

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256300
Inspection date	19 July 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 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 1991. She lives with her husband and two children, aged 15 and 18 years in King's Lynn. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. She attends a local childminding group and takes children to the shops and to the park.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding five children, two of whom attend on a full-time basis. 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 eating and after using the toilet and so are learning about good hygiene through the daily routine. Individual flannels are provided for children to

dry their hands to minimise the risk of cross-infection. A downstairs bathroom is available for children to wash their hands so they can be independent. The premises are clean and well maintained and toys are regularly cleaned.

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. There is a system for recording the administration of medicines, which is completed correctly. The childminder obtains information from parents on caring for children's medical needs. 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 protected from the risk of infection as the childminder has clear procedures on not accepting children with infectious conditions, which she shares with parents.

Children are able to sleep and rest according to their needs. Children can watch television quietly in the front room during certain times of the day or relax on the sofa in the play room. A pram and travel cot are available for young children who need to sleep. Children have regular opportunities for exercise and fresh air as they walk to school and pre-school every day and play in the garden when they want to. The childminder also takes them to local parks.

Children are well nourished. Parents provide snacks and meals in the form of packed lunches or meals to heat up. These generally include healthy options. Children's dietary needs are met as the relevant information is obtained on their record forms. Children are offered drinks at regular intervals and children's drinks are put on the kitchen table where they can reach them. However they are not able to access fresh drinking water independently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises which are safe and suitable. The door is locked while children are present so they are secure. Children have room to play in the conservatory which has been converted into a play room. The environment is made welcoming with child-sized furniture and colourful posters and displays. A good selection of toys is available at the children's level on low shelves and in storage boxes and the childminder rotates toys to provide children with variety. Toys are age-appropriate and checked regularly for hygiene and safety.

Children are kept safe as the childminder maintains a good level of supervision. The environment is made safe by the use of cupboard catches in the kitchen. All toxic substances are placed out of reach. Children understand that they do not use the upstairs. Children begin to develop an awareness of safety issues because explanations are given. They are asked to be careful when standing on a chair or they might fall. Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder takes her phone with her, which has all the emergency contact numbers in. Children know that they must hold on to the buggy or hold hands to keep them safe when walking. All the necessary permissions for outings and transport have been obtained from parents. The childminder has written an emergency plan and arranged for emergency cover with another registered childminder so that parents are clear about what would happen in an emergency. Children are protected from the risk of fire as the fire evacuation plan is displayed on the fridge. Necessary fire equipment such as fire blanket and smoke alarms are in place. The childminder practises the fire drill regularly with children so they know what to do in the event of a fire.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder is aware of her duty to report any child protection concerns. She has up to date information on child protection procedures, including

the referral number and has attended child protection training so she is able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of activities. They attend a local childminding group to help them to socialise, as well as regular outings to the shops and local parks. Inside they can choose freely from a good range of appropriate toys which are stored on low-level shelves and units. Children can help themselves from these and the childminder will get items for them from a larger store cupboard if needed. Toys are rotated regularly to give children variety. Children enjoy doing puzzles or playing with play dough at a small table in the play room. The conservatory doors are left open and children can play outside if they want to.

The childminder sits with children, at their level, and involves herself in their play, chatting to them as they play with the play dough or do puzzles. She asks questions to encourage their thinking skills, for example when they play with different sized bears the childminder says 'Do you want to help me count them?' and 'Shall we put them into teams?'. Children help to sort the bears by size and then make a pretend picnic for them. The childminder reads stories and children listen and join in. The childminder plans activities around a theme but is flexible and children are able to choose what to do. The childminder makes resources and involves the children, for example making simple laminated books together. She talks to parents about the children's development and provides opportunities to build on children's learning for example working on recognising numerals for children who find this difficult. Children are developing independence as they use the bathroom, feed themselves and help to tidy up. Children's self-esteem is fostered as they are given encouragement and praised for their achievements.

Children under three are cared for appropriately. The childminder has the 'Birth to three matters' framework pack and uses it to refer to when caring for under threes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met as the childminder gathers information from parents about their care on their registration forms. She gets to know the children in her care well as several children have been attending for some time. Children are beginning to learn about the wider world as some resources reflect other cultures and lifestyles, for example dolls and puzzles. She uses the library to ensure children can access a wide range of books which reflect diversity. The childminder plans activities for older children which involves learning about other countries. Children are given appropriate support. The childminder has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and ensures that they are fully included and integrated in the setting. She provides them with opportunities to build on existing skills to help them to progress.

Children behave well in the childminders care as she has consistent boundaries so that children know what is expected of them. She uses positive methods such as distraction or praise to encourage children to behave well. Parents are kept informed about her approach through her behaviour policy and she shares information about how the children's behaviour on an on-going basis, making sure that positive messages are given.

Children are cared for effectively because she has a good relationship with parents. Information about the children is exchanged on a daily basis at collection and drop off times and more detailed records are kept if required for babies. She has produced some clear policies and procedures which are shown to parents when they start. Ofsted's telephone number is displayed should parents want to contact the regulator. The childminder is aware of the regulations governing complaints.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is a suitable person to care for children. She and her household have the necessary clearances and evidence of these is kept in a folder for parents to see. She has a level three qualification in childcare and plans to complete a degree in early years. She has attended a wide range of training courses and workshops to ensure that her knowledge and skills are updated, and keeps in touch with childcare issues through her local childminding support group.

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

All of the required documentation is in place and is maintained in an orderly and accessible manner. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain parent's signatures following administering medication. Parent's signatures are now obtained on the medicine record.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard 2: Organisation about the childminder exceeding the numbers of children on her registration certificate. Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit and found that the childminder was looking after too many children under the age of five. The childminder accepted a caution and understands that she must remain within her registered numbers. Ofsted also found that documentation was not in place for the children. Ofsted set an action under Standard 14: Documentation, to provide evidence of how she will keep an accurate daily record of the names of the children looked after on the premises, their hours of attendance and the names of the person who looked after them. The childminder has carried out the action and remains qualified for registration.

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):

- enable children to access fresh drinking water independently.

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