



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	259546
Inspection date	31 May 2006
Inspector	Melanie Calway
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 2000. She lives with her partner and two children, aged eight and ten in a small village near to the town of King's Lynn. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. She drives to take and collect children from school and on regular outings to local attractions. She also walks with children to the park and bird hide in the village. The family has a pet rabbit.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding four children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association. She has a level three qualification in childcare and is undertaking the Norfolk Quality Kitemark accreditation scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well because there are good hygiene procedures in place. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Individual towels are provided to minimise the risk of cross infection and new children are shown which towel to use. Toys are clean and the childminder has a system for checking and cleaning toys at regular intervals. Children are learning about the importance of good hygiene as they discuss when hands should be washed and the childminder provides an incentive for them by placing a sticker on a reward chart.

Children's medical needs are met as the childminder has a current First Aid qualification and keeps a first aid kit so that she can deal with minor accidents and injuries appropriately. A system for recording the administration of medicine is in place as well as a record of children's existing injuries in order to promote their welfare. Consent has been sought for emergency treatment and advice so that help can be sought in an emergency. A detailed sickness policy is given to parents so that they know that they need to keep sick children away to reduce the risk of infection.

Children have good opportunities for exercise and fresh air as they play outside every day in the large garden or walk to the park or bird hide in the village. Children are encouraged to bring boots and outdoor clothes so that they can go out in all weathers. The childminder also takes children swimming and to a local indoor play area. Children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs. The childminder has bean bags for children to rest on and builds a quiet time into her routine. Younger children can sleep on the sofa protected by a bed guard.

Children are well nourished. The childminder provides a balanced and nutritious evening meal. She prints a menu for parents and compiles a list of foods that children like or dislike when they start. She offers them food she knows they will eat while also encouraging them to try other options. Children are able to choose fruit for a morning snack and bring packed lunches provided by parents for lunch time. Children are able to access fresh drinking water at all times from a cooler in the fridge. The childminder explains to children how to operate this. There is a lot of discussion about healthy and unhealthy foods during the morning to enable children to understand the importance of a healthy diet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and suitable environment. Children have sufficient space to move around and play freely. The premises are made welcoming to children as there is a good selection of toys available on shelving in the living room which children are able to access. The childminder will put out a selection for younger children so that they can reach them easily. Children's pictures are displayed on the walls, reward charts on the kitchen door and relevant information such as the poster from the 'Birth to three matters' framework pack in the kitchen. The childminder promotes children's safety by ensuring that toys are safe. She only buys items

which have a kite mark, and checks toys regularly for safety. She also ensures that smaller items suitable for older children are inaccessible to young children.

Children stay safe because the childminder maintains a good level of supervision. Children are protected from the risk of accidental injury as the childminder talks to them about safety issues. For example there is a set of rules for children when doing cookery sessions in the kitchen. The necessary permissions are in place for outings and transport. Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder takes emergency contact numbers with her and talks to children about safety rules and ensures that they hold hands when required.

Children are protected from the risk of fire as fire safety equipment is in place and is tested regularly. The childminder has an evacuation plan which children understand. She talks to children so that they know what to do in the event of a fire and practises sounding the alarm so they know what to expect.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder is aware of her duty to report any child protection concerns. She makes this clear to parents in her child protection policy and she has the relevant information on child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of activities. They can access a range of toys from shelves in the living room. In the kitchen they can sit at the table to do drawing, sticking, painting or play dough. The childminder also does cookery and gardening with them. They enjoy regular outings to the woods, the shops, the library and other local attractions as well as the swimming pool and an indoor play area. Children are able to choose what they would like to play with and the childminder will offer suggestions.

Children settle well as the childminder explains to them what to expect. Their self-esteem is boosted as she talks to them kindly and gives them plenty of praise and encouragement. Children are interested in the activities on offer because they are given choices about what to do and because the childminder involves herself with their play. They all sit down to play with the play dough and chat as they make props for a story. Children are asked what their favourite story is and they make items to go with it. The childminder shows the children a pack for post office play and they put up banners and displays and set out leaflets. She offers suggestions to extend their play such as making name badges or writing letters and they talk about walking into the village to post a real letter. The childminder shows the children how to send a different kind of letter by e-mail.

Children's independence is promoted well. They use the toilet and bathroom independently and are encouraged to do up their own coats and cardigans for outside play. They fetch their own fruit at snack time and are encouraged to tidy up toys before getting others out. Children form positive relationships with the childminder and each other and play happily throughout the morning.

Children under three are cared for appropriately. The childminder is currently attending training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework pack and is using the pack to develop her own practice.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing good relationships because the childminder works with parents and carers to meet the children's individual needs. The childminder makes sure that she has all the information she needs to be able to care for them effectively, for example, food likes and dislikes. She gets to know children well by talking to them and by encouraging a settling in period during which children can get to know her. Children are treated with equal regard and her equal opportunities policy is shared with parents. Children are beginning to learn about the wider world as she introduces other cultures through activities such as cookery or food tasting. However the range of resources that reflect other cultures and life-styles is limited.

Children receive appropriate support according to their needs. The childminder has had experience of working with children with special needs and works with parents and other agencies to enable them to progress. Children behave well because they are kept interested and occupied. The childminder uses positive strategies to manage children's behaviour such as praise and encouragement and uses a reward system to encourage good behaviour. Each child has a chart which is displayed in the kitchen. They receive reward marks for washing hands, helping to tidy up, sharing and being polite. When the chart is full they can choose an outing or special item of fruit. Parents are kept informed of the childminder's methods by means of a behaviour policy.

Children are cared for effectively because the childminder works with parents and carers to meet their needs. She has produced a brochure and an informative set of policies and procedures which are given to parents when they start, including menus and a list of activities offered to the children. She also communicates with them through regular newsletters. Parents are made aware of how to air any concerns and are given Ofsted's number, should they wish to contact the regulator. She obtains information on the children's preferences and needs and uses a daily diary for younger children to keep parents informed about their children's care and routines.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is a suitable person to care for children. She has a level three childcare qualification and has attended a range of relevant short courses to ensure that her skills and knowledge are updated. She is registered to take part in the Norfolk Quality Kite mark accreditation scheme in order to develop and improve the service she is offering. Children are protected from unauthorised persons as the childminder maintains direct supervision at all times. The premises and schedule are organised well to promote children's well-being and enjoyment.

All the necessary documentation is in place and is well ordered and accessible. Parents are provided with a clear set of policies and procedures which inform them about the setting. Overall the needs of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that acceptable behaviour is encouraged. The childminder uses positive strategies and a reward system to encourage good behaviour and as a result children behave well. She was also asked to ensure that she was aware of the local child protection procedures. She now has all the relevant information and is aware of the procedures to follow to safeguard children's welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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):

- develop the range of resources which reflect other cultures and life-styles.

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