

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY341232
Inspection date	20 April 2007
Inspector	Moira Oliver
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 2006. She lives with her family in a village close to Felixstowe. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding activities, with access to bedrooms one and two for rest or sleeping minded children. 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 under five, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder drives to local schools and pre-school groups to take and collect children.

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 stay healthy because the childminder follows current and appropriate health and hygiene guidelines and has policies in place. For example, children routinely wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before they eat. Nappies are changed on a clean mat which is

disinfected after each use and nappies are disposed of appropriately. The areas used by the children are clean, food preparation surfaces are hygienic and food is stored at the correct temperature. Children understand simple good health and hygiene practices through everyday routines. Discussions take place with the childminder to help children to understand why good hygiene is important.

Children are well cared for when they are ill, there are clear policies in place and parents know to keep their child at home if they are infectious. Accidents and medication administered is recorded by the childminder and signed by the parent ensuring they are informed. Children's well-being is promoted because the childminder has an up-to-date first aid qualification and three well stocked first aid boxes to ensure she always has one available both on and off the premises.

Children learn to lead a healthy lifestyle, they receive regular fresh air and exercise through the many outdoor play opportunities on offer. They enjoy nature walks in the countryside or on the beach and physical play on the trampoline, bikes or with balls.

Children's dietary needs are met and they are well nourished with a variety of healthy meals and snacks. For example, they enjoy homemade vegetable soup and are encouraged to snack on dried or fresh fruit. The childminder works closely with the parents, keeping them informed of the menus and recording any dietary requirements, likes and dislikes the children may have. Children eat and sleep according to their home routines which are discussed fully with the parents before the child starts. Children have access to drinks throughout the day to ensure they are hydrated.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment which is child-friendly and welcoming. They move safely from one area to another accessing the toys and equipment. The childminder is vigilant ensuring the premises are secure. The main gate is monitored, parents entering with a vehicle alert the childminder before they open the large gate, ensuring the children remain safe. The childminder has made her home safe to protect children, there is a stairgate in place to ensure young children do not gain access to the stairs and a fireguard is in place in the lounge. Any hazards such as cleaning chemicals are out of the children's reach and low-level glass is protected to ensure accidents are minimised. There is a safety net around the trampoline to ensure children's safety when using it and children zip it up once they are inside. A policy is in place, which is displayed and shared with parents and children, stating that an adult must supervise the activity, however, during the inspection a child was using the trampoline without an adult directly supervising which potentially puts their safety at risk.

Thorough measures are in place to ensure children are safe on outings. Good quality car seats are used which are appropriate to the age and size of the children. Pushchairs are safe and maintained in good condition. Children wear reins where necessary and are encouraged to hold hands and stay together as a group. Children are taught road safety, to respect other people and their property. For example, discussions take place about not touching cars or walking on people's walls or their property. Procedures are in place to enable the childminder, or the emergency services, to contact the parents at anytime whether they are on or off the premises, ensuring children's safety.

Children's welfare is protected because the childminder has a good understanding of her role in child protection. She is confident that she would be able to put appropriate procedures into practice if necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, relaxed and settled. They confidently access the resources from the wide range available as they freely access all ground floor areas as well as the outdoors. Children are supported by the childminder in their play and they enjoy making puzzles together. The childminder skilfully uses open-ended questioning to encourage the children to think for themselves. For example, when making a puzzle the childminder encourages the children to explain how they want to start, they decide to find all the outside pieces and the corners first and the childminder helps them to sort through the pieces. They share books together discussing the characters and getting involved, asking questions and making comments. Children are happy to play alone at times and are absorbed in their drawing, using a range of crayons.

Children have valuable opportunities to explore their environment. They enjoy playing in the 'jungle', behind the trees in the garden and look out for wildlife. They speak excitedly about the rabbits and the woodpecker who visit the garden and the horses in the paddock. They enjoy country walks and visits to the beach throughout the year, experiencing all weathers.

Children benefit from a childminder who has a good knowledge and understanding of child development. She supports their play and uses every opportunity to develop and extend their language. Babies are encouraged to communicate as the childminder responds to their babbling with smiles and by talking to them. Activities are provided according to the children's interests and the childminder ensures that she has enough resources for all children. For example, there are six bikes, all different sizes, one for each child depending on their size and ability. She has ordered outdoor play equipment to ensure there are plenty of swings for all children extending and adding to her resources. She is keen to extend her knowledge and understanding further and has booked to attend the 'Birth to three matters' training to provide her with a framework to improve her planning for children under three years.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder knows the children and their families very well and values them as individuals, listening to them and taking a genuine interest in their lives. Children settle exceptionally well, they are happy, relaxed and enjoy their time with the childminder. They build close relationships with the childminder who is attentive and affectionate towards them. It is clear that the children are very fond of her from the way they smile at her, include her in their play and confidently chat about what they are doing and their lives at home or at nursery. The childminder is aware of the individual needs of each child in her care, she uses discussions and books to promote positive approaches to diversity.

Children benefit from a childminder who has a good understanding of behaviour management and uses consistent, age-appropriate strategies to encourage positive behaviour. For example, children are aware of the house rules such as, sitting at the table to eat and drink and wearing plimsolls on the trampoline. Children learn to share and co-operate with others as she encourages games where they take turns. Age-appropriate explanations are used to help children to understand what is expected and distraction is used with very young children.

Close, trusting relationships are built with parents and their families. They work closely together to benefit the children. Information is shared daily when the parents bring and collect their children, they chat about where they have been, what the children played with, any achievements and physical needs such as what they ate. The childminder makes time to speak to the parents, she values the sharing and considers it to be a very important part of her role. Parents are informed about the provision through informal chats and a folder containing the childminder's certificates, policies and procedures. The parents find the childminder to be friendly and very approachable, they are very happy with the care their children receive and speak highly of her. All contracts and written parental permissions are in place enabling the childminder to provide quality care. The childminder is continuing to develop her role working in partnership with parents and has booked to attend training which will improve her quality practice further, benefiting children and parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a childminder who has a good knowledge and understanding of child development. She is keen to increase her knowledge and improve her practice further by attending workshops and training. The childminder provides varied play opportunities and choices for all children in her care, enabling them to develop as individuals. Appropriate ratios are maintained at all times to enable her to support the children and provide high levels of attention. She organises her home to ensure children can access all areas and resources independently and hazards are minimised enabling children to play safely.

Policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents to ensure appropriate care for the children. The childminder has a clear understanding of the importance of keeping records and all documentation is organised, available and confidential. The register is completed daily and a written weekly plan of minded children, the times and places she needs to be in order to pick up and drop off children, ensures she is organised efficiently, always on time and the days run smoothly.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 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):

- ensure children are safe when using the trampoline and policies work in practice.

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