attending are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made to inform parents of the procedure to follow if they wished to make a complaint. A clear procedure is in place to deal effectively with any complaints that may be received.

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

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):

- obtain written consent from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

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