



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY334877
Inspection date	24 January 2007
Inspector	Moira Oliver
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 2006. She lives with her husband and two children in a village close to Ipswich. The whole of the childminder's house is registered for childminding, however, childminding takes place mostly downstairs. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding two children under eight years on a part-time basis. The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group and is a member of the National Childminding Association. The family has a cat as a pet.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted and cross-infection minimised because the childminder has appropriate policies and procedures in place. For example, children routinely wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating. The childminder supports younger children to manage the soap and the taps, they are able to reach the basin with the help of a stool. Nappies are disposed of appropriately, gloves are worn and the mat is thoroughly cleaned after each use. Children are encouraged to wipe their noses on tissues which are disposed of immediately, minimising the spread of infection.

Children receive appropriate care when they are ill; the childminder has policies in place to enable her to contact parents whether she is at home or taking the children out. A first aid kit is always available and the childminder ensures her first aid training is up to date. Parents are kept well informed of illness to stop the spread of infection and any accidents and medication administered is recorded and signed.

Children are nourished with a variety of healthy foods and snacks. The childminder takes healthy eating very seriously and ensures children receive a varied and balanced diet. For example, children snack on fresh and dried fruit and have home made cooked meals. Children's dietary needs are met through discussions with the parents about any special diets, the childminder respects the parents wishes and keeps a written record. Children independently access drinks from their own cups or beakers which are always available, ensuring they are hydrated.

Children rest and sleep according to their needs and their home routines, the childminder ensures they have a quiet place to sleep and clean bedding. They receive regular fresh air and exercise as they walk to school and nursery and play on the large village green or in the garden.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe, inviting, welcoming and stimulating environment. They are kept safe because the childminder is vigilant, ensuring her home is safe and all potential hazards are out of reach. For example, stairgates are used to prevent children from going up the stairs unsupervised, kitchen cupboards are locked and all low-level glass is protected. The premises are secure and children cannot leave them unsupervised. Young children are safe wearing harnesses in high chairs at meal times and a baby monitor is used whilst they are sleeping to ensure they can be heard as soon as they wake.

Children use safe and well maintained toys and equipment which they can access independently. All equipment is checked regularly and broken items are thrown away. Children use resources which are appropriate to their age and stage of development, any small items are not accessible to very young children and older children understand to use them away from babies and very young children to avoid choking hazards.

Children learn to keep themselves safe, the childminder explains dangers such as leaving too many toys out on the carpet or throwing toys. She supports the children to tidy up and to use the toys appropriately. They learn about road safety as they walk to school and nursery, children are either strapped into buggies, hold hands, or the buggy to ensure they all stay together as a group. Children stay safe on outings because the childminder has clear policies in place and ensures she is well prepared. For example, she always carries parental contact details, children's details, a first aid kit, drinks and a mobile phone.

Children are protected because the childminder understands her role in child protection and is confident that she would be able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and play well together. They confidently access the toys and equipment, involving each other in their play and chatting about what they are doing. Children use a range of good quality toys and equipment which are rotated to ensure variety. They delight in cooking food on the play hob, listening to the saucepans and play kettle boiling. They are involved in the cleaning of the equipment as they bring the play kitchen in from outside. Younger children play alongside older ones, imitating them as they push buttons to make the play drink dispenser work.

Children use construction toys such as stickle bricks, pressing them together to make 'forests' for others to 'blow up' with the remote control they have made with the bricks. They enjoy books and sharing stories together, they recall stories they heard earlier as they talk about butterflies. Children use books well, they know how books work, starting at the front and turning pages one at a time.

The children are supported in their play by a childminder who is skilled in communicating with them, she listens to them and values their contributions. She talks to the children about what they are doing, developing their language skills and helps them to develop their ideas when building with the bricks. The childminder ensures she is providing appropriate care for all ages as she refers to the 'Birth to three matters' framework poster on a regular basis.

Children have opportunities to explore their environment as they feed the ducks, visit the beach and indoor play areas, play in the local park and on the village green. They delight in throwing leaves at each other in the garden in autumn. Children have opportunities to use paints and glue in craft activities and to handle play-dough. Photographs show children involved in cooking activities, mixing and making chocolate brownies and biscuits. Children enjoy playing with others and attend local toddler groups or invite friends to the house. They are learning to socialise with others of similar ages, developing important skills such as sharing and communication.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a relaxed and friendly environment by a childminder who knows them very well. The childminder has a good understanding of the importance of working with parents and how it benefits the children. She ensures she has all the relevant information to enable her to meet their needs. For example, she follows the children's home sleep routines, laying with the child sharing a book. All policies and procedures are available to the parents and permission forms are completed. The childminder records children's daily food intake and keeps a written record of activities the children have taken part in, to share with parents, keeping them informed.

All children have access to all the toys and equipment and the childminder is very aware of not using gender stereotypes. She treats the children with equal concern and has a good understanding of anti-discriminatory good practice which is evident from her policies. She has planned activities to celebrate festivals such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and Christmas, however, she is aware that she needs to increase her resources to reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity and disabilities.

Children are happy and behave well due to the childminders sensitivity and excellent understanding of children's behaviour. She uses consistent, developmentally appropriate strategies to support the children to manage their own behaviour. For example, she uses simple explanations to help the children to understand and listens to their point of view. She speaks to the children in a calm, understanding voice and is genuinely interested in their happiness and well-being. Children learn to use good manners as they thank the childminder for their dinner and say sorry to each other when they accidentally knock into each other.

The children are confident, happy and enjoy the company of the childminder and her own children. They interact with the childminder, coming to her for reassurance and to show her what toys they have found in the drawer. They chat freely to both the childminder and the other children present, involving them in their play and showing them what they have made.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit greatly from the childminder's organisation skills. The house is child-friendly and set up invitingly for play enabling the children to develop as individuals. Activities and resources are provided to encourage children to make choices and develop independence. The childminder ensures that appropriate ratios are maintained to enable her to support the children in her care effectively. She has a planned routine but is flexible depending on the children's needs.

The childminder has a clear understanding of the importance to keep records and all documentation is available and up to date. For example, the register is completed daily and contracts are reviewed every six months, or earlier if necessary. There is a folder containing well thought out policies which are individual to the setting, enabling children to remain healthy, safe, enjoy, achieve and make a positive contribution.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- increase the range of activities and resources which promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

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