



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY269543
Inspection date	12 March 2007
Inspector	Christine Eglinton
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 2004. She lives with her partner who is also a registered childminder and her three children aged 10 months, 12, and 13 years. The family live in a house in the village of North Elmham, close to Dereham, Norfolk. The childminder prefers to use the downstairs for childminding and parts of the upstairs for children who require a sleep. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years at any one time and is currently co-minding with her partner a total of 19 children under the age of eight which includes 11 children under the age of five years. She is also caring for eight children who are aged over eight years. All the children attend on a part-time basis.

The family has two cats. The childminder walks to local schools to take children in the morning and drives to take children to school in the afternoon. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from playing in a warm and clean home where from an early age they learn the importance of good personal hygiene. For example, the childminder discourages young children from putting their feet on the table during snack time by explaining the risks of passing on germs. She generally uses effective procedures such as ensuring tables are cleaned with anti-bacterial sprays before children eat their snacks. However, some of the toys and equipment are not being cleaned frequently, which does not protect children from the risks of cross-infection.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate, which means she is able to give children appropriate care if there is an accident. Parents give prior consent to administer any medication, to ensure children receive the correct dosage, according to their needs. The childminder operates an effective sick child procedure, and parents are called immediately if a child becomes unwell whilst in her care. Parents are able to view a list of communicable diseases, and are informed about the exclusion procedure. This prevents the spread of contagious ailments.

Meal times are a relaxed and social occasion where children are able to chat to the childminder and with each other, which encourages children's social development. Toddlers are encouraged to feed themselves which helps develop their independence. Children are given very good opportunities to learn about healthy foods when they make their own fruit cocktails, and sample a very wide selection of fresh fruits. For example, some of the children try fresh blackberries for the first time, in addition to eating melon, peach, bananas, kiwis and oranges. Children have also grown a variety of vegetables and fruits in the garden which they have sampled and taken home to eat. This encourages children to learn to make healthy food options in a fun and meaningful way. The childminder makes good provision for children who have special medical and dietary needs, because she ensures she gathers this information from parents before the childminding arrangement commences.

Regular outings to the local park where there is large play equipment gives children plenty of opportunities to develop their physical skills. The childminder utilises the local area well to give children further opportunities to enjoy lots of fresh air and exercise. For instance, children play while being supervised in a field with bats and balls on their way back from school. This contributes to keeping children healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in a secure safe and child centred home, which allows them to move around safely. The childminder has displayed children's creative work and appropriate posters in her home which adds to the welcoming atmosphere. The childminder uses a good range of appropriate equipment to help her meet the needs of young children. For instance, toddlers are able to sit with the older children during meal times and play alongside older children at the table, because she has appropriate child booster seats. Babies and toddlers are

able to sleep comfortably and safely in appropriate cots, which contributes towards their physical well-being.

Children have access to a very wide range of good quality toys and resources that are stimulating, and suitable for children's stage of development. Children are able to choose their own resources by self-selection or by asking the childminder to access them, which enables them to spend time concentrating at self-chosen activities. However, the sheer volume and organisation of toys and equipment, is not enabling toddlers to freely explore their environment and aid in their mobility.

Children benefit from a good range of safety measures for example, fire guards protect open fires, and low level glass is protected by safety film, which help to reduce potential hazards. Good routines and gentle reminders, help children learn about safety in the home. For example, the childminder talks to the children about the dangers of pulling out toys from shelves above where younger children are sitting. Older children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe because they practise the fire evacuation procedure frequently. They are given clear safety rules during outings, and understand why they must stop at certain points of the journey which ensures their safety.

The childminder has sound knowledge of child protection issues, and is clear regarding her role and responsibility in the procedure to follow, if she has any concerns. This supports children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have made warm and easy friendships with the childminder, her partner, and with each other. The older children enjoy a playful banter with the childminder's partner, and even care routines such as washing children's faces, are done in a fun and enjoyable way by using hand flannel puppets. Consequently, children thoroughly enjoy their time there and separate easily from their parents. Children are given good opportunities to make choices during their day. They choose if they want to take part in decorating cards they have made, and choose what type of fresh fruit they want to try. This allows children to make decisions, and to take the initiative in their play and learning. They are given good opportunities to become independent for instance, they butter their own toast after school, and have made their own play dough. The older children under supervision, have made their own hot chocolate and have been consulted on deciding on the after school snack menu.

