

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251015
Inspection date	23 August 2007
Inspector	Emily Alderson

Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1994. She lives with her husband and two children in a house in East Ipswich. Minded children predominantly play in the dedicated playroom. They also have access to the kitchen diner, conservatory, downstairs cloakroom and an upstairs bathroom. There is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play. The setting has a giant African land snail, praying mantis and tropical fish. Local schools, shopping facilities and other amenities are within walking distance or a short drive away.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding nine children on a part-time basis. The childminder has completed the National Childminding Association 'Children Come First'. She has also completed the Suffolk Quality Assurance Scheme and is currently undertaking an NVQ Level 3 in Early Years.

The childminder is a member of the Suffolk County Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children attend a setting that has good health and hygiene practices. The childminder understands the importance of following good procedures when preparing food and has attended a food hygiene course. She monitors her fridge and freezer temperature by using a thermometer and any food re-heated is done so correctly. Children learn about good health and hygiene through discussions with the childminder. The children are aware of why they wash their hands and are encouraged by the hand washing chart in the setting. They record when they wash their hands after toileting, before food, outside and when touching animals. Nappy changing facilities are good; the childminder wears gloves, uses a mat which is cleaned after use in order to minimise cross-infection and the nappies are hygienically disposed of.

Children receive good care when they are ill or had an accident because the childminder has attended a first aid course and has a well-equipped first aid kit on the premises. Should children have an accident it is recorded in their individual books which parents sign to acknowledge the entry. Parents' consent to the childminder administering medicine to their child, any medicine given is recorded in a book which parents sign. Although parents provide written permission to seek emergency medical treatment, this consent does not completely cover situations when the childminder may need to seek both emergency medical advice and treatment. Consequently, children's well-being in a medical emergency is potentially compromised. If a child becomes un-well at the setting the parents are contacted and asked to collect them. They are informed of the length of time they should be kept at home via the setting's well-written policy.

Children's physical play experiences are well promoted because the childminder has a very well-equipped garden with many resources for the children to use and practise all their skills. They access the outdoors on a daily basis. Children often go on outings into the local community visiting the park and local shops. Children enjoy pulling themselves up on the climbing frame and slide, using the bats and balls skilfully and jumping on the trampoline. They move their bodies in different ways when they run round the garden pretending to be aeroplanes getting faster and slower, controlling their movements. They practise their hand and eye co-ordination through using puzzles, threading beads and proficiently use scissors.

Children have their health and dietary needs well met and increase their understanding of healthy living at the setting because the childminder provides the children with healthy nutritious food. The childminder places great emphasis on health and involves the children in growing vegetables so that they learn how things grow and enjoy freshly picking and eating the produce. The childminder has a magnetised 'five a day chart' which has pictures of different fruit and vegetables and a plate where children note what they have eaten. It acts as a reminder to the childminder and shows the parents and children how many portions they have had throughout the day. The children access drinks during the day and choose from water, milk and fruit juice. The childminder provides the children with snacks which include fruit, breadsticks, rice cakes and cheese. Children make choices about what they want to eat and are given options to choose

from. For example, sandwiches which children make themselves choosing their preferred fillings, soup, a choice of raw vegetable sticks amongst others. Dessert includes yoghurts, fruit and cakes that children bake. All food provided meets children's dietary requirements and is according to parents' wishes as detailed on their registration forms.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The environment is extremely warm and welcoming for children, parents and carers as the resources are very well laid out invitingly for children and the playroom has their work proudly displayed. The space is outstandingly used, children have the use of a dedicated playroom, conservatory, kitchen, garden and a downstairs bathroom. The childminder has an excellent range of resources catering for all the ages and abilities of the children who attend. The majority of the resources are stored in the playroom on the floor and in low-level toy boxes, accessible to all the children. In addition, the childminder has more resources stored in a cupboard which, she rotates to enable children to experience a full range of activities. Children use extremely safe and suitable equipment. It is regularly checked and washed and any resource deemed unsuitable is removed.

