



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221366
Inspection date	05 March 2007
Inspector	Rachael Mankiewicz
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 1999. She lives in a house in a village in the south of Northamptonshire with her partner and eight year old daughter. There are a number of community facilities within walking distance of the house, including a school, pre-school, shops and recreation areas. The childminder has use of a car during the day.

The areas of the house used for childminding include the living room and kitchen/dining room and the cloakroom. Children have supervised access to the first floor of the house and the fully enclosed garden. The family have a cat, a rabbit and fish in an aquarium.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years and currently cares for four part-time children under the age of five. She is a member of the National Childminding Association, and is the vacancy co-ordinator for her area.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean home, where they learn about good hygiene practices through daily routines, such as hand washing before snack time and before taking part in a cooking activity. They are reminded that coughing spreads germs and to put their tissues in the bin. Children have their drinks to hand and they are learning to keep themselves hydrated. They are developing their awareness of the benefits of a healthy diet. The childminder provides nutritious meals and snacks in accordance with the wishes of the parents which helps to promote the children's healthy growth and development. Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminder has up-to-date first aid knowledge and a well-stocked first aid box. Procedures are in place if children are unwell, to deal with accidents and for the administration of medication.

Children are developing an awareness of a healthy lifestyle as they partake in good physical activities. They actively take part in a range of indoor and outdoor play opportunities to develop their physical skills. Children enjoy play activities in the garden, walks around the village and the use of large apparatus at the park. They discover the environment as they spend time at activity centres, at Daventry Country Park and on outings further afield. Children participate in activities to encourage their co-ordination and creativity by exploring a range of crafts and artwork and by handling small toys and construction equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are able to move around safely and independently within sight of the childminder and in the safe environment of the home and outdoors. The premises, including the outdoor play area are secure and children are unable to leave them unsupervised. The required safety equipment is provided in the home, and all toys and equipment are appropriate for the children's age and stage of development, encouraging them to stay safe and promoting their development. This includes car safety. Children enjoy playing on the garden toys and extend their physical development through the challenge of larger apparatus in the garden, at the park and at activity centres. They are beginning to learn how to handle tools and implements safely as they use cooking utensils and enjoy art activities. Children are safely escorted on outings and they benefit from learning about road, fire and water safety. Their welfare is promoted and safeguarded through the childminder's understanding of child protection issues and her access to the latest local guidance regarding procedures for dealing with concerns. The childminder maintains appropriate written records and procedures to promote the children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy to play with their friends and are settled in the care of the childminder. They move freely between the different play activities on offer, spending time playing with the toys they have chosen, and building on their concentration span with the encouragement of the childminder. Children are able to select from a wide range of toys and activities to promote

their learning in different areas. For example, they enjoy imaginative play with figures and models, construction toys and a range of artwork and crafts. Children enjoy outings, including walks and the challenge of activity centres, which help to broaden their range of experiences. They have free access to a good range of age-appropriate books and relate the tractor story in their own words. Children count alongside the childminder and recognise different colours. They eagerly participate in cooking activities and are keen to sample what they have produced. Activities are adapted to meet the children's individual needs, interests and abilities, and the childminder uses her knowledge and experience to deliver the appropriate service. She encourages the children's full development and helps them generally to make good progress. However, the childminder does not currently base her activities on a formal framework, such as 'Birth to three matters' to further enhance younger children's development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy to take part in the daily routine provided by the childminder, who ensures that all their individual needs are well met. They are valued and respected as individuals, and feel a sense of belonging in the childminder's care. Children have access to some play resources which reflect diversity and they are developing their understanding of the wider world. They meet different children and adults at the children's groups they attend and they learn about their local community on outings.

Children develop their confidence and self-esteem as they make choices and decisions by selecting activities and resources, helping to put away toys and choosing when to take a drink. They behave well and respond to the childminder's appropriate behaviour management strategies that take into account their age and stage of development. Co-operative attitudes are encouraged and children begin to understand that they need to share and play harmoniously. They are learning to be kind and caring towards each other as they develop an understanding of the needs of others.

The childminder fosters positive relationships with parents. Information is exchanged on a daily basis with parents regarding children's care, routines and progress, helping to ensure continuous and consistent care for the children. However, the childminder's system for complaints does not reflect recent changes. Children's individual needs are discussed with parents in detail. Any special requirements or information are discussed and consistent communication and information exchange takes place. The needs of children are recognised and met sensitively.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel at home and at ease within the childminder's routines which include effectively organised time and space. This allows children to move freely, to develop their play, find their own space and choose from a good range of activities both indoors and outdoors. The adult-child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. The childminder is well aware of her responsibilities to inform Ofsted of changes to her minding situation and to ensure that all those adults having regular contact with the children are suitable to do so. Her business-like

approach to childminding helps the childminder provide a reliable service for parents and children. Children's care is well supported by comprehensive written records and documentation. The childminder has a positive attitude to develop and improve her practice by attending relevant training. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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):

- continue to ensure that children make progress across the areas of development
- ensure that parents are made aware of the changes to the complaints procedures and that the record of complaints is made available to parents on request.

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