



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY224640
Inspection date	04 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 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 2002. She lives with her husband and two children aged 15 and 12 in a village near Great Yarmouth. The whole of the house, with the exception of the annex, is registered for childminding. 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. She is currently minding seven children at various times during the week. Care is also provided for children over the age of eight. The childminder walks to a range of local facilities and also uses a car to transport children. The family has rabbits, ducks, guinea pigs and three cats.

The childminder supports children with special needs and children with English as an additional language.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is exceptionally well promoted. They are cared for in a home that is clean with very good standards of hygiene. Children are learning how to keep themselves well and manage their personal care. Older children manage the toilet with confidence and younger ones are appropriately supported to help them develop the skills required. All wash their hands after using the toilet, before meals and after handling the pets as they know this is the routine to help prevent them getting unwell. Children's medical needs are met as good records enable the childminder to respond sensitively if they become unwell or have an accident with parents being consulted to enhance the care their child receives. Children enjoy an excellent range of healthy snacks and meals which are designed to meet any special dietary needs. They are actively learning what is good for them through a range of projects. For example, they make their own place mats, have a competition to design a favourite meal, shop for fresh produce and chatter about food during cookery activities. Fresh fruit is regularly served for a snack and children drink frequently to enhance their health.

Children really enjoy being active and use the garden frequently for a variety of play in the fresh air. They love the freedom to run, play football and use the climbing frame on the large flat grassed area and pedal, push and manoeuvre a wide range of toys with confidence. Obstacle courses are negotiated, ball games played and sports days designed to include all. They often walk to and from a range of local facilities encouraging the understanding that walking is good for them and an interesting activity. If the weather is particularly bad then they are active indoors exercising to tapes, playing games and using sit and ride toys according to their stage of development. Fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination are developed as they use a range of tools effectively. For example, they draw around their hands, colour them and cut them out using appropriate scissors then use these to make collages. They make models with construction sets, complete puzzles and design robots using a range of tools effectively. Consequently they are developing a comprehensive range of physical skills and finding out how their bodies work. When they are tired they can rest according to their individual needs. This may be in a travel cot in the front room, with a monitor to ensure their safety, in a buggy or on comfortable furniture as agreed with their parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are safe and very well cared for in premises that are secure and suitable for childminding. They play on the ground floor, with a stair gate restricting the younger ones to the playroom, with access to the kitchen, dining area, bathroom and garden. This gives ample and attractive areas in which children play happily moving around with confidence. Children over the age of eight have use of additional areas of the house with a comprehensive range of appropriate resources to organise their own activities. The playroom is a particularly attractive and child-centred environment. A range of posters, displays of children's work and resources stored for children to access freely encourages them to be eager and active learners. The childminder has considered storage to be appropriate to the range of children and she checks what is

selected to make sure it is safe, for example, responding quickly when she sees a young child with a pen top. The garden is fully enclosed with the gate secured for children to safely play and with the childminder monitoring the steps to ensure they are used appropriately. She has taken the appropriate action to minimise risks in her home and garden and carefully considers outings and activities assessing risks and working effectively to ensure children can enjoy the experiences safely.

Children are learning how to keep themselves safe. They help tidy up to prevent falling over toys and consider road safety through projects then practice this when out with the childminder. Fire drills are also practised so they know how to leave the premises appropriately in an emergency. This is helping them prepare for future independence. The childminder has a clear understanding of child protection procedures and knows the action to take if she has concerns to ensure children's safety and welfare is promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are eager and well motivated to learn. They enthusiastically join in an exceptional range of interesting activities that help them make rapid progress in all areas of learning and development. During free play they effectively organise their own resources making choices from the excellent range which is readily available to them in the playroom. They happily find items they wish to play with such as a doll to take for a walk in a buggy, a construction set, dressing-up clothes and books to read. These may be taken to the kitchen or dining area as they decide where they want to play. Children explore a range of creative skills through planned craft activities. They regularly paint, construct and enjoy making items such as bird boxes, nests for Easter chicks, cards, decorations and a wealth of other items often linked to a specific project. They concentrate well, for example, when drawing they chatter to the childminder about what they are doing. She asks questions to make them think and extends learning opportunities in a relaxed manner such as counting and naming colours and shapes whilst giving much praise and encouragement. She understands their level of development and interests knowing when to extend an activity further for older children who are still interested but enabling younger ones to move to other play when they are ready. This sensitive approach encourages children to focus well on tasks and gain full benefit from their play.