Provision arrangements excellently meet all health and safety guidelines because the childminder assess all the hazards and minimises the risks to the children. The childminder carries out risk assessments which identify the risk, how it is controlled and any action needed. These are reviewed annually or as and when new items are purchased. The childminder is extremely thorough and has an assessment for the house, garden and for outings such as to the park ensuring that children always remain fully protected. Precautions are taken such as covering electrical sockets, some cupboards have locks and sharp or dangerous items are always out of children's reach. Security is excellent, children are unable to leave the premises un-accompanied as the front and the back door are always locked with the key hanging beside it in-case of a fire. Children are extremely safe when they play in the garden as the gate is padlocked and they are always fully supervised. Children keep themselves safe in the setting and demonstrate an awareness of safety issues. They know how to handle scissors safely passing them to each other holding the blade firmly shut. They understand why they sit at the table if the oven is opened, one child states 'it is because it is hot and might burn me'.

In the event of a fire children are excellently protected as the childminder has a extremely well thought out evacuation procedure. The childminder has the children's contact details, a phone and her car keys always accessible so a safe evacuation can take place. Precautions are taken with smoke alarms fitted all around the house and a fire blanket easily accessible on the kitchen wall. Fire drills are recorded with the time taken noted, the date, children involved and any action required so that the childminder can make any improvements necessary to ensure that the children's safety is paramount. Children are exceptionally safe on outings because the childminder has excellent operational procedures in place. Should an emergency arise the childminder carries in her handbag photographs of each child she cares for along with their contact details. In addition, she carries contact details of an approved childminder who would temporarily care for the children. Parents are made aware of these arrangements via the childminder's policy. When transporting children in the car they are securely fastened into very

appropriate safety harnesses in line with the current legislation. Children enjoy going on walks and do so extremely safely. Younger children are sat in pushchairs or wear wrist straps and older children walk sensibly beside the childminder. Children are beginning to understand road safety through the discussions that take place with the childminder. They understand how the pelican crossings work and take turns to push the button waiting for the green man to appear before it is safe to cross.

Children's welfare is fully safeguarded and promoted because the childminder fully understands her role in child protection as she has carried out training and is able to put all the appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. The childminder has literature to guide her and keeps herself fully up to date by attending courses. A confidential incident book is available should a concern arise about a child. Parents are notified of the childminder's duties via the well-written policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to be confident and develop their independence through the childminder's praise. The resources are accessible to all the children enabling them to make choices about what they want to play with throughout the day. Children have formed good relationships with each other and the childminder and are clearly very comfortable at the homely setting. They are provided with a range of fun and meaningful activities and enjoy being creative with a range of materials. The children are often involved in collecting materials from different places such as shells from the beach, seaweed, drift wood and leaves these are then used in activities. They have books, treasure baskets, puzzles, dressing-up clothes, sand and water, and construction toys available to them throughout the day amongst many others. Children enjoy going to the allotment to do some gardening and enjoy looking after the vegetables at the home also. They enjoy baking and often make things for lunch such as bread and cakes. The children proficiently use knives to spread margarine on their bread rolls demonstrating their skills and their independence. The childminder encourages the children to try new activities as she acts as a very good role model to the children. She takes part in their activities and is always at hand offering support and guidance.

Children under three years of age are very well supported as the setting plan activities in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Observations and photographs are transferred into the child's records which helps to inform the childminder of where children need further help to develop their learning.

The nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The childminder has a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. She has attended a child development course which further adds to her knowledge of how children develop. The childminder plans a very effective programme of activities for the children covering all areas of learning. She plans around themes and topics which vary in the length of time they last depending on the children's interests. This term the focus is transport as lots of the children have taken an interest in cars, trains and aeroplanes. The childminder uses her medium term plan to identify activity ideas, which are

written onto a weekly spider diagram so that the childminder can ensure that all areas are completed. The daily grid sheet identifies the daily activities and the links with the stepping stones. These are written retrospectively once the activity has taken place. Children's starting points are identified through discussions with the parents and through observations made by the childminder during the child's settling-in period. The information enables the childminder to plan for each child's individual need.

Assessments are recorded on the daily grid sheet and detail how the activity went, what was achieved, observations made and the next step for the children. The childminder spends time making individual observations recording them in each child's note book. These are then transferred into their step by step record of achievement. The record is completed monthly so that gaps can be identified and further used for planning. Children also has a scrapbook which contains their work and more photographs of past activities along with the childminder's comments. The childminder knows each child she cares for very well and is able to adjust activities to suit their abilities so they can all progress in their learning at their own pace. However, the childminder must ensure that there is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities as the children are not always given the opportunity to direct their own learning. The childminder continuously talks to the children using a range of vocabulary teaching the children new words and explaining the meaning. She uses lots of open-ended questions to encourage children to use their initiatives and in turn ask questions. Children behave very well and are gently reminded to be polite to one another.

