



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260767
Inspection date	26 April 2005
Inspector	Anne Archer

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 and 3 daughters aged 16, 14 and 13 in Higham Ferrers in East Northamptonshire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding with access to the first floor for sleeping and toilet facilities. There is an enclosed rear garden for outside play. The family has 4 dogs and 2 cats.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is currently completing Developing Childminding Practice training with the National Extension College. She is registered to care for a maximum of four children aged

under eight at any one time and is currently minding 12 children, including six aged over eight years, all of whom attend on a part time basis. The childminder walks to the local primary schools and pre-school to take and collect children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a variety of activities such as garden games and visits to the local parks and playground which contribute to their good health and develop their physical skills. The younger children join in activities enthusiastically as the childminder understands about appropriate types of activities and the levels of support children need. The childminder is keen to increase her knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Their understanding of why they must wash their hands after handling the family pets and after using the toilet combined with the childminder's good hygiene routines when changing nappies reduce the risk of cross contamination. To support this the childminder follows her vet's advice in relation to vaccinations, worming and flea treatments for her pets.

Children understand the importance of taking regular drinks as a way to maintain their health. The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents and the children's choices to provide nutritious snacks and cooked teas that appeal to children and meet their dietary needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are able to move around the house in safety as the childminder has a good understanding of how to keep children safe. She is able to minimize potential risks throughout the house and garden and teaches children about keeping themselves safe on the way to and from school. Older children are able to independently select toys and activities for themselves while the childminder selects appropriate ones for the younger children, changing them twice daily. Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted due to the childminder's knowledge of local child protection arrangements and satisfactory understanding of first aid procedures. She is also aware of the documentation she is required to keep and maintain in relation to accidents and medication.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well at the childminder's house. They enter confidently and make

themselves at home. The different ages relate well to each other and the school age children enjoy helping the younger ones with activities. The childminder adapts activities for the differing age range ensuring that they are appropriate. However as activities are not always planned in advance there are occasions when the materials required to ensure children get the most out of an activity are sometimes not available, for example, sharpened colouring pencils. Older children are able to choose what they would like to do and provision is made for them to complete homework tasks. Children are taught new skills by the childminder, for example, how to sew and make cross stitch patterns. Children have access to a good range of books and the younger children enjoy listening to stories read by the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. The childminder meets the children's needs well, they follow their normal routine as discussed with their parents. Children behave well because they know what is expected of them as the childminder regularly reinforces the behaviour boundaries. The children show care and concern for each other. Older children willingly help and support the younger children when they are playing. Relationships with parents are well established and friendly. Through discussion, the childminder ensures that the level of care she provides for children is as expected by the parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children feel comfortable in the homely surroundings. Younger children confidently play with the activities provided and older children have the opportunity to self select. Whilst all children are provided with a variety of activities which they enjoy, these are not always planned in advance resulting in the childminder not always being prepared for children's next stage of learning or for required resources to be available. However the childminder is currently completing a Developing Childminding Practice course to help increase her knowledge and understanding of these issues. She is also booked on to an approved first aid course to reinforce her understanding of how to administer first aid to infants and young children. Through regular verbal communication the childminder ensures that parents are kept fully informed about the level of care their child receives and through the recently established systems of documentation the childminder keeps information about children and parents up to date. Both of these contribute to continuity in the children's care. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has improved children's health by attending a six hour refresher course in First Aid to enable her to provide appropriate treatment for children if they have an accident. She hopes to attend the approved twelve hour

course which childminder's are required to complete, in the near future. She has increased her level of organisation by putting into place new systems which ensure she keeps relevant information about children and parents up to date. Finally, by increasing the variety of activities available for all children she ensures that caring for children over eight years old does not adversely affect the care she provides to younger children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 there has been one complaint relating to National Standard 2: Organisation about the childminder exceeding the numbers of children on her registration certificate. Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit and found that the childminder was looking after too many children under 8 years. The childminder was served with a compliance notice requiring her to meet the number of children set out on her certificate. An unannounced visit on 03/09/2004 confirmed that the childminder was complying with the notice. She remains qualified for registration.

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 that resources and materials are organised and accessible during activities to support children's play and learning
- complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk