

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256680
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Inspector	Melanie Calway

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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1994. She lives with her husband and two children, aged 10 and 15 years, in a village near to the town of King's Lynn. The whole of the ground floor, with the exception of the office, and two of the upstairs bedrooms are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks and drives to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. She also takes children to the local park.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding five children under eight, one of whom attends on a full-time basis. The family has a cat and a guinea pig.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because there are satisfactory hygiene procedures in place. Nappies are changed in the downstairs bathroom. The childminder washes her hands after changing nappies and disposes of them appropriately. Children's independence is encouraged as a step stool is provided for them in the bathroom and older children are encouraged to wash their hands as part of the daily routine. The home is clean and well maintained.

Children are protected from the risk of infection as the childminder will not accept children with infectious illnesses. A list of common exclusion periods is kept on a notice board by the front door for reference. A first aid kit is kept so that minor accidents and injuries can be dealt with. However, the childminder does not have a current first aid certificate so her knowledge of first aid procedures is not up to date. A record of all accidents is maintained and there is a system for the recording of medication. The childminder obtains information from parents on children's medical needs and consent has been obtained from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice so that she can seek help in the event of an emergency.

Children are able to sleep and rest according to their needs. They can sleep in travel cots in two of the bedrooms. Children's needs are respected and they benefit from a stable routine. They bring comforters from home to help them to settle and the childminder makes sure they have them when needed. Children have regular opportunities for exercise and fresh air as they walk to school or pre-school on most days and play in the garden if the weather is fine. Children are well nourished. The childminder provides lunches of sandwiches or hot dinners and snacks. Some children bring their own lunch. Children are offered drinks at regular intervals and some children, who are old enough, are able to access their drinks independently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for in premises which are safe and suitable. Children have plenty of room to move and play freely in the large living room and in the garden. The environment is made welcoming as toys are placed within easy reach of toddlers and babies. Children access appropriate toys and the childminder checks that smaller items are kept out of the reach of younger children.

Children are kept safe as the childminder maintains a good level of supervision. She checks on sleeping children by going into the room and by using a baby monitor. The environment is made safe as hazards have been removed from the kitchen and stair gates are in place at the top and the bottom of the stairs. Children begin to develop an awareness of safety issues because explanations are given, for example, children are asked to be careful when climbing on to toys because they might have an accident. Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder takes her phone with her, which has all the emergency contact numbers in. Children are kept in buggies or on reins to keep them safe when walking. All the necessary permissions for outings and transport have been obtained from parents. The childminder talks to the children about safety rules. Children are protected from the risk of fire as there is fire evacuation procedure which is practised by the older children so they know what to do in the event of a fire.

Children's welfare is not safeguarded sufficiently as the childminder does not have an adequate knowledge of child protection procedures. She has some information on child protection which she would refer to if concerned and she would seek advice but she does not have the referral number and is unclear about what she would do in this eventuality.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. Inside they can choose freely from a range of appropriate toys which are placed at floor level. Toys are stored in plastic boxes in a storage unit and in cupboards and drawers in the living room. Children are able to choose what to play with. Outside they can play on the trampoline, slides and climbing frame. Older children can play games or do craft activities at the dining table. Children play together co-operatively and the older ones enjoy playing with the younger ones.

The childminder sits with children, at their level, and involves herself in their play, giving them smiles and eye contact and chatting to them to encourage their language development. She supports them as they build a house for the animals with Lego bricks, asking them the colour of the bricks and encouraging them to share. She sings and chats to children when changing their nappies. Children's self-esteem is fostered as they are given praise and encouragement. Their independence is promoted as they choose what to play with and help to tidy the toys up.

Children under three are cared for appropriately, although the childminder has not received the 'Birth to three matters' framework pack and so has not referred to it. Children under three are given appropriate comfort and reassurance.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Children's individual needs are met as the childminder gathers information from parents about their care when they first start, as she chats to them and on the record forms. She gets to know the children in her care well so that she can respond to their needs. They are beginning to learn about the wider world as some resources reflect other cultures and lifestyles. Children are given appropriate support. Although she has no experience of working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities she would work with parents to ensure that children's differing needs could be met.

Children behave well in the childminder's care as she has consistent boundaries so that children know what is expected of them. She uses positive methods to manage children's behaviour such as removing them from the situation and explaining why some behaviour is unacceptable. She attaches a behaviour policy to her contract so that parents are aware of her approach.

The childminder communicates with parents at collection times when she talks to them about their children's day. She talks to new parents about her service and some parents write down their children's routines so that she can meet the children's needs. However, the childminder does not have an adequate knowledge of the regulations governing complaints and is unaware of the requirement to investigate complaints and to set up the complaints record. She is therefore in breach of regulations.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The childminder and her household have had the necessary clearances to work with children and evidence of these is kept with her paperwork. She has not maintained a current first aid certificate and therefore fails to meet a requirement of the National Standards. Children's welfare in the event of an emergency is therefore compromised.

The premises are well-organised to ensure children's safety. The childminder organises her time to incorporate school and pre-school collections and also to respect children's routines. An accurate record of children's hours of attendance is kept.

Most of the required documentation is in place and is maintained in an orderly and accessible manner. Overall children's needs are not met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain information regarding child protection procedures. She has obtained the relevant booklet but she does not have an adequate knowledge of child protection procedures or the referral number and this is an action at this inspection. She was also asked to provide evidence that vehicle insurance covers childminding. Evidence of this was sent in to Ofsted.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- update the first aid certificate
- improve knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures and ensure that the current referral number is obtained and kept for easy reference
- improve knowledge and understanding of the regulations regarding complaints and develop systems for the recording of complaints.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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