Much consideration is given to providing children of all ages with a balanced and exciting range of activities. The childminder plans carefully to meet the needs of all the children and also encourages them to make their own suggestions with an excellent resource file being available with leaflets to help them decide. Many visits are enjoyed, for example, visiting a fisherman with a smoke house to find out about his work and how the fish are prepared, trips to the Sea Life Centre, to a pig farm and fruit picking. Children are becoming very familiar with their local community as they walk to a range of facilities and meet local people. They know the shopkeeper, butcher and post office staff as they go shopping, make lists, carry the bags and select produce helping them understand how routine tasks are carried out and how people help us on a daily basis. The childminder often works closely with another childminder to combine their skills and resources and to extend what they can provide. For example, they sometimes hire a local hall where all the children, siblings and parents join together for a special celebration

such as a Christmas party or for a themed day. These are very popular as children enjoy meeting with friends and sharing the experience with their family. Such rich experiences encourage children's natural curiosity and stimulate their interest in learning.

Children are developing very good relationships. They happily greet friends as they arrive and quickly settle to play together sharing, taking turns and being polite. Their behaviour is good as they are sensitively supported by the childminder who is a very positive role model helping them learn appropriate ways of behaving. Knowing how children learn and develop helps her plan activities to meet the needs of the wide age range of children who attend. She has a clear understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' and uses the principles well with the younger children to enhance their care. Her kind and caring approach inspires confidence in the children who are very happy and settled in her company.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are confident, independent and developing self-esteem. They are all treated with equal concern as the childminder knows them very well and works with them as individuals to meet their particular needs and promote their learning. They are developing an excellent understanding of valuing and respecting differences as she introduces them to the wider world and our multi-cultural society through a varied and exciting range of projects, for example, celebrating Chinese New Year, Diwali and a range of special days. Much thought is given to how this learning will catch children's attention and raise their awareness so a comprehensive range of activities are planned to support the celebration. For example, for St Patrick's Day children helped prepare and then ate Irish stew and for Canada Day they found out about native animals, made flags and enjoyed a 'corn roast'. Their understanding is further increased as they play with a good range of resources that reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability. Visiting a range of local facilities, walks and meeting local traders and people helps them learn about their own community and how it works. Considering others less fortunate than themselves is a key lesson they are learning. They eagerly take part in Children in Need and Red Nose Day realising it can be fun to raise money to support others. The childminder has a sensitive and inclusive approach, with a good partnership with parents, which enables her to care for children with special needs. A willingness to adapt activities and find suitable resources helps all children play together and to reach their full potential.

Children's behaviour is good. They understand what is expected of them as they frequently consider this as part of projects and the daily routine. Older children help to set house rules and the childminder gives sensitive reminders appropriate to the children's stage of development to help them manage their behaviour effectively. The positive written policy is shared with parents so they can support their children as needed. Praise and encouragement are freely given to promote self-esteem.

Children thrive due to the secure and caring partnership with parents. A flexible settling-in procedure enables children to be happy and settled in their own time and ensures parents are well informed about the service that is provided. This is enhanced by the comprehensive range of written policies and procedures for parents that explain in detail how their children will be cared for and their needs met. A daily exchange of information helps keep parents up to date

and this is supplemented by using a diary and scrap book to record relevant information and provide attractive records of their development. Parents are encouraged to contribute as they wish and can have access to all records held on their children. Interesting newsletters inform of forthcoming events and projects so parents can plan ahead to join in with their children. Although there have not been any complaints, the childminder has set up a system to deal with any that may be received and maintain a log as required. Parents were made aware of a forthcoming inspection and very positive feedback was received.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children receive an excellent standard of care and education. This is enhanced as the childminder shows a commitment to developing her knowledge and understanding by attending appropriate courses and using new information effectively to extend her service. Her enthusiasm for working with children is evident in the care she takes to make learning safe and enjoyable for all and this is reflected in the children who love being with her and are making very good progress. Children play happily and safely as she organises space within her home effectively to meet their needs and she supervises them appropriately at all times. Checks have been completed on household members to ensure their suitability and the childminder always supervises them to ensure they do not have inappropriate contact with persons who have not been vetted. Having a close working relationship with another childminder has led them to agree a system to provide emergency cover should it ever be needed. All the required information is gathered before the childminder starts to care for the children so she may respond appropriately to their needs and information is regularly updated to ensure it remains current. Overall the needs of all the children attending are very well met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection recommendations were made to improve the way in which information about the children's day is shared with parents and to ensure car insurance covered for working as a childminder. Parents are now very well informed about what their children do and the progress they are making through a daily informal exchange of information, the use of communications books, diaries, newsletters and the child's file. Car insurance includes working as a childminder so the correct level of cover is in place.

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 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