



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256664
Inspection date	15 January 2007
Inspector	Tessa Margaret Betts
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 registered in 1987. She lives with her husband who is also a registered childminder and mother in a detached house on the outskirts of East Dereham. Whilst it remains the family home their four adult children are not permanently resident at the property. The whole of the ground floor with the exception of her mother's accommodation is available for childminding. Children also use one bedroom upstairs for resting. There is an enclosed area within the garden for children to play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. She occasionally minds with her husband and together they may care for a maximum of 12 children. Overnight care is not provided. Currently they are caring for four children between them. When working with her husband the childminder has overall responsibility for the childminding practice.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. The family have one dog as a family pet.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted. Relevant information to meet their medical needs is gathered from parents and clearly recorded on children's individual written records. Minor accidents are effectively handled as the childminder has recently updated her knowledge of first aid. She provides a well stocked first aid kit and ensures parents are kept fully informed through clear written records. Children are actively learning how to manage their personal hygiene. Through regular daily routines, which are made more enjoyable as the children sing their handwashing song, they begin to understand the importance of keeping themselves healthy. Supported by the childminder they know about germs and bugs which can get into our tummies if we do not look after ourselves properly. They are eager to reinforce their understanding as they snuggle up with the childminder on the sofa to look at the pictures in the book "wash, brush and scrub", responding enthusiastically to the questions asked by the childminder.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. They enjoy a range of fresh fruit for their snack. Whilst children currently bring packed lunches these are monitored by the childminder to ensure they are healthy and nutritious. All foods are stored appropriately so that their meals remain fresh. They learn more about healthy eating through discussion. They enjoy role play where they set up a café and talk about foods which are good and bad for us and trips out to the local shops and supermarkets. Regular drinks of milk and water are offered and babies are fed according to their individual routines to ensure they remain well nourished and hydrated.

Children enjoy being active and are developing a positive attitude to exercise. They frequently walk to a range of local activities and play in the garden. In good weather they have ample opportunity to ride bikes, climb on the climbing frame, splash around in the water and dig in the sand. Plans are in hand to extend their range of tactile resources with the introduction of a gravel tray. Their physical needs in bad weather are met as they dance to taped music in the large sitting room and ride their sit on toys down the long hallway. Babies have ample space to practise their early mobility within a designated area as they play on their mat on the floor, flexing their legs under the close supervision of the childminder.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children receive a warm welcome into a comfortable family home. Familiar daily routines provide stability for children and as a result they settle well into a change of environment. They are quick to take advantage of the large available space indoors as they choose their toys from low level storage boxes and become engrossed in their play. The childminder has taken all necessary steps to maintain a safe environment. The premises remain secure at all times so that children cannot leave unsupervised and the risk of intruders minimised. Whilst the garden area is very

large, children have an enclosed area in which to play safely. Children are able to access the bathroom on their own promoting their independence.

Children freely access a very good range of resources and use these well to organise their own play. Children are familiar with where additional items are stored as they rush to the bookcase in the hall to find a particular book they wish to share with the childminder. Resources are well organised to ensure they are safe and suitable for the different age groups. Resources with small parts are kept on higher shelves to protect very young children. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as the childminder gently reminds them that some toys have sharp corners and that extra care should be taken. Whilst interlinking smoke detectors and an accessible fire blanket in the kitchen contribute to keeping children safe, the childminder has not securely devised or practised an emergency evacuation plan. As a result children are not fully safeguarded in the event of a fire.

Children's safety is well promoted as the childminder has a clear understanding of child protection issues and her duty to protect children. Recent training has updated her knowledge, which together with written guidance held in her childminding files ensures that any concerns would be handled quickly and effectively.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled and take part in a good range of activities. They play together well as they choose what toys they would like to play with. They access these easily which fosters their particular interests at the time. When playing with dolls they are able to choose from a range of clothes laid out on the sitting room floor. This promotes good conversation about how we wear our clothes and what we need to keep warm in the cold weather. Children enjoy a good balance of self initiated play and more adult led activities as they cover a range of topics supported by the childminder. Currently they are exploring clocks and time. Good planning on the part of the childminder ensures that a range of interesting clocks are available that are different shapes, some with numbers and some without. Together they look at how a clock works, talk about time and the numbers on the clock face. They then recreate their own clocks with paper and paint. Children have many opportunities to further their creative talents as they contribute to a large group collage which is proudly displayed in the kitchen, valuing their achievements.

Children are developing good relationships with the childminder. She joins in their play in a relaxed manner using their ideas to extend learning opportunities naturally. When sitting with them on the sofa sharing a book, she will use the opportunity to ask open ended questions to check children's understanding. She then helps them to make connections with events in their own lives. Children readily talk about their own experiences of going to the dentist when looking at pictures relating to personal care. Children enjoy outings on a regular basis which include trips to the local park and nearby shops as well as attending local playgroups. Children are developing their independence. Supported by the childminder they attend to some of their personal needs and take an active part in role play situations, such as ordering food at the role play café.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's confidence and self esteem is promoted as the childminder know them well. She treats all children with sensitivity and respect according to their individual needs. All children are naturally included. When the baby is going for a sleep the childminder gently encourages the other children to say goodnight. They respond enthusiastically by giving him an extra cuddle. Children are learning about the wider world through planned topics. They celebrate a range of different festivals throughout the year to raise their awareness of the needs of others. This is further extended in routine activities as they frequently access dolls, books and small world play resources, promoting a wider understanding of culture and disability.

Although the childminder is not currently caring for any children with learning difficulties/disabilities, she is aware of children's developmental stages. Consequently, she feels able to approach parents if she is concerned about children's progress and obtain appropriate support. Children are learning how to manage their behaviour successfully. They listen and respond to clear instructions and are eager to please. They follow the positive example set as they say please and thank you and respond when asked to share toys with each other. As a result they are grasping a strong sense of right and wrong.

The partnership with parents is good. Children are relaxed and happy and embrace the warmth and care they receive from the childminder. Policies and procedures, including information on the complaints procedure are shared with the parents so they understand the service that is available for their children. Parents comment favourably in writing on the care provided. Good exchanges of information daily, both in the form of an informal chat and a written diary for young children keeps parents fully informed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care and welfare is promoted as relevant checks have been completed on the childminder and all additional adults in the household. The childminder complies with all conditions of registration, displaying her registration certificate prominently in the kitchen. The quality of care offered is good. This is further enhanced when she and her husband who is also registered as a childminder work together, displaying a real enjoyment in caring for the children and sharing their individual progress and development. They are able to do this as they are well organised and work effectively together to make sure routine tasks are completed whilst the children remain actively engaged in their play.

The childminder has updated her child protection and first aid training so that she remains fully up to date with current practice to protect children in her care. Good use is made of space and resources so that children can play, rest and eat comfortably. The childminder takes overall responsibility for maintaining appropriate records which contain all the required information to meet the National Standards. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has made good progress in addressing the issues raised at the last inspection. The childminder was asked to obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. This has now been obtained for each child attending and is held on their individual records. This ensures that child's welfare in an emergency situation is robustly promoted.

She was also asked to improve her knowledge of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and become familiar with the relevant written information to make an effective referral. She has recently attended training in child protection and is familiar with the supporting literature. As a result she is better informed and able to fully safeguard children in her care.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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):

- further improve action taken in the event of a fire by devising and practising an emergency escape plan.

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