



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256187
Inspection date	22 November 2006
Inspector	Marianne Gascoyne
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 1991. She lives with her husband and one adult child in a village between Downham Market and Swaffham. The whole of the ground floor and the spare bedroom on the first floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder walks or drives to local schools and nurseries to take and collect children.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding four children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. She also cares for children over the age of eight years. The family have a dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well by good standards of hygiene maintained in the home which help prevent the spread of infection. The childminder has developed her knowledge of good hygiene, with regard to food preparation, from attendance on a course and has registered her kitchen with Environmental Health to safeguard children's welfare. The health needs of very young children are promoted by effective nappy changing procedures and older children learn to take responsibility for their own hygiene needs through reminders and routines in place to ensure hands are washed at appropriate times. The childminder's policy with regard to sick children protects them from cross infection and the needs of children are given priority if they are unwell while with the childminder. The childminder has current first aid knowledge and has obtained consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment to safeguard children in the event of an accident or sudden illness. The childminder is sensitive to young children's need for rest and sleep to ensure their needs are met. Appropriate care is given to the dog to ensure it does not present a hygiene risk to children.

Children are well nourished by food provided by the parents, following the advice for healthy foods provided in the brochure provided by the childminder. The childminder provides them with fresh fruit and vegetables which they enjoy and helps develop their understanding of healthy eating. They are able to access fresh drinking water when they are thirsty, meeting their own health needs. Any risk of an adverse reaction to food given is prevented by obtaining information about food allergies on registration.

Children's physical needs are promoted as they enjoy outings to the park to practise their physical skills on the available equipment or play in the garden. They are developing a positive attitude to fresh air and exercise as they walk to and from school on a daily basis.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed by the childminder and feel at ease in the premises that are suitable for their purpose. Play is offered in the child-centred conservatory with a range of equipment available to promote their development. Further space is made available to children in the living room to enable older children to play games or complete homework undisturbed. A cot set up in the spare bedroom enables young children to sleep in comfort and a baby monitor ensures children can be heard. An appropriate range of toys and equipment is available to meet the varying needs of the wide age range of children attending.

As children walk to and from school with the childminder she develops their understanding of road safety and children learn the rules that are in place to keep them safe at this time. She encourages them to think about the consequences of their actions, for example, if they walk in front of the swing in the park. Children are able to play safely because the childminder has taken reasonable steps both inside and out to ensure that hazards to children are minimised and the house is secure. The childminder always carries contact details with her when taking

children outside the home to safeguard their welfare. Children learn how to keep themselves safe in an emergency by practising the fire evacuation procedure.

Children are well protected by the childminder's knowledge of child protection gained from attendance on a course. She believes it is important to listen to children and is able to recognise potential signs and symptoms of abuse. The information to enable her to report any concerns, if necessary, is easily accessible. Parents are advised of the childminder's responsibility to protect their children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder who encourages them to make decisions about the activities they wish to undertake. Children undertake activities together which encourage their learning and development, for example, making their own version of 'Top Trumps' and playing the game together. A warm and trusting relationship is in place in which children feel secure. The childminder encourages children to complete homework by letting them use the computer to access the internet to gain information. Children are given opportunities to undertake craft activities and the childminder values their ideas and encourages them to use their initiative while providing the necessary resources. Equipment is well organised to enable children to access the items they wish to use and older children are aware they can ask for items stored out of reach of the younger children for safety reasons. Children enjoy a balance of quiet and more active play as they take part in card games together or go on walks and visit the park.

The childminder does not have a copy of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and has not therefore begun to use this framework for support and guidance in her care of children under three. Very young children are happy in her care and practise their communication skills with confidence. The childminder sits on the floor with them encouraging their play and engages in fun activities, for example, balancing stacking rings on the children's heads to make them laugh. They play happily with the selection of toys she makes available to them. The range and variety of equipment to encourage young children to make connections or respond to the world imaginatively or creatively is fairly limited. For example, they are not able to explore interesting objects such as textured material, household objects or open-ended resources, in line with the framework.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are very secure in the care of the childminder and demonstrate a sense of belonging by the confidence with which they relate to her. She has a high regard for their well-being and involves them in decision making. Their self-esteem is enhanced by the value she places on their contributions. Resources and discussions help children develop positive attitudes towards differences in people. Children are respected as individuals to enable their needs to be met. The childminder does not have experience of caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities but recognises the need to work with parents if asked to take on the care of children

with additional needs. She would research the condition to help her to care for children appropriately.

The childminder provides clear boundaries for children and makes sure she does not give attention to inappropriate behaviour except to explain why it is unacceptable. The use of positive techniques such as distraction and explanation, together with praise for good behaviour, helps children to learn right from wrong while promoting their self-esteem.

Parents are given an attractive brochure which includes details of the care and activities provided and a website has been set up to give further information. This enables parents to work with the childminder for the benefit of their children. The childminder recognises the particular needs of many of the children she cares for who may have one parent working abroad. She encourages them to draw pictures, write to or email their parent.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is very experienced and is continually developing and updating her knowledge through attendance on training courses in a variety of topics. In this way she is demonstrating her commitment to providing positive outcomes for the children in her care. Children's care and learning is therefore promoted by her appropriate skills, knowledge and experience. Children benefit from the enjoyment the childminder experiences from caring for them and their overall development is enhanced by the care they receive. Space in the home is used effectively to meet the varying needs of the children attending. Children's wellbeing is safeguarded by clear written procedures to follow in the event of a child being lost or uncollected.

The childminder ensures documentation is well organised and up to date. All the necessary documentation to safeguard children's health and wellbeing is in place. The childminder has simple policies and procedures covering some aspects of her work. This helps her to carry out her work effectively and has a positive impact on the care children receive.

Overall the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop and practise an emergency evacuation procedure and obtain permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

The childminder has been effective in making these improvements. An emergency evacuation procedure has been written and practised with the children to ensure they are aware of action to take in an emergency situation. Parents give their permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment when completing the contract at the start of the childminding arrangements. This safeguards children's wellbeing in the event of sudden illness or accident requiring medical attention.

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):

- improve outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters'.

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