Sensitive settling-in routines where the childminder ensures children follow the same routines for sleep and feeding ensures continuity of care, and special comforters from home such as pieces of muslin, enables young children to settle more easily.

Children have good opportunities to develop their creativity. They enjoy painting their pictures with block paints, and the younger children are able to explore the feel of paint on their fingers and make marks on paper. Younger children have explored 'gloop' and are able to play with natural materials such as sand and water. This gives young children important opportunities to take part in sensory play which helps them make important connections in their learning.

Trips to the local woods, beach, and feeding the local horses and ducks, offers children a rich range of learning experiences and helps them to become aware of their local environment.

.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to participate in all the activities provided, which ensures they have equal opportunities to maximise their enjoyment and potential. The childminder has prominently displayed children's creative work in the home, to show them their achievements are valued. Children are helped to feel good about themselves by the childminder using praise and encouragement, which promotes their self-esteem. Resources and play equipment reflect positive images of all aspects of society, to help develop children's understanding of diversity. Children have discussed and celebrated different cultural festivals, which means that children learn to acknowledge and accept differences.

Children play together co-operatively and show consideration towards each other. For instance, they volunteer to clear the table together, and offer to pick up a card dropped by one child without any adult prompting. Older children have devised their own behaviour rules, and they are learning important social skills such as waiting for their turn when playing with group games. Subsequently, children behave well, and respond effectively to any guidance and praise.

Children are encouraged to participate in all the activities provided, which ensures they have equal opportunities to maximise their enjoyment and potential. The childminder has prominently displayed children's creative work in the home to show them their achievements are valued. Children are helped to feel good about themselves by the childminder using praise and encouragement, which promotes their self-esteem. Resources and play equipment reflect positive images of all aspects of society, to help develop children's understanding of diversity. Children have discussed and celebrated different cultural festivals which means that children learn to acknowledge and accept differences.

Children play together co-operatively and show consideration towards each other. For instance, they volunteer to clear the table together, and offer to pick up a card dropped by one child without any adult prompting. Older children have devised their own behaviour rules, and they are learning important social skills such as waiting for their turn when playing with group games. Subsequently, children behave well, and respond effectively to any guidance and praise.

The childminder uses care diaries for children under two years which parents are able to view, and make their own comments. She also uses daily feedback for parents to ensure continuity of care. Parents are able to view all the written statements and procedures to enable them to make an informed choice.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder attends additional training whenever she can. This ensures she is able to provide appropriate care for the children she looks after, and helps her to reflect, monitor and improve her practice. For instance, she has incorporated a singing activity following attending a creative work shop. Children receive good support from the childminder, who knows them well.

The childminder organises her time effectively, which enables her to offer children good support and supervision during their play, and daily care routines. She has created a welcoming environment, where children feel at home and at ease. The day is well balanced giving children ample opportunities of taking part in vigorous physical play, and quiet restful activities.

Information kept about the children is relevant, and all mandatory records are in place. However, some records relating to qualifications and insurance records are not readily accessible, and organisation of furniture, resources and toys, restricts the amount of clear floor space made available for children's play. Written policies and procedures guide the childminder in her daily practice. This ensures children's needs are met, and all relevant information concerning the childminder's practice, is shared with the parents. A good two-way flow of information between the parents, ensures consistency of care. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop documentation to improve the organisation of care, and to improve the location of safety equipment. She has now sought written permission from parents for children to receive emergency medical treatment which promotes children's health. A fire blanket is now positioned on the kitchen wall ensuring easy access in the event of an emergency. This enables her to promote children's safety more effectively.

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 the 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 the frequency of cleaning toys resources and outdoor play equipment
- ensure the organisation of toys and resources are not hindering young children's opportunities to freely explore their environment and encourage their mobility.

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