



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	259460
Inspection date	14 February 2007
Inspector	Susan Cox
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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children aged four and six on the outskirts of the city of Norwich. The home is within walking distance of the local shops, park and schools. A car is also used to transport children. All areas of the childminder's house, except for the main bedroom, are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and sometimes works with an assistant who may, at times agreed and confirmed in writing by parents, be left in sole charge of the children. She is currently minding eight children on a full or a part time basis. The childminder also cares for children who are over the age of eight. The family has a cat and a dog. The childminder supports children with English as an additional language.

The childminder is qualified to National Vocational Qualification Level 3.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted as the childminder gathers relevant information from their parents to respond to individual needs. If they become unwell in her care she assesses the situation and contacts their parents so they may be collected. Good standards of hygiene in the home help to keep the children well. They use paper towels after washing their hands and this minimises the risk of passing on infections. Children enjoy seeing the pets but are not left unsupervised with the dog for their safety. Although the dog uses the rear garden it is checked and cleaned each time before the children go out to play to ensure it is appropriate for their use. Older children manage their personal hygiene independently using the downstairs cloakroom for convenience. Little ones are sensitively supported as they are toilet training and nappies are changed according to individual needs.

Children's dietary needs are met as parents supply snacks and meals. This ensures they are appropriate for their child and takes into account any allergies or specific dietary requirements. Children are learning social skills as they sit together to eat and little ones are well supported as they learn to feed themselves. Babies are cuddled comfortably to be fed bottles and a record of food intake helps parents understand what has been eaten during the day. Children drink frequently from their water bottles and the childminder often reminds little ones to have a drink to ensure they remain well hydrated. Children are learning about healthy eating as they talk about foods that are good for them at meal times and as they play together and share books.

Children enjoy being active. Little ones who are learning how to be mobile are supported to ensure they may crawl, stand and toddle with safety being considered. Playing in the garden is popular. Children learn a range of physical skills and how their bodies work as they climb, slide, swing and ride a range of wheeled toys. They extend these skills as they sometimes take the bikes to the park and play on the apparatus under close supervision for safety. Dancing to music helps children remain active if unable to get outside. When children are tired they sleep or rest in a manner agreed with their parents. Younger children sleep in travel cots upstairs with their own set of bedding to ensure hygiene is maintained. Older children can rest comfortably on the lounge furniture as they wish.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children receive a warm welcome into a comfortable family home. The playroom is particularly attractive, with a range of posters and children's work displayed, creating a child centred environment. A good range of resources are displayed and stored for children to make their own choices. This helps them settle quickly and start to play. The childminder monitors what is chosen to make sure it is safe and appropriate for the children's age and stage of development. For example, asking children to remove small pieces of Lego, so the little ones cannot reach them, as she realises there could be a risk of choking if they put them in their mouth. The rear garden is not being used at present as the fencing blew down in recent gales so the area is not

secure. The childminder is having the fencing refitted as soon as possible and will then resume use when it is safe.

Children understand that they generally play downstairs, with older ones asking if they wish to go upstairs to play, so they are learning to respect boundaries. They are learning about road safety as they go out for walks and know why they need to use their car seat, or seatbelt with a booster cushion, to be safe in the car. The childminder has taken much action to minimise risks. Stair gates prevent younger children accessing the stairs or having unsupervised access to the kitchen for their safety. The childminder is mindful of security and makes sure the doors are locked to prevent children leaving without supervision or unauthorised persons having access. However, some unsuitable cleaning products are accessible in the upstairs bathroom which potentially compromises children's safety.

Children are protected as the childminder has a clear understanding of child protection issues and knows it is her duty to report concerns. She has a policy that is shared with parents and the relevant information is readily available to help her take the correct action to make sure children remain safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have a good balance of activities that promote all areas of their development. Much of their time is spent in free play where they make choices of resources and organise their play independently. The childminder is readily available to support them and develop learning opportunities as they arise. For example, she is encouraging children in early communication skills as she talks to them clearly and emphasises key words for them to repeat. Children chatter to her freely knowing she will listen to them and value what they say. They are building positive relationships being very comfortable with the childminder, asking for help when needed, and enjoying a cuddle or lap to sit on at times. Children are delighted to see the childminder and other children on arrival; there are many smiles and warm greetings.

