

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221314
Inspection date	24 April 2007
Inspector	Ann Austen
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 has been registered for over 20 years. She lives with her husband and one adult child in the village of Hartwell, Northamptonshire. Local amenities are within walking distance. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. Toilet and sleeping facilities are provided on the first floor and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five whose times vary and two children over five before and after school. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect the children. She attends toddler groups and takes children to the local park. The family has two pet tortoises.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a very clean, warm and comfortable childcare environment. They learn the importance of good hygiene practices through daily routines and become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, children readily wash their hands after using the toilet, before meals and after feeding the tortoises in the garden. This is further enhanced by the childminder who provides separate hand towels and linen for children, encourages younger children to clean their teeth after meals and has secure procedures for changing nappies. This sustains levels of hygiene and helps to prevent the spread of infection. Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminder has up-to-date first aid knowledge. Their individual and personal requirements are discussed with parents to ensure that health and medical needs are identified and adhered to. Clear procedures are in place in the event of accidents, for the administration of medication and if children are unwell.

Children's good health is promoted by a range of freshly prepared nutritious meals and snacks, and any special dietary requirements are complied with in partnership with the parents. Children are encouraged to try new foods during 'taste testing' activities, including dishes from other countries. They are often involved in helping to prepare their own snacks, for example, children enjoy making sandwiches. Meal times are relaxed, social occasions where children and adults sit together around the table to enjoy their food, each others company and develop good table manners. Younger children are encouraged to drink from accessible beakers and older children know that they are able to ask for a drink. This ensures that children remain well hydrated and comfortable.

Children develop an awareness of healthy lifestyles as they take part in a good range of physical activities. They have daily opportunities to get fresh air as they walk to and from school and play outside in the garden. Children play swing ball, rock on the rockers, bounce on space hoppers, balance on stilts, slide down the slide and manoeuvre wheeled toys. This helps children to develop the confidence to enjoy moving with control, using their bodies in a variety of ways.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. This is enhanced by evidence of the children's art work and by posters showing numbers, shapes, life cycles and a world map. Children use a range of safe, good quality resources, furniture and equipment which supports their play and development. The childminder checks the resources and equipment to ensure that they are safe and suitable for the children's individual needs. Children are interested in and want to play with what is available.

Children are cared for in a home where risks of accidental injury are minimised during indoor and outdoor activities because the childminder supervises the children well and works hard to identify potential hazards. For example, safety equipment is used according to the ages and needs of the children attending. This enables children to move around safely and independently. Good priority is given to helping children understand the importance of keeping safe by responding to the guidelines set out by the childminder. For example, children learn about what to do in an emergency by practising the fire escape plan. Children behave sensibly on outings and learn to stop, look and listen when they cross the road. The childminder ensures

that children are safe in the sun by applying sun cream and encouraging the children to wear a hat. Children's welfare is generally safeguarded by the childminder's knowledge of local child protection procedures and her understanding of her responsibilities for the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and settled in the childminder's home. They purposefully engage in an interesting range of activities that develop their emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities. Children are enthusiastic in their play and independently select resources. They learn at their own pace and complete activities in their own time. Relationships are good, and the childminder enthusiastically joins in the children's play, helping to extend their learning and making their play meaningful. For example, the childminder asks appropriate questions to encourage children to think, she counts with the children and introduces mathematical language to develop children's skills. Children participate in a good range of creative activities. They use their imaginations during role play activities and handle a range of small world resources such as the cars and train set. Children sing, dance and play musical instruments. They make Easter cards, draw and colour pictures, manipulate dough, paint ceramics and make wind chimes. Children's language development is promoted by the childminder who repeats familiar words, introduces new vocabulary and encourages the children to look at books for enjoyment. They learn about the world around them through first hand experiences. Children learn about the changing seasons and the life cycle of the butterfly and frog. They visit the forest to explore living things such as mini beasts, plants and trees and enjoy visits to the farm to see the lambs. Children learn to care for living things. They help the childminder feed tomatoes to the tortoise, change the water and put the tortoise into its pen.

Older children enjoy a relaxed session after a busy day at school. Children participate in baking activities, for example, they make and taste bread, Easter bonnet biscuits, pizza, sandwiches and cakes. They enjoy board games such as Chess, 'Cludo' and 'Race for Life'. This encourages children to play cooperatively together and to take turns. Children use the computer and thoroughly enjoy creative art activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. They are confident in their relationship with the childminder. This increases their sense of belonging and promotes their emotional development. Children learn to take responsibility by helping to tidy away the resources, and clear routines through the day help young children feel settled and secure. For example, sleep and feeding routines are respected. Children have good opportunities to learn about themselves and others in the wider community. For example, children make clay lamps to celebrate Diwali and use chop sticks to sample new foods to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Children are helped to appreciate the needs of people with disabilities, they use sign language to communicate with one another and handle a suitable range of resources that positively reflect themselves and people of other races, cultures and abilities. Children behave and respond well to the childminder's appropriate behaviour management strategies that take into account their age and stage of development. They develop their confidence and self-esteem because they are consistently praised and encouraged by the childminder. The childminder promotes good manners and respect for others. Although there are no children currently attending the setting

with special needs the childminder is able to provide care through discussing their needs with parents.

Children's individual needs are met because the childminder develops open, friendly and professional relationships with parents. Policies including the complaints procedure are made available to parents, and systems are in place to exchange information, including a daily diary for younger children. This ensures continuous and consistent care for the children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel at home and at ease in the well-organised environment. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximize play opportunities for children, and routines and resources are organised well to meet the children's needs. For example, toys are stored into appropriate categories and arranged in storage containers. Good use is made of local facilities and the childminder regularly arranges outings to broaden children's range of experiences. Children benefit from the childminder's enthusiasm and positive attitude. They are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning, as well as receiving a good level of adult support. Children's welfare, care and learning is promoted by a range of records, policies and procedures. Records are stored securely and confidentiality is maintained. Children's records and achievements are openly shared with parents and their contributions are valued. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to improve three aspects of her provision. Arrival and departure times of children are now recorded appropriately, and accurate written records are maintained of medicines given to children. This safeguards children's welfare. Records relating to childminding activities are now readily accessible on the premises and available for inspection. This promotes children's welfare, care and learning.

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 by 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):

- develop an awareness of the Government booklet 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused - Summary'.

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