



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256557
Inspection date	06 December 2006
Inspector	Melanie Calway

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 satisfactory. 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 1987. She lives in a village between the towns of Downham Market and King's Lynn. The whole of the ground floor, one bedroom and the bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. She walks or drives to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. She takes children to the library or park and on other outings.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding six children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. She has two cats.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because there are satisfactory hygiene procedures in place. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet although explanations are not always given as to why they should do this. Their independence is encouraged as a toilet seat and a step stool are provided for them in the bathroom and a towel for hand drying. The home is clean and well maintained. Nappies are changed on a mat in the living room and the childminder uses gloves to prevent the spread of infection.

Children's medical needs are met as the childminder has a current first aid qualification and keeps a first aid kit in a kitchen cupboard so that she can deal with minor accidents and injuries appropriately. An accurate record of all accidents is maintained. There is a system for recording the administration of medicines, which is completed correctly. The childminder obtains information from parents about any medical needs on children's record forms. Consent has been obtained from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice so that she can seek help in the event of an emergency. Children are protected from the risk of cross-infection as the childminder makes it clear on the contract that she will not accept children with infectious conditions.

Children are able to sleep and rest according to their needs. They ask to go to bed if they need a sleep and the childminder recognises when they are tired. They are able to sleep in comfort and undisturbed in a travel cot in an upstairs bedroom. Children walk to school and pre-school on most days. However on days when they are at home there are limited opportunities to be active and enjoy the fresh air. The childminder takes them to the park on some days but the garden is used mainly in the summer time and although children can move about freely they are not encouraged to engage in active play.

Children are adequately nourished. The childminder offers them healthy snacks of fruit, yoghurts or cheese and crackers and parents provide packed lunches. Information on children's dietary needs is obtained on their record forms. Children are encouraged to drink and their beakers are kept within easy reach so that they can access them easily.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises which are safe and suitable. The front door is kept locked while children are present and the side gate is padlocked to ensure children's security. Children have room to move and play freely and there is a fully enclosed outside area where children can play safely. The environment is made welcoming as toys are placed in small boxes on the floor where children can access them easily. Toys are appropriate for the age groups attending and items that have small parts are kept out of reach to keep children safe. The childminder ensures that toys are safe and of good quality when she buys them.

Children are kept safe as the childminder maintains a good level of supervision. She checks on sleeping children at regular intervals. The environment is made safe by the use of socket covers. Children are prevented from using the stairs as the door to the living room is kept closed and the childminder supervises young children using the stairs to go to the toilet. Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder takes her phone with her, which has all the emergency contact numbers in. Children are kept in buggies or on reins to keep them safe when walking, and explanations are given about road safety so that children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe. All the necessary permissions for outings and transport have been obtained from parents. Children are protected from the risk of fire as there is a clear written fire evacuation procedure which is displayed in the dining room and practised regularly with children so that they learn what to do in the event of a fire. Necessary fire equipment such as a fire blanket and smoke alarms are in place.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder is aware of her duty to report any child protection concerns. She has all the relevant up to date information and has recently attended child protection training to update her knowledge in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a satisfactory range of activities. Inside they play with a selection of toys, which the childminder puts out for them. These are changed every few days and include a box of books, puzzles, dolls and push chairs and a box of play food. There is a range of board games for older children and craft materials. At Christmas they enjoy doing craft activities on a sheet in the living room. They play outside in fine dry weather with bikes, a ball pit and sand. Children are able to reach the toys easily and the childminder will fetch additional items for children if they ask for them. They go on occasional outings into town, to the library and to the park.

The childminder sits with children and supports them as they do jigsaw puzzles or colours in a colouring book on the floor with them. She talks to them quietly and kindly. Children are given praise to develop their self-esteem. At other times she sits back while they play. Children play happily but opportunities are missed to provide children with a range of activities that challenge them or to interact with them to encourage their language development. Their independence is promoted as they are encouraged to feed themselves, select toys and attempt to put coats on.

Children under three are given appropriate care. They are given comfort and affection. The childminder has the 'Birth to three matters' framework pack but has not yet used it to develop her practice, and activities for children under three are not sufficiently challenging, with limited opportunities for tactile and exploratory play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are met as the childminder gathers information from parents about their needs on their record forms. She gets to know the children in her care well so that she

can care for them appropriately. They are beginning to learn about the wider world as there are a small number of resources, which reflect other cultures and lifestyles. Children are given appropriate support. Although she has no experience of working with children with learning difficulties or disabilities she would seek training and work with parents to meet children's needs.

Children behave well in the childminder's care as she has consistent boundaries so that children know what is expected of them. She encourages children to share resources and uses positive methods such as distraction. She has developed a statement on behaviour management which is shared with parents so that they are aware of her approach. Children are settled as she gives them praise and affection.

Children are cared for effectively because she has a friendly relationship with parents. Children are settled in gradually and she uses these occasions to share information such as her last inspection report and behaviour management statement. Drop off and collection times are used to communicate with parents and let them know about what the children have been doing. Information about the service is limited, in particular relating to the activities offered and how to make a complaint. The childminder herself is not clear about the correct route for making a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is a suitable and experienced person to work with children. She has many years of childminding experience and has undertaken some training to keep herself updated. She ensures that people without the necessary clearances are never left alone with children.

The schedule and routine are well organised to ensure children's well-being and safety. An accurate register of attendance is maintained.

All of the required documentation is kept in place, including the necessary parental consents, and is kept in an orderly fashion in a large folder. Overall the needs of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop a behaviour management agreement to share with parents. An agreement is now in place and is displayed in the setting to let parents know about the childminder's expectations with regard to behaviour management. She was also asked to develop the range of activities and resources which promote equality of opportunity. There is a small number of resources which reflect other cultures so that children can begin to have an awareness of the world around them.

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 satisfactory. 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 opportunities for children to be active and enjoy the fresh air
- plan activities which provide children with challenges, including opportunities to interact to promote their language development and for tactile and exploratory play in line with the approach in the 'Birth to three matters' framework pack
- improve the information given to parents, in particular relating to the activities offered and the correct procedure for making a complaint.

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