Little children enjoy the freedom to explore and find out how things work. They move around between rooms, being supervised for safety, and discover how to make sounds and items move on activity centres. Finding resources from a wicker basket they push toys along the floor, pull others along by the string, cuddle soft toys or make music with a range of instruments. Older children particularly enjoy playing pool, watching videos or using a hand held electronic game brought from home. They explain they like the freedom to relax and make their own choices during the holidays as a contrast to time in school. Children of a range of ages sometimes play together such as older children working with little ones to draw and create designs on the Aquamat. Children take part in a range of craft activities. For example, older ones enjoy using 'tap it boards', they paint, model and make cards and gifts for special events. Cookery activities allow them opportunities to prepare food, and talk about ingredients, with egg free oat biscuits being a favourite. They grow tomatoes, take excess plants home to tend, and make collages of leaves and autumn fruits as they explore the natural world. Outings during holidays give children wider experiences as they visit places such as Pleasurewood Hills or an indoor physical play area. Children are beginning to distinguish right from wrong and form positive relationships as the childminder sets consistent boundaries and supports them appropriately to develop

these skills. They have made house rules, which are displayed on the notice board, and children listen to reminders about their behaviour.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident, independent and developing their self-esteem. They are treated with equal concern as the childminder knows them all well and adapts her approach to their stage of development. They are learning about the wider world as they play with a good range of resources that promote positive images of our multi-cultural society. Displays of photographs and an attractive selection of books promote this further. Children who are learning English as an additional language are supported as the childminder works in partnership with their parents to agree the best way to help them make progress. Although the childminder has not been approached to care for children with learning difficulties or a disability, in discussion, she shows a clear understanding of how to assess needs and work with parents to care for them appropriately. Children are learning how to manage their behaviour well. This is because the childminder shares her behaviour management policy with parents and implements it consistently. Consequently, children know what is expected of them and the childminder gives clear explanations to help them understand if behaviour is not as expected.

Children benefit from a good partnership with their parents. Parents receive clear and comprehensive information about the service on offer to help them decide if it is appropriate for their child. A flexible settling-in procedure helps everyone become comfortable with the arrangements in their own time. Parents and the childminder chat each day and use a diary to record information to make sure they remain well informed to meet the children's needs. The childminder has a complaints procedure to deal with any concerns that may be raised and maintain a log as is required. Several parents have expressed their satisfaction with the service by writing references, or sending cards and thank you notes, which the childminder holds on her file.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's safety is promoted as relevant checks have been conducted on the childminder and her husband, who may work as her assistant. He may, at times agreed in writing with parents, take sole charge of the children. They are protected from persons who have not been vetted by the childminder or assistant supervising them at all times. The childminder has recently completed training to National Vocational Qualification Level 3 and is booked to attend 'Birth to three matters' training shortly to further develop her provision for the little ones. The childminder failed to inform Ofsted of an accident requiring medical treatment, which is considered a significant event. This is a breach of a regulation which impacts on the overall outcome of the inspection. However, it has a minimal impact on children as the childminder keeps her first aid training up to date and deals appropriately with accidents.

Children use the space in the home well moving around with confidence and understanding where it is appropriate for them to play. They sleep peacefully according to their individual

needs and enjoy meals and creative activities in the kitchen. The childminder is well-organised to support their play. All the required documentation is in place to make sure children are cared for appropriately and according to their parent's wishes. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made to improve the records of children's attendance. The childminder has developed her system by ensuring attendance for all children is recorded clearly in a diary. A note, made on a white board in the hall, is also used for easy reference each day.

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):

- ensure Ofsted is notified of any significant changes or events
- ensure that hazards to children are minimised, this particularly refers to potentially dangerous substances in the upstairs bathroom.

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