

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256582
Inspection date	08 May 2007
Inspector	Christine Eglinton

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 about 1987. She lives with her husband and two adult children in a suburb of Norwich. The ground floor of the house is used for childminding. 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 six children under eight all of whom attend part-time. She also cares for children over the age of eight. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children, but a car is available to transport children. The family has a dog and keeps birds in aviaries located at the rear of the garden.

The childminder attends a local childminder support group and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment where they benefit from the good level of cleanliness and hygiene throughout the home, which effectively contributes to limiting the risk of cross infection. This is further supported by the use of paper towels and appropriate daily routines such as children being reminded to clean their hands before eating, and washing their hands after using the toilet. These effective daily routines and the childminder's own good practice help children learn the importance of good personal hygiene.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate which means she is able to give appropriate care if there is an accident. However, although she has sought relevant medical information from all of the parents, she is not consistently seeking parental consent from the parents to enable her to seek emergency medical treatment for all of the minded children. Consequently, this poses a risk of children not receiving swift and prompt treatment in the event of an emergency.

Parents give prior written consent to administer medication which is clearly recorded. This ensures children receive the correct dosage according to their needs. The childminder operates an effective exclusion procedure for children who are suffering from an infectious illness which includes identified communicable diseases. This helps to prevent the spread of infectious ailments.

There are effective storage facilities for the food provided by parents to prevent spoiling. Children benefit from the childminder supplementing their diet with additional healthy snacks such as fresh fruit. The childminder uses shopping games and general discussion to help children understand foods that are good for them. Children are able to independently help themselves to a drink from their own cups and drinking beakers which are within easy reach. This helps them to think about their personal needs.

Children enjoy regular exercise which contributes to their good health. They regularly walk to the local school and enjoy kicking footballs and using the slide in the garden. Young children are becoming competent in manoeuvring they sit in play cars around the outdoor play area, and energetically move their feet along the paved areas to make the cars travel along the ground. Outings to the local park where there is a good selection of large play apparatus offer children further opportunities to develop their balance and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Space within the childminder's home is well-organised and is used effectively which allows children to engage in a varied range of activities. They have ample room to play freely with their toys and equipment. For instance, they enjoy pulling along string toys which require areas of clear floor space and sit cosily with each other whilst playing under the table. Children benefit from having a quiet place to rest, and a comfortable safe place to enjoy their meals. A 'child step' in the bathroom enables children to easily reach the sink without adult assistance which encourages young children to become independent.

Children enjoy playing with a wide range of good quality toys and equipment which are suitable for children's stage of development. They are able to choose their favourite toys which are

kept clean and visually checked to ensure they remain in good condition. This helps to ensure there are no broken parts that could harm a child. Toys and equipment are stored within easy reach of children so they can access them safely and easily.

The childminder's vigilance and awareness of safety issues minimises risks and ensures children's safety. This enables children to move around safely, freely and independently. For example, hazardous items in the kitchen are stored out of children's reach, and the exposed fire hearth is protected with a safety barrier. Good routines and gentle reminders help children to learn about keeping themselves safe.

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and knows how to proceed if she has any concerns about a child in her care. Appropriate procedures and policies are in place and easily accessible. This supports children's well-being and promotes their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder has created a homely and welcoming environment for the children and they enter the childminder's house readily with cheerful expectation, and immediately involve themselves in play. Children are able to make important decisions during their day such as what they want to play with, when to eat their lunch and when they want to play outside. This enables children to spend time concentrating at self-chosen activities to help sustain their interest. Consequently, this enables them to take the initiative in their play and learning and increases their overall enjoyment.

Children relate well to the childminder who enjoys their company. They have developed close caring relationships with the childminder and with her family and enjoy lots of snuggling-in opportunities. For example, children enjoy sitting on the childminder's lap while they receive lots of cuddles listening to stories, and fall asleep contently in her arms. This helps to foster children's emotional development and encourages them to develop caring relationships outside home to promote healthy dependence and independence. As a result children are happy and confident.

Children are encouraged to talk about important people and their home lives such as the names of their cats and bring special comforters from home such as their special cuddly toy. They are encouraged to put on their own shoes and help the childminder sweep up the stones in the garden. This helps children develop a sense of belonging and encourages them to develop positive self-esteem.

Children have good opportunities of developing their social skills when they regularly attend the local childminding support group where they mix with other children and adults. Trips to the local shops and park help children to learn about their local environment and offer children a wide range of experiences. Children are able to express their feelings when they explore a range of mark making materials. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities for mess making activities to aid their sensory development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder acknowledges children's efforts by praising them which helps them feel good about themselves. All the children are encouraged to take part in all the activities she provides

which ensure children have equal opportunities to maximise their enjoyment and potential. Children learn about people in the local community whilst attending groups with the childminder and have access to a suitable range of resources that reflect positive images of diversity. The childminder uses general discussion to help children learn to value differences, and resources such as books show men and woman in positive gender models. There are good systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Young children are showing kindness and consideration towards each other and are praised for showing kind behaviour. The childminder manages children calmly and patiently and gives clear reasons for requests. For example, she explains why the books will get damaged if children tread on them. This encourages children to respond effectively to any guidance and praise and helps them understand why certain behaviour is not acceptable.

Children benefit from sound working relationships between the childminder and the parents. Regular informal discussions and daily feedback about children's daily routines help to ensure continuity of care. Parents are able to view clear and detailed information about the service she provides to enable them to make an informed choice.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has regularly updated her knowledge by attending relevant childcare courses. This ensures she has sufficient knowledge of current child care practices to support the care and learning of the children. Children benefit from the childminder's good organisation of the premises which provides them with sufficient space to play and access resources independently.

The childminder plans her day well, providing children with a good range of stimulating activities which helps to keep children interested and encourages them to take part and have fun. Children are happy and feel at home, and daily routines provide children with good opportunities to relax as well as be busy and actively occupied.

Information kept about the children is relevant and helps to promote their welfare. All mandatory records are in place and are kept in a confidential manner to guarantee the safe and effective management of the setting. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop documentation to improve the organisation of care for the children and to improve communications with parents. The childminder has now developed systems to ensure parents are kept aware of any incidents which are clearly recorded. This promotes effective partnerships with parents and ensures records are being used to promote the welfare and care of the 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 the 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):

- increase opportunities for mess making and sensory exploration for young children by using the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- seek appropriate consent from parents for children to receive emergency medical treatment.

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