



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250880
Inspection date	23 June 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 good. 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 1988. She lives with her husband and adult son in Ipswich. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding four children all on a part-time basis. She also cares for children aged over eight years. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools. The childminder attends local children's groups and takes children to the local park. The family has a cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and comfortable home where they gain some understanding of personal hygiene through reminders by the childminder to wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals. However, this is not always reinforced at snack time. Children's individual dietary needs are met because the childminder requests information from parents on allergies and children's preferences. Children usually bring a packed lunch from home and the childminder provides them with snacks of fruit or biscuits. The childminder has a good understanding of healthy eating which she promotes through discussion with parents.

The childminder maintains records of medication administered and accidents which are countersigned by parents. Children's health is promoted because the childminder has a current first aid certificate, maintains an appropriately stocked first aid kit and obtains parents written consent for first aid and to use plasters. However, she does not request prior written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment, so potentially children may not receive prompt attention in an emergency.

Children enjoy a range of physical play experiences that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They develop control of their bodies while playing in the garden or using the apparatus at the local park. Weekly trips to a soft play centre provide children with good levels of physical challenge.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where they move about freely and safely. Their risk of accidental injury is minimised because the childminder supervises their play, especially in the garden and has taken steps to reduce risks to children. For example, fitting cupboard locks as required in the kitchen and keeping the front and back door securely locked. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through explanations from the childminder about the possible consequences of their actions.

Children have access to a wide range of good quality toys and equipment which meet safety standards. They can choose the toys they wish to play with from those stored in labelled boxes in the under stairs cupboard or in a chest of drawers in the dining room. Children are kept safe on outings because the childminder obtains written consent from parents to use public transport and she ensures she has all their emergency contact details stored in her mobile phone.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminder has obtained information on safeguarding children and she is aware of the correct procedures to follow if she has a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and well settled and have good relationships with each other and the childminder. Children play happily together interacting and sharing ideas, for example, while sitting in boxes pretending to be on a train. They enjoy spending time together, for instance one of the youngest children likes arriving early to see the 'big boys' before they go to school. Children's self-esteem is promoted because the childminder praises their achievements, such as clapping and enjoying a child's delight as they exclaim 'hooray' after completing a jig saw puzzle.

Children's development is promoted by access to a good range of toys and equipment which interest and motivate them, such as building the 'Humpty Dumpty' toy then making him fall off the wall. The childminder joins in with children's play to extend their learning, for example, while encouraging them to practise their counting skills when using the building bricks. Children use their imagination in their play and contentedly explore their own interests such as when 'trapping' small plastic figures in little stacking boxes. Young children enjoy looking at books, which they bring to the childminder for her to share with them. Children have regular opportunities to develop their social skills through attendance at local children's groups.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a strong sense of belonging because they are all included and valued and enjoy activities suitable to their stage of development. The childminder has a very positive attitude to inclusion and she has some experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children have access to resources such as books and puzzles reflecting a positive view of diversity.

Children learn about responsible behaviour through praise and encouragement and the use of clear boundaries of expected behaviour. For example, children understand that they are not allowed to go upstairs and that they must sit down while eating. The childminder uses strategies appropriate to their individual stages of development and encourages children to share and take turns with favourite resources such as the plastic golf set.

Children benefit from the positive partnerships the childminder builds with their parents. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure their wishes are followed to provide continuity of care. Information is shared verbally with parents on collection to keep them informed about their children's day. Parents provide positive references praising the childminder's knowledge and experience and how she is quick to respond to their children's needs.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her home to provide a safe and child friendly environment with all the facilities to support children's care, learning and play. Children benefit from regular routines which helps them feel confident and secure. Space and resources within the home are organised

to provide a suitable balance of activities for the children attending. The childminder follows sound procedures to promote children's safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

Most of the required documentation and consents are in place to provide appropriate care and to ensure children are cared for according to their parent's wishes. Most parents have written agreements in place setting out the care provided, however, the childminder does not retain a copy for her own records. In addition the accident and medication book is not confidential as more than one entry is recorded on a page. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At her last inspection the childminder was asked to develop her knowledge and understanding of child protection and food hygiene issues. She now has a safeguarding children flowchart and is aware of the procedures to follow. She now ensures that children's lunches are stored appropriately so improving children's welfare. The childminder also agreed to provide children with opportunities to make choices and decisions with regard to play activities and ensure toys and equipment are cleaned regularly. Children can self select toys and activities to initiate their own play and the childminder regularly washes the toys, sometimes with the children's help. The childminder also agreed to complete the attendance register, this is now being done to maintain an accurate record of children's time of arrival and departure, so enhancing children's welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 Ofsted has received one complaint which led to concerns regarding the welfare of a child. We investigated the concerns raised by conducting a visit on 8 December 2004. The provider has been given an action under National Standard 14 (Documentation). A satisfactory response to this action was received on 5 January 2005. The provider remains suitable for registration. The provider has made a record of the complaint in their complaint record.

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):

- improve hygiene procedures with regard to hand washing practices and promote children's understanding of the importance of good personal hygiene
- request prior written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment
- improve documentation to ensure written agreements are in place with all parents and to ensure confidentiality is maintained with regard to accident and medication records.

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