



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250842
Inspection date	14 February 2007
Inspector	Karen Pretty
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 1995. She lives with her partner and two children aged five and sixteen in Leiston, Suffolk. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding five children, one of which is on a full-time basis. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler groups, takes children to the local library, park and beach. The family has dog and a cat.

The childminder is a member of a local childminder support group. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and comfortable home where they are encouraged to follow simple good health and hygiene practices. Children are given opportunities to develop their own knowledge about personal hygiene as they are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They are reminded of the importance of using soap to wash away any germs. Their health is promoted as the childminder obtains the appropriate information from parents about children's individual health care needs and all written consents are in place to support this. The childminder has attended first aid training and has accurate procedures in place to record accidents. Children are protected from the spread of illness as the childminder has a clear policy in place, which she shares with parents, about the exclusion of children if they are ill.

Children are learning about healthy eating as the childminder works with parents to support her views and provides their children with healthy snacks, which feature fruit and vegetables. The childminder holds a current food hygiene certificate, she prepares and cooks a wide variety of foods to provide each child with a balanced diet. Children enjoyed a picnic style platter at lunchtime which included sandwiches, sausages, fruit and seeds. Children have constant access to drinks to ensure they do not become dehydrated, smaller children have their beakers replenished regularly by the childminder. All children are able to rest and sleep according to their individual routines, there is a travel cot for younger children and there is a sofa with plenty of cosy cushions for older children. Sleeping children are frequently checked and a monitor system is also used for babies.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical play experiences that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They regularly play in the safe enclosed garden with access to an extensive range of equipment which includes bikes, footballs, tents and tunnels. Babies have plenty of space indoors to pull themselves up and move around safely, the childminder provides a range of cause and effect toys to promote their physical development. Children frequently go with the childminder to the local park which gives them further opportunity to have the freedom to run around in the fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment, where they can move around freely and independently under the childminder's close supervision. Children's safety is enhanced and the risk of accidental injury is minimised because the childminder has taken effective steps to reduce possible risks. For example, fitting cupboard locks, excluding children from the stairs and using socket covers. Fire safety precautions such as a fire blanket and smoke alarms are in place and the childminder has developed an emergency evacuation procedure to follow.

Children have access to a stimulating range of good quality toys and equipment that meet safety standards. These are mainly stored in the ground floor bedroom which is also used as a

playroom, the childminder cleans and checks toys and equipment regularly. Most resources are stored at child height, this enables children to self-select. Children are learning to keep themselves safe on outings as the childminder teaches them about road safety and they know to stay close. The childminder uses buggies and reins to keep younger children safe. Appropriate sized car seats are used when transporting children in the car, however, the childminder has not got any written consent from parents for their children to be transported in her car.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted because the childminder has a good understanding of her role and responsibilities in protecting children. Recent training and relevant up-to-date information ensures the childminder is confident and competent in following correct procedures and knows who to contact should she have any concerns about the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and well settled in the warm and welcoming environment. They enjoy spending time exploring the stimulating range of toys and equipment provided by the childminder based on her accurate knowledge of child development. Children build confidence and self-esteem through the development of warm close relationships with the childminder who is very responsive to their needs. The childminder gets down to the children's level and joins in with their play, supporting the development of their language and curiosity with open ended questions. Children are given plenty of opportunities to develop their social skills as they go out to the park, library or local children's groups.

Children are motivated to learn and interested in what they do because the childminder provides a wide range of planned activities starting with the children's interests. Children frequently enjoy craft, cooking, painting and colouring which ensures all areas of development are promoted and met. Children were seen making jam hearts to celebrate St. Valentine's Day, experimenting, manipulating and rolling pastry, some were so involved their faces became animated with delight which seemed to capture their levels of concentration and involvement. Children have access to a large selection of books which is helping them to develop a love of books, they also provide opportunities for them to have quiet times with the childminder. Children confidently ask questions and use their initiative to satisfy their curiosity and help solve problems, for example, a child asks for a tissue, the childminder responds, but still encourages him to wipe his own nose, following his success he is praised for his effort.

Younger children's needs are well met by the warm and gentle childminder who reflects aspects of 'Birth to three matters' in her good practice. Babies have access to natural resources which they can use to explore textures, developing their curiosity. The childminder encourages their communication skills by patiently listening and responding to their questions so they know their views are valued. She is alert to their need for consistency and believes in offering plenty of one to one time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a good sense of belonging because the childminder knows them and their families well and ensures they are all valued and included. Children have built good relationships with the childminder who responds sensitively to them and respects their individual personalities. All children have equal access to toys and equipment that meet their individual needs so they can become confident and independent. The childminder has several resources reflecting diversity and discusses people's similarities and differences with children, to help them develop an understanding of others.

The childminder has a very positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She has considered how the environment and activities could be adapted to ensure inclusion. The childminder works very closely with parents to provide individual care required to promote children's welfare and development. She is willing to work with other agencies to further increase her knowledge and would undertake further training to accommodate an individual child's needs and promote their welfare.

Children learn about responsible behaviour as the childminder is a positive role model and has a good understanding of appropriate managing strategies depending on their stage of development. The childminder deals with behaviour in a calm and consistent manner, she encourages self-discipline and respect for others. Regular communication with parents enables any behavioural changes to be shared and ensures a consistent approach is maintained. Behaviour incidents are recorded in a book so any patterns of behaviour could be quickly recognised.

Parents are able to share all written policies and procedures. Information is provided by parents to ensure their children are looked after according to their wishes. A positive relationship is built with parents from the beginning, as children are able to spend time settling in with their parents. Information is shared verbally on a daily basis regarding children's meals and daily routines to ensure their changing needs are met and provide continuity of care. The childminder is aware of her duty to make parents aware of how they can make a complaint and she knows to log complaints, should she ever receive any.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder organises her home to provide a welcoming and child-friendly environment in which children can take part in a range of activities to support their care, learning and play. Space and resources are well organised to provide children with a good balance of interesting activities. The childminder follows accurate procedures to promote children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards which ensures children are well protected. Appropriate checks are in place to ensure children are cared for by a suitably vetted person and children are never left alone with any person not vetted. The childminder has attended all the relevant training to support her registration and is still keen to develop

her knowledge and skills further. Children's needs are met by good adult to child ratios and the children benefit from the individual care and attention given.

Children's well-being is positively promoted by the documented information kept, this is well organised to ensure children's personal details are kept confidential. A register is maintained, accurately showing children's actual hours of attendance and all the required documentation was available at the time of inspection.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop her paperwork to ensure parents are informed of their child's progress and for the efficient and safe management of the provision. The childminder has updated her file which contains information for parents, it now includes all the required information about her childminding practice. The childminder shares information verbally with parents each day to keep them informed with their child's progress.

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):

- obtain written permission from parents for their child to be transported in a vehicle.

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