



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250676
Inspection date	10 August 2006
Inspector	Gill Thornton
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 1991. She lives with her husband and three children aged 20, 17 and 14 in Ipswich. The whole of the downstairs of the property, except the study and downstairs bedroom, is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding 11 children aged under eight all on a part-time basis. The childminder also cares for children aged over eight. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and pre-schools and regularly attends local children's groups and takes children to the local park. The childminder is an active member of the National Childminding Association and is chair of the local childminding group. The family has two dogs, a cat and a rabbit.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's good health is very effectively promoted as the childminder seeks clear information from parents regarding their children's individual health care needs and through her rigorous attention to ensuring that there are consent forms in place for emergency medical treatment or medication to be administered. The childminder has attended first aid and food hygiene training to ensure she is aware of the correct procedures to follow to maintain children's health and prevent the spread of infection. Children are well protected from the spread of illness as the childminder has a very clear policy in place, which she shares with parents, about the exclusion of children if they are ill.

Children develop an excellent understanding of the importance of good health and hygiene practices. They are aware of the need to wash their hands before meals and after going to the toilet, reinforced by gentle reminders and explanations from the childminder about how soap "washes away the germs". Children are encouraged to be independent when using the ground floor toilet and they confidently use individual hand towels and flannels to reduce the risk of cross infection.

Children's individual dietary requirements are well understood and catered for as the childminder obtains detailed information on their registration forms. Children either bring packed lunches from home, which are stored in the fridge if they contain perishable items, or the childminder provides breakfast, lunch or a cooked tea, dependent on the wishes of parents. Meals and snacks feature fresh fruit and vegetables with the menu being adapted to take account of children's individual dietary needs and preferences. The childminder sits with the children while they are eating, giving opportunities to discuss healthy eating and food that is good for them.

Children have excellent opportunities to extend their physical development both indoors and outside so contributing to a healthy lifestyle. They can move freely indoors, safely negotiating space for themselves and the other children. Free access to the rear garden and regular walks to the local park provide them with plenty of fresh air and access to a range of equipment offering appropriate challenge. In the hot weather the childminder is vigilant in promoting sun safety, explaining to children why they need to wear sun cream and ensuring they wear sunhats. Children develop control of their bodies while using wheeled toys, pushing buggies, playing 'swingball' or using the climbing equipment at the park. They develop their manipulative skills using a wide range equipment, such as mark making tools, construction kits and scissors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment where they can move around freely and independently. The large well maintained house provides a warm and welcoming environment for children and their parents, with a designated playroom decorated with children's photographs and examples of their art work. Children make excellent use of their environment and adapt the layout to suit their play, for example, when organising resources

in the playroom. The rooms are bright and light and set up invitingly for play with toys and resources organised effectively to enable children to choose activities that interest and motivate them. Children use the back garden regularly with the large french windows wide open in fine weather to enable them free flow from indoors to out during their play.

The childminder has a very clear understanding of how to keep children safe and she has taken all the necessary steps to reduce risks. For example, safety gates are used effectively to prevent children having access to the stairs or meter cupboard and all potential hazards are stored out of children's reach. Children are learning effective strategies to keep themselves safe and prepare for future independence, such as learning the 'Green Cross Code' or discussing why they need to wear a safety helmet when riding a bike. In addition, the childminder arranged for a visit from a 'lollipop lady' to further enhance children's understanding of the importance of road safety. The childminder has sound procedures in place when taking children on outings or in a vehicle and always carries all their emergency contact detail with her. All the necessary fire safety precautions are in place and the children regularly practise emergency evacuation procedures with the childminder to ensure they know what to do in the event of a fire.

Children have access to an extensive range of high quality toys and equipment which meet safety standards. All equipment is checked regularly and replaced as necessary. The childminder monitors and supervises children's play to ensure they are safe and that toys are used appropriately. Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted because the childminder has an excellent understanding of her role in child protection. She updates her training every three years to ensure she is aware of the correct procedures to follow if she has a concern and she has a child protection policy in place which is shared with parents before their child's first session.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy, settled and motivated to learn in the vibrant and child-friendly atmosphere. They confidently make themselves at home and form warm and lasting relationships with the childminder and each other, which contributes to their sense of belonging. They play together contentedly, interacting and negotiating with confidence, for example, while selecting toys and resources in the play room. Children develop a wide vocabulary offering their own ideas and asking questions, for example, during an animated discussion about whether animals have brains, so promoting their natural curiosity and stimulating their questioning skills.

