



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260985
Inspection date	03 August 2006
Inspector	Susan Smith
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 2001. She lives with her husband who is also a registered childminder, and two children aged twelve and thirteen in a house situated in Lowestoft, Suffolk. The whole of childminder's house with the exception of, one bedroom, is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder works closely with her husband and together they are registered to care for a total of six children at anyone time. They are currently minding eight children all of whom attend on a part-time basis. She takes children to the local park and children's groups.

The childminder is a member of the Suffolk childminding network and is working towards the Suffolk Quality Kitemark. She has a level 3 qualification in early education and care.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted because the childminder is well informed about their individual health care matters and all the necessary written consents are in place to support this. The childminder has attended first aid and food hygiene training to ensure she is aware of the correct procedures to follow to promote children's health and prevent the spread of infection. In addition, she has received training to enable her to monitor blood sugar levels for diabetic children. The first aid kit is well stocked and easily accessible in an emergency. First aid kits are also carried in the vehicle used for transporting children.

Children are learning to understand simple good health and hygiene practices through clear instructions to wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet and children are encouraged to be independent when using the toilet.

Children have their health and dietary needs met because the childminder requests written information from parents on their dietary needs and any allergies. Children's meals are supplied by their parents which the childminder gives to the children according to their parents' instructions. Meals times are a social occasion with children sitting down to eat together at the kitchen table. They have free access to drinks in their individual beakers to ensure they are not thirsty. The childminder provides healthy snacks, for example, water melon, apples, bananas, cucumber and carrot. Children are learning to understand the importance of having a healthy diet through discussion about eating fruit and vegetables.

Children take part in a good range of physical activities which contribute to a healthy lifestyle, for example, children enjoy regular trips to local play areas and the woods. They also play in the garden, where they enjoy activities such as ride on toys, water play and playing with hoops and balls. They have opportunities to develop their fine motor skills through using cause and effect toys, using pencils and rolling play dough. Children are encouraged to rest and sleep according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very safe and secure environment where they can move about freely and independently. Children have access to a playroom decorated with displays of posters and photographs, a kitchen diner area with table and chairs for art and craft and the living room providing further space for quiet activities. The house and garden are secure and children cannot leave unattended. The childminder has a clear understanding of how to keep children safe and has taken all the necessary steps to reduce risks to children. For example, all potential hazards are out of their reach or are stored in cupboards with child locks and a safety gate is placed across the stairs.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe through discussions about road safety and by gentle reminders from the childminder to sit on the chair safely so they do not fall and hurt

themselves. The childminder has sound procedures in place when transporting children in a vehicle with suitable car seats for all the children and appropriate documents for the vehicle used. Children are kept safe on outings because the childminder ensures she always takes children's emergency contact details, has a mobile phone and a first aid kit with her.

Children have access to an extensive range of toys and equipment which meet safety standards. All equipment is cleaned and checked regularly and replaced as necessary. Babies are provided with a suitable range of equipment appropriate to their developmental needs. The childminder monitors and supervises children's play to ensure they are safe and that toys are used appropriately. Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminders update their child protection training every three years to ensure they are aware of the correct procedures to follow if they have a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the welcoming and child-friendly environment. They enjoy spending time together and have secure and trusting relationships with the childminders and their family. All children have access to a stimulating range of toys and resources suitable to their stage of development. Toys and resources are rotated to take account of individual children's interests and they can choose from the further range of toys stored in the shed.

Children's interests are responded to by the childminder, for example, by providing play dough and sticking activities when the children asked for them. Children are motivated and interested in what they see and do because the childminder plans a wide range of activities and play opportunities using her sound knowledge of child development. For example, planning a variety of outings and events for the school holidays.

The childminder is familiar with 'Birth to three matters' and incorporates many aspects of the framework in her good practice. Younger children have many opportunities to develop their social skills through attendance at local children's groups. Regular use is made of local amenities, for example, walks to the park and shops, along with visits to the library, Adventure Island and Lowestoft Beach which provide children with good opportunities to learn about their community.

The childminder shows a genuine interest in the children, talking to them about their home life and achievements. For example, by asking children what they got for their birthday?, and entering into discussion about their families. Children play happily together and are learning to share and take turns, for example, when sharing play dough cutters.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children develop an excellent sense of belonging to the setting and the childminders work together to ensure that all children are included and valued at all times. For example, the children share in each others achievements and proudly refer to the photographs displayed on the playroom walls. Consequently they develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem.

Children are very independent and make choices and decisions with confidence. For example, accessing toys independently from shelving in the play room and being able to access books in the quiet area under the stairs.

Children have opportunities to become aware of the wider world through celebrating the Japanese festivals of 'Children's Day' and through topics, such as exploring rice and where it grows. In addition, they have access to resources such as books and puzzles that promote a positive view of diversity.

The childminder has attended a workshop promoting equality for disability. She has a very positive approach to caring for children with special needs and develops very effective partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure children's specific needs are met. Children learn about responsible behaviour through praise and encouragement and the childminder's use of clear and consistent boundaries of expected behaviour. The childminder uses strategies appropriate to children's individual stages of development and acts as an excellent role model.

Children benefit from the excellent relationships developed with their parents and carers. The childminders take positive steps to ensure that parents are kept well informed. Each childminder has their own folder which they share with parents that contains policies and details their individual experience, qualifications and the childcare provision. Parents speak warmly about the setting and provide excellent letters and testimonials in which they praise the warm welcoming atmosphere and the excellent care given by the childminders. Information is exchanged verbally on a daily basis to ensure children's changing needs are met and to provide consistency of care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminders work closely together and successfully organise their home to provide a stimulating and child-friendly environment in which children take part in a wide range of activities to support their care, learning and play. Children are happy and enjoy their time at the setting.

Their well-being is promoted by the well organised records and policies which are shared with parents to provide continuity of care. The childminder ensures that the required documentation and parental consents are in place to ensure children are looked after according to their parents wishes. However, the register of attendance was not completed on the day of the inspection. The childminder follows effective procedures to promote children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

The childminder's commitment to ongoing training has a positive impact on her childminding service. She regularly attends network meetings and is undertaking the Suffolk Quality Kitemark, quality assurance scheme to support her in providing good quality care. She buddies new childminders and is starting a drop-in session for childminders through the local Sure-Start programme.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to reflect on recent training. The childminder is developing her reflective practice in order to continuously improve her already very good practice through undertaking the Suffolk Quality Kitemark, quality assurance scheme.

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 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):

- ensure an accurate record of children's daily hours of attendance is consistently maintained.

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