

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	257989
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Inspector	Lindsey Ann Cullum

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 1993. She lives with her husband, one adult son and her 11-year-old son, in a residential area of Norwich. The downstairs of the property only is registered for use by minded children. There is an enclosed garden for outside play. Local amenities are within walking distance of the home. The family have two cats.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. Overnight care is not provided. The childminder is currently caring for seven children on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a range of activities which contribute to their physical development and promote a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy regular visits to the park where they can run freely or use large equipment such as slides or swings, which develop their co-ordination skills. Children benefit from fresh air as they walk to the school or toddler group each day. They play outside in the childminder's garden with balls or small wheeled toys. Sufficient space is provided indoors

for children to move around freely and for young children to practise crawling or walking. Children are developing good hand to eye co-ordination through playing with jigsaw puzzles, construction items and interactive toys. A limited choice of sleeping facilities are available. Parents are aware that their child may have a nap whilst in a buggy.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and well-maintained home. They are learning about the importance of good hygiene practices through following established daily routines. For example, they are encouraged to wash their hands before meals and after visiting the toilet or playing outside. Pets are kept clean and are well looked after, to ensure children are protected when coming into contact with them. The childminder has updated her first aid training and has a first aid box to hand in order to deal effectively with any accident should this occur. Children's health and medical needs are discussed with parents and relevant information recorded, enabling appropriate care to be provided. The childminder does not gain written consent from parents prior to administering medication, which compromises children's well-being. Records are maintained of accidents, incidents or any existing injuries, although the confidentiality of some details is not ensured.

Children are adequately nourished as they are provided with regular meals and snacks throughout the day. Parents provide food for their children which caters for their dietary needs. The childminder is aware of the principles for healthy eating and encourages children to eat fruit for snacks. Drinks are accessible to children, ensuring they remain well-hydrated.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a homely environment where they feel comfortable and secure. The conservatory is used for most of the children's activities. There is sufficient space for children to play freely plus a table for meals or creative activities, fostering children's development. Children can access a range of resources and are able to make independent choices from the selection available. Most toys are stored in child-height storage trays with an additional selection in storage boxes which the childminder can access, for example, creative materials or toys with small pieces. The childminder rotates the resources used to stimulate and maintain children's interest. Children's risk of injury from toys is minimised because the childminder ensures that they are good quality and appropriate for the range of children that she minds.

Children's safety is promoted satisfactorily because the childminder has taken some measures to minimise the risks for children. Doors and windows are secure, low level glass is suitably protected and dangerous household substances are inaccessible, protecting children from harm. However, some electrical sockets may be accessed by children, compromising their safety. The childminder offers appropriate levels of supervision and monitors children's activities, to ensure they are able to play safely. Smoke detectors are sited on each floor of the home and the childminder has thought through her emergency evacuation plan. However, children are at potential risk as the fire blanket is not sited so this is immediately accessible and ready for use.

Children enjoy regular outings with the childminder who has clear strategies in place to keep them safe. For example, children walk holding onto the buggy on the side of the path away from the road or are securely strapped into their buggy. The childminder assesses the safety of venues visited, for example, the park, in order to protect children from harm. Children are beginning to learn about road safety as they practise safe crossing, whilst out with the childminder.

Children are protected as the childminder understands her role and responsibilities in child protection. She is aware that her first priority is to safeguard children and children are not left with persons who have not been suitably vetted. The childminder has relevant literature and contact numbers available for reference.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, relaxed and at ease in the childminder's care. They are happy to go to her for comfort, reassurance and support. The childminder spends individual time with children, joining in their activities, in order to promote their learning. For example, when looking through books the childminder talks about what can be seen in the pictures, encouraging children's language skills and interest in stories. The childminder is responsive to children's gestures and non-verbal communication, encouraging children to express their needs or feelings.

Children follow a familiar weekly routine which incorporates a range of activities and outings, geared to promote children's learning and development. They regularly attend local toddler groups where they are able to explore a range of creative resources such as paint, playdough or sticking. Children's social skills are promoted as they learn to play with other children, share resources and take turns. Frequent outings to the park, enable children to practise their physical skills as they climb, balance or run around freely. They enjoy walks around the local environment, observing the boats on the river or feeding the ducks. Children's imaginations are stimulated through role play resources such as play food, a shop till, dolls and small buggy. Children can choose from an age-appropriate range of resources, stored in easily accessible trays. Children select what they would like to play with including puzzles, construction materials, books, threading toys or small world resources such as cars, trains and play figures. They are interested in the selection available and initiate their own play. As a consequence, children are making good progress in all areas of their development.

The childminder has a limited knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She currently provides suitable toys and activities for children under three to help promote their learning and development. The childminder has resources for babies to explore including musical toys, rattles and textured toys. She responds warmly to young children, giving smiles and eye contact, ensuring they feel settled and secure.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are met because the childminder knows them and their routines. She obtains information from their parents on their individual preferences and needs at the start of the arrangement and through ongoing discussions, enabling appropriate care to be provided. All children have access to appropriate activities which promote their learning and development. Children develop positive links with the local community through the childminder taking them on outings, for example, to a café, toddler groups, the park or walks around the local area. The childminder is aware that some children have specific needs and would liaise closely with parents or seek advice, if necessary, so that their needs could be met.

Children are happy and well behaved as they are occupied and interested in the activities on offer. Good behaviour is valued and children are given praise and encouragement. Positive strategies are used to manage children's behaviour and these are shared with parents at the start of the arrangement to promote consistency.

Children benefit from the positive relationships which have developed between the childminder and their parents. The childminder liaises closely with parents to make sure she is familiar with children's routines and needs, enabling appropriate care to be provided. Children's continued well-being is assured through the valuable daily discussions with parents as children arrive or leave. The childminder talks through her childcare practices with parents, which includes brief information on the procedure for complaints or expressions of concern. A system has not been established to record any complaints received.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel comfortable and secure in the childminder's home. They benefit from the care of an experienced childminder who understands how children learn, enabling them to make progress. Activities and daily routines are flexibly planned around children's individual requirements and they receive good levels of support and attention. Space and resources are well organised to allow children to move around freely and play in comfort. The childminder takes account of parents wishes and shares information each day to ensure continuity of care for children.

Children benefit from the care of an appropriately vetted childminder. She has completed some training linked to childminding practice and has a sound understanding of the requirements of the National Standards, which is reflected in the care she provides for children. Records which promote the welfare and care of children are in good order and filed confidentially. Overall, the needs of the children who attend are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the last inspection, the childminder agreed to familiarise herself with relevant literature on child protection issues and obtain written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for children.

The childminder has read the Government publication on child protection procedures in order to update her knowledge and ensure children are protected. She gains parents' written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for children when completing contracts, contributing to children's ongoing well-being.

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):

- obtain written consent from parents prior to the administration of all medicines and ensure the confidentiality of any records
- take positive steps to ensure children's safety by ensuring that electrical sockets are inaccessible to children and that the fire blanket is appropriately sited
- improve the information for parents on the procedure to follow should they wish to make a complaint or raise a concern and develop a system for recording any complaints received.

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