



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250685
Inspection date	23 August 2005
Inspector	Hazel Meadows

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 satisfactory. 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 1993. She lives with her husband and their two sons, aged 22 years old and 17 years old, in a house in north-west Ipswich. Her 9 week old grandson also lives in the house.

All of the downstairs of the house is used for childminding. A new downstairs shower/cloakroom is currently being converted from the original separate cloakroom and bathroom. A safe, enclosed garden is available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 5 children at any one time.

She currently has 5 children on roll, 3 attend full-time and 2 attend part-time.

Amenities such as local schools, shops and parent and toddler groups are within walking distance or a short drive away.

The family has a pet dog and some goldfish.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because the childminder mostly follows current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, when children are out all day the childminder ensures that their packed lunches are stored in thermal bags or boxes with ice packs in them.

Children are kept safe when playing outside in the sun as the childminder ensures she applies sunscreen. She has a large, fixed gazebo in the garden and ensures children have adequate shade when on outings.

Children follow simple good health and hygiene practices when encouraged to do so by the childminder. For example, they washed their hands in the kitchen after using the temporary portable toilet (situated in the garden whilst the downstairs bathroom and toilet are refurbished). However, the children were not encouraged to wash their hands prior to being given their mid morning snack of biscuits, even though a couple of them had been outside and touched the dog.

Children have frequent opportunities to enjoy physical activities. For example, they mostly walk to and from school and have regular access to the play equipment in the garden plus local play areas. The childminder also takes them swimming, to local forests and to the beach.

Children are mostly well nourished. For example, the childminder states that children are offered a variety of sandwiches at lunch time and also a choice of fruit or yoghurt. Drinks are made freely available to the children. Children were given biscuits and squash for their mid morning snack.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and safe indoor and outdoor environment. The house is homely, with a few toys within easy reach. There is a fixed fireguard in the lounge and usually a stair gate at the bottom of the stairs. The childminder stated this is not up at present as they have just renewed the banisters.

There is a swing-set in the garden which is not currently fixed in the ground. The childminder states that this is shortly to be moved to make way for a trampoline and

will be fixed once in its new location. The new trampoline has a safety net, which will be fitted to prevent children falling off the sides. Children mostly use suitable and safe equipment which is in good, clean condition.

Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder ensures they are safely strapped into the appropriate car seat and states she is vigilant with supervision whilst out with them.

Children are protected because the childminder has a reasonable understanding of her role in child protection. She attended child protection training in June 2005 and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children show interest in what they do when they are occupied with appropriate activities.

Children have free access to a toy box in the lounge containing toys primarily suitable for pre-school aged children. They can also request items from a stacking unit such as books, drawing and colouring activities, which offers older children with a greater level of interest and challenge. More toys are kept in a cupboard in the hall but the childminder selects items from here for the children.

During the visit the children were initially watching television, which is left on most of the time. The children became restless as there are limited alternative activities for them to self-select. The children asked to do some drawing after seeing the childminder show the contents of the stacking unit to the inspector.

Children are taken on regular outings, especially during school holidays. They have a broad variety of play experiences outside the home, such as visiting the beach and walks in the woods. Children acquire new knowledge and skills through some of the visits they are taken on by the childminder. For example, they are going to go crabbing at a local coastal town.

Children mostly make positive relationships with the childminder and the other children. They mostly play co-operatively together and are at ease with the childminder, responding positively to her. Most of the children have been cared for by the childminder since they were babies. They have their individual needs met as the childminder knows their individual personalities well. Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong with reminders from the childminder when necessary, for example, sharing the crayons.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by the childminder who works with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are included fully in the life of the setting. For

example, the childminder knows the children well and has a regular exchange of information with the parents and encourages open discussions.

Children's behaviour is generally good and they play well together when they are sufficiently occupied. Children develop a level of self-esteem and respect for others through encouragement and reminders from the childminder. Children are aware of their own needs and are becoming more aware of the needs of others, for example sharing the toys and making space for one another.

All children are welcomed and the childminder is aware of their individual needs and personalities. However, few of the resources present positive images of the diversity within the community and children have limited opportunities to learn about wider society.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are adequately protected and cared for as the childminder has sufficient knowledge and understanding of child development.

Documentation is mostly in place but some improvements are required. All the children's records are stored in individual plastic wallets for easy retrieval in an emergency. The childminder keeps a record of accidents in a notebook but these are recorded consecutively and therefore entries are not confidential. She keeps a record of medicines administered but does not acquire prior written consent from parents.

All the childminder's training is up to date and certificates are presented in a folder. This documentation is made available to parents. Her registration certificate is also in this folder and not displayed.

The childminder had not informed Ofsted of the major refurbishment work being undertaken in her home.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to improve her registration system to clearly show children's hours of attendance. She has rectified this by writing children's contracted times in her National Childminding Association (NCMA) attendance register and also recording children's actual hours of attendance in a daily diary.

Complaints since the last inspection

A concern was raised regarding behaviour management (Standard 11: Behaviour), and that the childminder had failed to meet a child at school at the correct time

(Standard 6: Safety). Ofsted investigated this concern by carrying out a visit on 22 February 2005. The childminder admitted that she had left the spot where she was to meet the child, but was still in the playground speaking to a teacher. She now realises that she should have waited for the child before leaving the agreed meeting place, and has assured Ofsted this will not be repeated. Details of this incident had initially not been recorded and an action was raised under Standard 12: Relationship with parents and carers, to keep a clear record of any incidents or complaints which occur whilst childminding. The inspectors were satisfied that the childminder dealt with behaviour appropriately.

A satisfactory response was received to the action and the childminder remains qualified for registration.

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

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure written consent is obtained from parents prior to the administration of medication
- ensure accident record entries are kept confidential
- ensure Ofsted is informed of any significant changes or events as they occur
- ensure that the Ofsted registration certificate is displayed.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk