

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220399
Inspection date	14 June 2007
Inspector	Andrea Ewer
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 registered in 1988 and is registered to care for a maximum of six children up to the age of eight years. She is currently caring for five children for various hours and days.

The childminder lives with her family who include her husband and adult daughter. Care is provided on the ground floor of the house which includes the living room, conservatory and kitchen. Children share access to the fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder holds a certificate in Developing Childminding Practice at level 2. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is a member of the Northamptonshire Childminding Association Children Come First Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are gaining an excellent understanding of how to maintain their good health. They wash their hands at appropriate times as part of everyday routines and the childminder explains

that this washes the germs away so you don't get a poorly tummy. The childminder also carries out consistent hygiene practices that effectively prevent the spread of infection. Disposable gloves are worn during nappy changing and high chairs are cleaned after children have eaten. Children get plenty of fresh air and robust physical exercise. They have free access to the garden and visit local toddler groups where they ride on and push wheeled toys, play ball games, play in the sand and use the slide. This helps to develop their large muscles and co-ordination.

Children learn about healthy eating as the childminder provides freshly cooked, wholesome meals and snacks that contribute to their healthy growth and development. They enjoy braising steak casserole with vegetables for lunch and fresh fruit for snacks. Drinks are always available for children to help themselves to. Information obtained from parents is used to ensure meals and snacks meet children's dietary needs and the childminder ensures children receive sufficient quantities for their needs. For example, snacks close to lunch time are limited to ensure children eat their lunch.

Children generally receive appropriate care in the event of minor accidents or illness. The childminder holds an up to date first aid qualification and a well-stocked and regularly replenished first aid kit is readily accessible.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for within a clean, tidy, safe and secure home environment. Children independently select activities from a broad range of good quality furniture equipment, toys and activities that meets their play and development needs well. Toys are stored on low-level shelves and toy boxes in the living room and conservatory, enabling children to choose what to play with.

Children play safely because active steps are taken to minimise hazards and prevent accidents. Safety gates prevent children gaining unsupervised access to the stairs and kitchen, catches are fitted to cupboards and drawers housing sharp cutlery, smoke alarms are fitted on both floors of the house and household cleaning equipment and medicines are out of children's reach. The garden is securely enclosed with gates to prevent children leaving unsupervised. Children's safety is further promoted because the childminder has clear arrangements in place to ensure children are cared for appropriately in an emergency.

Children are protected from harm or neglect. The childminder has sound understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and understands the correct procedure to follow if she has concerns children may be being harmed. The written procedure is shared with parents and explains the childminder's role in protecting children from harm. This ensures children's welfare is safeguarded effectively.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's vast experience in childcare and commitment to providing a good quality care. They share warm, caring relationships with the childminder and each other, are happy and settled. This helps children feel secure and contributes successfully to them making good progress and enjoying their time with the childminder.

Children's physical, emotional, intellectual and social needs are met well. The childminder provides a stimulating environment, with a broad range of activities that meets children's play and development needs well and are linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. The childminder thoughtfully plans some topics around individual children's interests. For example children learn about colours through their interest in cars. They go for walks and identify the various coloured cars they see along the journey. Children's achievements are monitored by the childminder and records show their progress. This helps the childminder identify what stage children are at and supports her to provide suitable activities that help them move on to the next stage in their development.

Children develop their language and communication skills as the childminder talks to them consistently and shows interest in what they do and say. They sing simple action songs and rhymes with enthusiasm and listen intently to stories. Children repeat simple words and phrases, listen to the childminder tapping on the drum explaining that it sounds like rain on the conservatory roof and start to use language to communicate with increasing confidence.

Children explore confidently as they initiate their own play indoors and outdoors. They crawl through the tunnel inside, play happily in the sand outdoors and explore colour and texture during craft activities such as foot painting. Children's play and learning experiences are further extended during regular visits to toddler groups where children develop their social skills in a larger group.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel valued because the childminder knows them well and makes every effort to meet their individual needs. Useful information is obtained from parents and used by the childminder to ensure children's individual needs are met. Information about children is shared daily thereafter which contributes successfully to them receiving consistent and appropriate care. Although there are no children currently attending who have learning difficulties, the childminder demonstrated clearly that she is able to provide care which fully includes all children and could incorporate any additional care requirements into the daily routine. She has attended training which equipped her to ensure children who have learning difficulties receive appropriate care including, Adapting your resources to include all children, Working with children who have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, Practical ideas on Autism and Introduction to Makaton.

Children respond well to the warm and caring support they receive from the childminder. They are starting to learn right from wrong because the childminder uses effective methods, such as, calm and clear explanations to help children understand the benefit of sharing and taking turns. The written behaviour management policy promotes the use of positive strategies to support children to behave well and takes account of their age and stage of development. This is shared with parents to aid a consistent approach to managing children's behaviour during their time with the childminder and at home.

Children are gaining a very good understanding of diversity. They have regular access to a suitable range of toys and activities such as, small world people and dolls of various colours and abilities. Children learn about various religious and cultural festivals as they colour pictures with images of festivals around the world. They participate enthusiastically in Chinese New Year celebrations by making paper dragons and eating Chinese food. This helps children appreciate our similarities and differences.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children benefit from the organised environment where their welfare, care and safety are promoted well. Space and resources are very well-organised to meet children's needs and allows them to move around safely. The daily routine takes account of children's home routines and meets their individual needs for meals, sleep, quiet and active play.

Relevant checks have been carried out on all household members to ensure they are suitable to work with or have regular contact with young children, which promotes their safety and welfare. The quality of care is enhanced because the childminder continues to attend training workshops. Since her last inspection the childminder has attended a refresher course in safeguarding children and a conference on the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This supports the childminder to develop her own skills and knowledge and subsequently the care provided to minded children. The childminder uses some self-assessment, however this could be developed to identify what is being done well and areas that could be developed to further enhance the quality of care provided.

Attractively presented written policies and procedures provide parents with clear information about the service being provided and informs them of what to expect from the childminder. Children's records are generally maintained to a high standard and shared with parents appropriately.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended that the childminder provide resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. Children are now gaining an understanding of diversity as they have regular access to an interesting range of toys and activities that promotes positive images of people of various races, religions, abilities and cultures.

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

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 the use of self assessment in order to continuously evaluate the quality of care provided.

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