A very comprehensive range of craft resources help children purposefully explore their creative talents. For example, chalking or painting with water and large wallpaper brushes on the patio or using acrylic paints and glitter to create a stained glass window effect. Children delight in experimenting with their own ideas while making junk models with an extensive range of boxes and cartons they all help to collect. Children enjoy lots of positive interaction with the childminder who offers them excellent support during their activities, for example, when discussing what colours mixed together make brown.

Children's self-esteem is skilfully promoted because the childminder is enthusiastic about their ideas and values their contributions, for example, saying "that's a good idea, I'll remember

that". Children spend their time engrossed in activities that motivate and interest them because the childminder provides an extensive range of stimulating play opportunities using her expert knowledge of child development.

Children have excellent opportunities to socialise with others through regularly attending local children's groups. They enjoy many planned outings, for example, a coach trip to the beach at Clacton, visiting open farms or going crabbing. The childminder is familiar with 'Birth to three matters' and has attended training to help her implement the framework in her good practice. She has a plentiful supply of toys and equipment for children of this age group to promote their all round development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop a strong sense of belonging as the childminder ensures they are all valued and included, this enables them to develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Children have excellent relationships with the childminder who responds sensitively to them and respects their individual personalities. Children have equal access to toys and equipment that meet their individual needs and they make positive choices about how they spend their time, so they can become confident and independent. The childminder has a very positive approach to caring for children with additional needs and works closely with parents and other professionals to ensure all children are included and their specific needs are met.

Children have many opportunities to learn about their local environment while on walks or outings to local amenities. They develop an excellent understanding of the wider world through skilful interaction from the childminder, for example, spontaneously extending children's interest in Chinese writing on a hat and then looking up information in a book and discussing the photographs. Children have free access to a meaningful range of resources promoting a positive view of diversity, particularly the extensive range of small world figures depicting people from different races or with disabilities.

Children develop an excellent understanding of responsible behaviour. They respond well to the childminder's consistent use of strategies appropriate to their individual stage of development to enable them to understand the consequences of their actions. The behaviour management policy is shared with parents to promote a consistent approach. The childminder reminds children to be polite and show concern for each other and praises them for being kind.

Children benefit from the excellent relationships the childminder develops with their parents and carers. The childminder is flexible and cooperative to fit in with parents needs and works closely with them to ensure their children settle well. All the required documentation and written consents are in place to ensure children are looked after according to their parents' wishes. The childminder takes positive steps to ensure that parents are kept well informed about all relevant policies and procedures via a detailed information pack and through sharing her operational folder. Parents show a very high level of confidence in the childminder and the care she provides for their children, through the numerous positive references praising her good approach to dealing with children's behaviour, her friendly disposition and the range of activities and outings provided. Detailed information is shared verbally each day to ensure

children's changing needs are met, with daily diaries used for babies to ensure continuity of care.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder is aware of the need to inform Ofsted of any changes relating to her registration. The current registration certificate is displayed where it can be seen by parents. All adults living on the premises are checked for suitability, reassuring parents and keeping children safe. The childminder is very experienced and knowledgeable and has attended all the required training to support her registration. She is proactive in updating her practice and skills by attending numerous workshop and childminding conferences. The knowledge and understanding gained from this training is used to update and enhance the provision and the care provided.

The childminder has a very high regard for the well-being of all the children in her care to ensure they are fully supported in reaching their full potential. The childminder is meticulous in maintaining all the required documentation and consents to support the care and welfare of children. Records are stored securely and the childminder has an excellent understanding of issues relating to confidentiality. The childminder has compiled a substantial operational folder containing detailed information about her provision to promote children's good health, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Children's care is significantly enhanced by the childminder's very effective organisation of time, space and resources and the balanced range of activities provided to promote their care, learning and play. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At her last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure she maintained an appropriately stocked first aid kit. She now monitors and checks the contents of her first aid kit against a list provided during first aid training to enhance children's welfare.

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

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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