

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256641
Inspection date	11 June 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 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 1984. She lives with her husband in King's Lynn. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder drives to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools and takes children on regular outings into town and in the holidays to nearby attractions. She also takes children on regular walks around the neighbourhood and to the local park.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding eight children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. 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's health is promoted well because there are good hygiene procedures in place. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before they eat and after using the toilet. Younger children are given individual flannels to wipe their hands to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Nappies are dealt with hygienically and disposed of appropriately. The premises are clean and well-maintained.

Children's medical needs are met as the childminder has a current first aid qualification and keeps a first aid kit in the kitchen so that she can deal with minor accidents and injuries appropriately. An accurate record of all accidents is maintained. The necessary permission is obtained before medicine is administered and parents sign to acknowledge it has been given. Consent has been obtained from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice so that the childminder can seek help in the event of an emergency. Children are protected from the risk of infection as the childminder does not accept children who are infectious. Children are able to sleep and rest according to their needs. They sleep in a travel cot in the dining room and their individual routines are respected. Children have regular opportunities for exercise and fresh air as they go on walks every day to feed a neighbour's fishes or to the local park. Older children can play football in the garden or engage in other forms of active play. For the younger children there is a good selection of scooters and tricycles to ride on in the paved area and a sand pit. Children are able to choose when they want to play outside.

Children are well nourished. Some parents provide snacks and packed lunches. The childminder provides healthy cooked lunches for those that want it and sandwiches for tea. Fresh drinking water is always available for children to access independently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in premises which are safe and suitable. The front door is kept locked while children are present and the rear is fully enclosed. Children have plenty of room to move and play freely and there is a large outside area where children can play safely. They are able to move from room to room and explore their environment safely. A stair-gate restricts access to the first floor which is not registered and children understand that they are not able to go there. Toys are stored at children's level in different rooms and children can help themselves to what they want. Toys are checked regularly for hygiene and safety. Children are kept safe as the childminder supervises children while they play.

Children begin to develop an awareness of safety issues because explanations are given. For example, when out walking the childminder asks children to stop, listen and look before they cross the road. Children understand that they must abide by the safety rules when they are out. Children have to stay in buggies or hold hands to keep themselves safe. The childminder always takes her phone and emergency numbers with her in case of an emergency. The required belts and booster seats are in place for children travelling in her car. The necessary permissions for outings and transport have been obtained from most parents. Children are protected from the risk of fire as the childminder is aware of how to evacuate the premises and linked smoke alarms are in place. However, the fire blanket is kept in a kitchen cupboard and is therefore not properly attached and readily accessible in the event of a fire.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder would seek advice if she had any concerns about children. She has attended child protection training in the past but her knowledge is not up to date and some of the information she holds including the referral number is out of date.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of activities. They are taken on regular outings into town to the shops or an indoor play area. They go on walks every day around the neighbourhood and enjoy walking to a neighbour's garden to feed the fishes. In the holidays trips are organised to local attractions.

Inside they can choose freely from a good range of appropriate toys which are arranged in different rooms. Children can move between rooms freely and choose what they want to play with. Children can ask to play outside at any time. The childminder is lead by what the children want to play with and goes outside with them if this is what they want. Outside there are balls, a rocker, a goal post, a selection of tricycles and scooters and a sand pit. Children also enjoy helping with the gardening and watering the plants. Other activities include cookery, drawing, play dough and puzzles. Older children enjoy imaginary play in the garden, making dens or dancing and putting on shows.

The childminder sits with children, at their level, and involves herself in their play making sand castles with them, helping them to do puzzles or playing with pretend food. Children's independence and self-esteem is promoted as they choose what to play with, fetch things for themselves and try to take their jackets off.

Children under three are cared for appropriately. The childminder has the 'Birth to three matters' framework pack and has referred to it. Children under three are given opportunities to explore and use their senses as they play with play dough or sand. They feel secure as the childminder gives them affection and reassurance when they need it. As a result children are happy and settled in her care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are met as the childminder gets to know the children in her care well. Parents visit with the children initially so that the childminder can tell them about what she offers and to find out about the children. Most information is exchanged verbally. However, not all of the contracts contain information about children's specific needs, routines and preferences to ensure that children are given appropriate care. Children are beginning to learn about the wider world as there are some resources which reflect other cultures.

Children are supported well. The childminder cares for some children with learning difficulties. She works with parents to ensure children can be fully included and feel supported. Children behave well in the childminders care as she has consistent boundaries so that children know what is expected of them. She uses positive strategies such as distraction or removal from the situation and gives children explanations about why some behaviour is unacceptable. She communicates with parents and the contract includes a brief statement on behaviour management.

Children are cared for effectively because she has a friendly relationship with parents. Information about the day to day care of the children is exchanged at collection times when parents can chat about what the children have done. Most information about the service is given verbally. Although the childminder has the information on the regulations governing complaints and would refer to it in the event of a complaint being received, she has not developed a system for the recording of complaints, in line with regulations, or for making parents aware of what they should do if they had a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has many years of experience in caring for children. The household has received the necessary clearances. Children are not left alone with persons who have not been vetted unless there is an emergency and then only with the prior consent of the parents.

The premises and schedule are well organised to ensure children's safety and well-being and to give them a range of interesting experiences. An accurate record of children's hours of attendance is kept.

Most of the required documentation is in place and is maintained in a satisfactory manner. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure paperwork is organised to include policies and procedures to support practice with regard to behaviour management, activities provided, safety and hygiene. The childminder has included a brief statement on behaviour in her contract but has not produced written policies and procedures to support her practice. Information about the service is exchanged verbally. She was asked to ensure that permission to seek emergency medical aid is obtained from all parents. This has now been obtained. She was also asked to further develop the resources that positively reflect equality of opportunity. Some resources reflect other cultures.

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):

- ensure that the fire blanket is properly fitted
- update knowledge of child protection procedures and obtain the current referral number
- ensure that records for all children contain information which enables appropriate care to be given, for example, any special requirements, dietary information, preferences and routines
- develop a system for the recording of complaints in line with regulations and make parents aware of how to make a complaint.

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