



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250964
Inspection date	28 February 2007
Inspector	Margaret Elizabeth Roberts
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 outstanding. 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 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged 13 and nine years in Mildenhall, Suffolk. Most areas of the home are used for childminding and 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 four children, who attend on a part-time and full-time basis. The childminder walks and drives to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group, takes children to the local library and the local park. The childminder has no pets. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's very good health is promoted through the extremely high standards of hygiene that the childminder maintains. The implementation of good practices such as the regular wiping down of surfaces, the rota for the cleaning of toys and the reinforcement for children to wash their hands, helps to prevent the spread of infection. Children learn about personal hygiene through these daily routines. Children's medical needs are met very well because the childminder is trained in first aid and has obtained written parental permission for the giving of medication or the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment. Children are protected from illness and infection because the childminder has devised a policy about the exclusion of children who are sick, which includes how they will be cared for should they fall ill in her care.

Children's healthy growth and development are promoted through the very nutritious snacks and meals that are offered by the childminder. Fresh fruit and dairy products such as grapes and cheese are served at snack time, where children sit on child size chairs round a small table. They enjoy a social and relaxed atmosphere at this time, with the childminder, who is close at hand to ensure that their needs are met. In accordance with parents' wishes, she serves light meals or packed lunches ensuring that any special dietary requirements are met. Children are offered and encouraged to drink water regularly to ensure that they do not go thirsty.

Children's large physical development is encouraged through outside play in the garden where they have opportunities to play with a range of equipment. They take regular walks to the local parks, which helps to contribute to a healthy lifestyle, where they learn to throw and catch balls, running freely. Children are able to move between the furniture with ease negotiating a pathway from one activity to another. With support from the childminder they have opportunities to be active or quiet which helps them to become aware of their own needs such as exercising and sleeping. Their eye-hand coordination skills are promoted by taking part in activities such as threading, constructing and making craft items where they have opportunity to use small tools such as scissors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children enter premises that are warm and welcoming. A designated play area, where space is organised well, helps to promote their development. Their independence is encouraged through safe low storage boxes and access to suitable washing and toilet facilities that are situated downstairs. The garden is well maintained and completely enclosed allowing children to play safely when outside. The exceptionally hygienic kitchen area allows for safe storage and preparation of food.

The provision of a very good range of safe and well-maintained furniture, equipment and toys meets the varying needs of children. They are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment enabling children to develop their emotional, intellectual, social, creative and physical skills. Children are able to sleep or rest in travel cots

or on large comfortable seating. Children are transported safely when travelling in a vehicle because they are restrained in appropriate car seats or belts.

Children play safely because the childminder has taken very positive steps to ensure that hazards to children on the premises both inside and outside, are minimised. For example exit doors are kept locked and the outside area is secure so that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. All dangerous substances such as cleaning materials and medicines are inaccessible to children. Safety gates are in place to prevent unsupervised access to the stairs and kitchen. Children can be protected in the event of a fire because the childminder has devised an emergency escape plan which they practise regularly and helps them learn about personal safety. Smoke alarms are provided at every level of the home and a fire blanket is situated in the kitchen area. Consent is obtained from parents allowing the childminder to take children on outings ensuring that they are escorted safely to local parks.

Children can be protected if abuse or neglect is suspected because the childminder has effective, very clear procedures in place which are shared with parents. She has undertaken training in safeguarding children and is aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect. The childminder has guidance to follow and knows who to contact to seek advice should she have concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time spent with the childminder, where they are cared for in a relaxed and loving environment. They have access to a wide variety of play and learning opportunities, appropriate to their individual needs, supported by the childminder who allows children to build on their natural curiosity as learners. She values children's contribution highly, by listening and talking to them about what they are doing and has high expectations of what they can achieve. Children are able to make decisions about their play because all of the activities are easily accessible. Their learning and development is enhanced through the structure of the day where they have opportunity for free play and more structured, adult led activities. Children are encouraged to share and take turns, learning about what is right and wrong. They are very independent choosing freely an activity that they wish to play with and sustaining interest in what they have chosen for long periods of time.

Children's imaginative skills are promoted well through role play situations, such as caring for the 'babies' while dressing up in a range of different types of clothes. They are encouraged to develop their intellectual skills through the use of writing materials, learning to write their names and recognising letters by learning the alphabet with good support from the childminder. Time is allocated for quiet periods, usually in the afternoons, where children can listen to a story while snuggling up to the childminder on comfortable seating. Celebrations of different festivals helps children to learn about the world around us. They particularly enjoy using different construction materials to make models of aeroplanes or space ships, when they often correct the childminder should she guess wrongly, what they have made! Their creative talents are encouraged through the provision of a range of art and craft materials, where they express themselves freely.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn about equality through their play and the resources that they have access to. They are encouraged to respect one another by being kind and caring, sharing and taking turns. Children's individual needs are met through good communication with their parents, whose contribution the childminder values. All children have access to a full range of suitable resources which helps children to increase their awareness of the world around us, through planned topics. Children who may have special needs can be cared for exceptionally well because the childminder understands the needs of every child in her care. This is because she takes time to find out about children by making individual development checks with the parents so that appropriate care can be given. She has had experience of working with children with disabilities, working closely with parents and outside agencies, being proactive so that the necessary action can be taken, promoting the welfare and development of every child cared for.

Children behave extremely well because the childminder is able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way that promotes their welfare and development. Consistent boundaries are set, positive techniques used such as re-direction and simple house rules are agreed with children old enough to understand. Good behaviour is encouraged by the use of praise and good behaviour charts, with children working as a team to earn treats, such as being able to go to the park or to do a favourite activity. Children follow the childminder's good role model, she is calm and speaks quietly to children, giving explanations as to why the behaviour is unacceptable. She helps children to understand their emotions and feelings, allowing them to be sad or angry when things go wrong, working with them to find constructive solutions.

Children's well being and development is enhanced through the very good partnership that the childminder has built with the parents of the children she cares for. They are given good quality information in a very well presented brochure setting out in detail what they can expect from the childminder. After discussing children's individual needs, these are then recorded for reference, contracts are drawn up and consent obtained for different types of activities. Daily diaries for each child ensure that parents are fully informed about their children's routines and the activities that they have taken part in during their time spent with the childminder. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns that they may have and are informed of how they can make a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's welfare and learning is promoted because the childminder has undertaken the relevant training and has the appropriate skills and experience in childcare. The organisation of space and resources allows children to play and learn in a child centred environment, meeting their individual needs effectively.

The excellent organisation of all relevant documentation that is required and the working set of policies and procedures that have been written, helps the childminder to carry out her work effectively and has a positive impact on the care the children receive. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to make sure that children are unable to leave the garden unsupervised and request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

The childminder has made good improvements. Children's safety has been improved because the fence panel that had been removed is now in place and secure. Children's medical needs can now be attended to should an emergency arise because written permission has been requested from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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