



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	255850
Inspection date	25 July 2006
Inspector	Marianne Gascoyne
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 satisfactory. 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 1997. She lives with her husband in the village of Terrington St Clement, near King's Lynn. They have no children of their own. The whole of the ground floor with the exception of the study and sitting room is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder drives to the local school to take and collect children.

The childminder is registered to care for four children at any one time and is currently minding three children. She has a dog which is kept in a run outside.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are aware of the need for sun protection to be able to enjoy playing in the sunshine and are able to play in shade in the garden. They develop a positive attitude to fresh air and exercise as they play outside or go on walks and bicycle rides. The range of equipment provided in the outside area helps develop children's physical skills. The dog is cared for effectively to ensure he does not present a health risk to children.

Children are developing an early understanding of the need for clean hands before eating and learn how to wash them properly using soap and water when they come in from the garden. Adequate procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection when changing nappies and drying hands and appropriate measures taken when children are ill. A well stocked first aid box ensures dressings are available to treat any accidental injury which may occur although the childminder does not have a current first aid certificate to give her the necessary up-to-date knowledge.

The childminder frequently reminds children to drink fresh water throughout the day which ensures they do not become dehydrated in the hot weather. They are adequately nourished by snacks and packed lunches provided by their parents and gain some understanding of healthy eating from conversations which take place with the childminder. Children are protected from risk of an allergic reaction to food by information obtained on registration.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Toys and equipment are visible in the garden as children arrive creating a child-centred welcome. There is sufficient space for children to play effectively in the areas of the house used for childminding. They spend time, whenever possible, in the large garden where they are able to play imaginatively or develop their physical skills with suitable equipment. An appropriate range of toys and equipment is easily accessible to children in storage units to encourage their development. They request items and play with them on the floor or look at books sitting comfortably in an armchair. They learn to take responsibility for maintaining toys as they help to tidy them away after use. Children are able to play, eat or sleep in comfort using appropriate furniture.

Children's safety is promoted because action has been taken to minimise risks and enable children to play in a safe, secure environment. However, the childminder has not given consideration to how to evacuate the building in an emergency and a plan has not been devised or practised. Consequently escape routes may not be clear to the childminder to ensure children are not placed at any risk if such a situation arose. A fire blanket is available but it has not been installed to enable it to be accessed easily in an emergency. Children learn about road safety when they are taken out and are aware of the need to use a seat belt to keep themselves safe when travelling in the car.

The childminder does not have a clear understanding of the procedure to follow and route to take to make a referral if she has any child protection concerns. Children's welfare is not therefore fully safeguarded and parents are not made aware of the childminder's responsibility to protect their children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and secure in the care of the childminder. They talk to her and involve her in their imaginative play. She encourages and extends their play 'do you think your baby is hungry - are you going to make her a bottle?' The childminder asks questions to encourage the children to reflect and recall experiences they have enjoyed and they communicate very effectively with her. They use their initiative to make prints on the blackboard with their hands after putting them in water and choose the train set to construct with her help. They concentrate when playing with the train set and learn about magnetism as the childminder draws their attention to the way the train magnets attract and repel. The children are developing a good range of knowledge and skills because the childminder provides play opportunities to help children achieve in all areas.

The children enjoy a positive rapport with the childminder and benefit from the warm relationship, sitting on her lap to listen to a story. They are learning right from wrong through consistent boundaries, explanations given and the role model provided by the childminder. Children enjoy experiences outside the home as they go on walks and cycle rides to see the cows or visit a friend with chickens where they are able to collect the eggs.

The childminder has a copy of the 'Birth to three matters' framework but is not yet using it to meet the needs of the younger children who attend. However, they are confident in using language to communicate and express their needs. They listen and respond appropriately to questions the childminder asks which develops their language and understanding. They use their imagination in role play activities and their creativity is developed, for example, as they paint or draw.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are very secure and at ease in the care of the childminder with a good sense of belonging. They are encouraged to access all the equipment and girls and boys play equally with train sets and dolls with no gender stereotyping. A good selection of books and other resources provide appropriate images to help children develop positive attitudes towards differences in people. The childminder is very aware of her own limitations in terms of experience and training undertaken in providing for children with additional needs. She would fully consider whether she could meet the child's needs, in liaison with the parents, before undertaking the care of a child with learning difficulties.

Firm, consistent guidelines help children understand the boundaries for behaviour. Praise is given which ensures children's confidence and self-esteem is enhanced. Children are well

occupied and behave appropriately. Children willingly help tidy away toys understanding the reason they need to do so.

Many letters and references from parents show their appreciation of the role the childminder plays with their children's lives. The childminder provides parents with information about the care and activities she provides when they register their children with her. They are, therefore, aware of how she will ensure their children's well-being. Sharing photographs and an exchange of information at the end of the day ensures they are kept well informed. Children benefit from the positive relationship their parents enjoy with the childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of the children in her care and provides a happy, stimulating environment which enables children to learn and develop. She organises the available space and resources effectively to encourage children to make choices and develop their decision making skills. The childminder gained a caring qualification and attended the pre-registration training some years ago but has not attended any further training to update her knowledge and understanding of childcare in order to benefit the children attending.

The childminder ensures documentation is retained for a suitable period and is aware of the need to notify Ofsted of any changes or significant incidents having done so in the past. Records required by regulation are in place. They are well organised to keep children safe and are stored confidentially. Clear records ensure children's individual needs are known and parents provide all the necessary information.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection set a recommendation to develop knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. The childminder still does not have a clear understanding of the referral route for any concerns she may have and this remains a recommendation at this inspection.

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 satisfactory. 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 a current first aid certificate at the earliest opportunity
- devise and practise an emergency evacuation plan and ensure a fire blanket is easily accessible in the kitchen in an emergency
- ensure you are aware of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and the referral route for child protection concerns.

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