

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	259498
Inspection date	08 May 2007
Inspector	Susan Cox
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 outstanding. 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 2001. She lives with her husband and children aged eight, 10 and 13 in a market town in Norfolk. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding with the exception of the master bedroom 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 seven children at various times. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and uses a car. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group. The family has a rabbit.

The childminder supports children with English as an additional language. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is enhanced as they are cared for in a warm and clean home where hygiene is a priority. They are learning how to manage their personal hygiene well with the little ones being sensitively supported as they acquire the relevant skills. Children understand the importance of washing their hands after using the toilet, playing in the garden or helping to care for the rabbit. They remove their shoes in the home with the older ones knowing this is because they might be dirty. The childminder uses good practice to minimise the risks of cross-infection and keep children well. For example, she wears disposable gloves when changing nappies, cleans up quickly after meals and ensures children have clean bedding. Clear information is obtained from parents regarding any medical needs or allergies which enables the childminder to respond appropriately to specific needs. If children have an accident they receive prompt treatment. This is because the first aid kit is readily available and the childminder maintains a current first aid certificate so she is aware of up to date procedures to help the children.

Children receive a very good range of snacks and meals to meet their dietary requirements. Parents supply a packed lunch and this is served appropriately with the childminder sitting with the children and encouraging them to eat well. Evening meals are organised in advance and prepared using fresh produce. This enables the childminder to control the nutritional content and help children enjoy meals that promote healthy eating. Trips to local shops to buy fresh vegetables, chatting as they eat and cookery activities give further opportunities to find out what is good for them. Bottles may be freshly prepared for babies who are cuddled to be fed to meet their emotional needs and to be safe. As they learn to feed themselves children are closely supervised to make sure they not only have enough to eat but to check they are not at risk of choking. Children drink when they wish as their drinking bottles are readily available in the kitchen and they help themselves.

Children love to be active; they use the garden frequently and with much pleasure. Children ride a range of wheeled toys and swing, slide and climb using the fixed equipment with confidence. Children play football, cricket, and older ones enjoy skipping. Little children are supported as they learn to become mobile with space and support being given as they roll, crawl, toddle and start to walk. As a result, children are learning an excellent range of physical skills and how their bodies work. When children are tired they rest according to their individual needs and in a manner agreed with their parents. For example, little children sleep in a travel cot in the lounge or dining room for ease of monitoring their safety. If children drop off to sleep in a buggy, when out for a walk, they are brought into the garden which is secure so they may complete their rest without being disturbed. Older ones relax on the comfortable furniture or snuggle up on the large bean bags.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are welcomed into an extremely comfortable family home where safety is a key consideration. Children generally play on the ground floor with older ones being invited to play upstairs by the childminder's children. A stair gate effectively prevents little ones from accessing the stairs or the first floor for their safety. Children confidently use the downstairs cloakroom and a step to reach the basin in the utility room helps them wash their hands easily after playing outside. The layout of the premises enables the children to spread out and play and the

childminder organises play either inside or in the garden so all the children are together for supervision of their safety. The playroom is particularly child-centred. Children's work is displayed and there is an attractive area displaying information for parents. An excellent range of toys and resources are stored to be readily available to the children. They confidently make their own choices and help organise their play as resources are safe and the childminder monitors what is chosen to make sure it is appropriate to children's stage of development. Low tables and chairs encourage all to take part in the wide range of activities.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of keeping children safe. She has taken all the required action to minimise risks in her home and garden and conducts risk assessments to ensure all is in order for the children. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe. They take part in fire drills, practise road safety when out for walks and help to tidy up toys to prevent accidents. The childminder makes sure her home and garden are secure to prevent children leaving without supervision or unauthorised visitors.

Children's safety is promoted as the childminder has a very good understanding of child protection issues. She has updated her training and relevant information is displayed for easy reference and to inform parents of her duty to report concerns. As a result, the childminder is able to respond promptly to protect children if required.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy, settled and making very good progress in all areas of their development. This is due to the excellent support they receive from the childminder who is adept at responding to their interests and extending learning opportunities as they arise. Children's play is enhanced by the wealth of bright and attractive resources which they often access independently to help organise their own play. For example, children play freely with a farm yard including a range of animals and many farm vehicles of differing types and sizes. They chat about the animals, learn their names and the noises they make. Cows are chosen and taken to the table where they colour cow pictures responding well to the praise and encouragement given. Children then find animal puzzles of various types from the shelf and concentrate as they work with the childminder to complete them. Animal books are found and the children snuggle up comfortably to look at pictures, repeat familiar words and chat about what is happening. Children also play happily on their own as they make models with bricks and then contentedly move them around emptying the boxes and filling the trailer before deciding it is time to tidy up and finding the 'hoover' to make sure all is clean. The balance of free play and child-led activities, with sensitive and caring support, promotes children's interests and makes them keen and eager to learn.

Children thrive as they play in the fresh air. The garden is very well used as the childminder understands that some children learn best when playing outside. A wealth of good quality resources are freely accessed with children playing on the climbing frame, digging for worms or organising home play in the play house. Children explore their creative skills as they paint, print, model and make cards and gifts for special events. They dress up and play imaginatively acting out real life and pretend stories. Trips to schools, the park, shops and the library help them learn about the local community and meeting up with other childminders gives opportunities for social play.

Children are developing very positive relationships with the childminder and their friends. They chat freely knowing the childminder will listen to and value what they say and do and this gives them confidence to play happily. Children enjoy the company of the childminder and there is

much fun and laughter as they play. Cuddles are freely given as is praise and encouragement to promote children's self-esteem. Children are learning right from wrong because the childminder sets appropriate boundaries, is consistent and gives gentle reminders. As a result, children's behaviour is very good.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children receive a very warm welcome and are treated with respect and sensitivity. The childminder knows them well and responds to their individual needs considering their stage of development, personality and adapting accordingly to meet their needs. Children play freely with an excellent range of resources that help them learn about the wider world and respecting others. This is extended as they chatter to the childminder and take part in celebrations such as Diwali. Children who are becoming bilingual are well supported as the childminder helps them learn English whilst acknowledging their home language through good links with their parents. The childminder demonstrates a very positive attitude towards working with children with learning difficulties or disabilities. She has undertaken some training to increase her awareness and she works closely with parents to assess children's needs. The childminder welcomes support from other professionals involved with the children to help meet their needs and make sure they benefit in full from the service she provides. Consequently she is able to meet children's specific needs in partnership with parents.

The childminder has a very positive behaviour management policy and this is shared with parents so they may work together if needed. The childminder is a positive role model; she is calm, courteous and understands how to promote good behaviour. Children respond well to praise and encouragement and listen carefully as explanations are given if their behaviour falls below the expected standard. Early intervention, distraction and redirection are all used appropriately. As a result, children are learning how to manage their behaviour effectively.

Children's care and welfare is enhanced by the very good partnership with parents and carers. Clear policies and procedures are available to help parents understand key aspects of the care their children receive. A flexible settling-in period helps the childminder get to know the children and families well and forms a secure basis for the future exchange of information that is so important in ensuring the children's needs are met. A daily chat helps to keep everyone up to date. Many parents have expressed their pleasure with the service they receive through letters, cards and references which the childminder holds on her file.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit in full from the way the childminder uses her skills and understanding in the sensitive and caring manner in which she works with and supports them. She shows a commitment to extending her knowledge and understanding through attending a range of courses and her enthusiasm is reflected in the high quality of service she provides. Children are appropriately protected as checks have been conducted on the childminder and her husband and she always supervises children well to prevent inappropriate contact with persons who have not been vetted. Excellent use is made of space within the house and garden for children to play happily, enjoy meals and sleep quietly when needed. The childminder is very well-organised and, as a result, is readily available to work with the children and provide the care they require.

All the required documentation to maintain children's care and welfare is in place. It is clear, well organised and readily available as needed. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to renew her first aid certificate and to improve her knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. The childminder has renewed her first aid training which enables her to respond appropriately to children in the event of an accident. She has attended a child protection course and updated her understanding of current procedures. As a result, she is able to comply with the procedures set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board to protect children.

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

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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