Children are progressing very well through the stepping stones towards the early goals in relation to their starting points. Children are motivated to learn and have a positive disposition to learning as they regularly suggest new activities and ideas. The children are developing self-care as they independently access the toilet knowing to wash their hands and are able to put on their own coats before going outside. Children use a wide range of vocabulary to communicate to the childminder and each other and take an interest in new words. The children understand the rules of communication, listening whilst the other person speaks. Children often talk through their activity explaining what they are doing, asking questions to learn about different things. They are able to link sounds to letters one child saw the letter 'd' and said 'that's the same d as my name'.

Children take an active interest in maths and are able to use numbers to count in everyday activities. During a bread making activity the children used the measuring jug to measure quantity. They recognise numbers knowing which number it needed to reach for the correct amount in the recipe. One child asked the childminder 'what does five add five make?', the childminder asked him to use his hands to count to find out the answer, the child did so and replied 'it is ten'. Children demonstrate their awareness of shape by referring to different shapes in their play such as circles. Planned activities have also helped the children as they use a camera to capture the different shapes in the environment such as the square windows, circular plant pot and rectangular bird table. Positional language is regularly used, for example, when making puzzles, words such as in front of and behind are common. Children are aware of what the word half means and demonstrate this when they make paper aeroplanes folding the paper in half.

Children enjoy exploring and investigating different objects. They thoroughly enjoy cooking and learn about kneading when they make bread rolls using many different describing words

to say how the dough feels. Children enjoy exploring in their environment as they are actively involved in gardening both at home and at the childminder's allotment. They grow a range of vegetables and enjoy caring for them learning about how things grow and in the summer they enjoy tasting them. The children are often taken on outings, this term they have been on a bus and a train experiencing the different things associated to both such as visiting the stations. Children have a sense of time and often refer to their birthdays often talking about their families and their weekends. Children are very creative and enjoy using their imaginations during role play dressing-up as different people and taking on the role. They make different pictures, models and collages using a range of different art and craft materials. The children show their inventiveness as they use a large cardboard box to make a bus cutting out windows and drawing on the outside. They also make bus passes drawing pictures of themselves and using them during their role play as they mimic the driver asking for money. Children very much enjoy music joining in with familiar songs and actions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are outstandingly included and their differences acknowledged because they are all given the opportunity to share their experiences. The childminder makes time to have one to one discussions with the children as well as group talks. Children are all involved in deciding what they want to do during their day as they can freely access the resources. The childminder encourages children to negotiate, for example, sharing toys taking turns. Children have a sense of belonging at the setting as they are all fully involved in daily routines. Each child has a peg labelled with their name and either a photograph or a picture they have drawn. On arrival they hang their coats up and take their shoes off showing their parents the routine. Children's art work is proudly displayed on the play room walls helping them to feel valued, building their self-esteem. Children help to make scrapbooks of their time at the setting by looking through photographs selecting which ones they want to stick into the book. Children are in touch with their local community as they are often visiting many different places. These include the local park, library, seaside, visits to other childminders and they attend three toddler groups a week. Children excellently learn about diversity through planned activities, discussions and through excellent resources. As a setting they celebrate many different festivals changing each year giving the children the opportunity to learn about different ones. This years festivals include, the Harvest festival because of the allotment, Notting hill carnival and they also celebrated Guru Nanak and grandparents day. The childminder plans for the children she cares for by choosing festivals which are important to them. In addition to the planned activities children play with a wide range of resources which reflect positive images of diversity such as books, small world toys which show differing abilities and puzzles. These are used to aid discussions.

Children's individual needs are being excellently met as the childminder has an outstanding approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The childminder is very confident that she could identify a developmental issue as she has in the past. She has had experience of children with additional needs as she has worked with children who are dyslexic, have behavioural issues and who have a range of dietary needs. The childminder has accessed training on a range of issues including autism awareness and makaton signing. If the need presented itself the childminder would further develop her training to enable her to

continue to offer exceptionally high quality of care and meet the needs of the children who attend. The childminder has experience of working with the local authorities' Special Education Needs Coordinator and would happily work with any external agency. Children understand appropriate behaviour because the childminder is a very positive role model setting an excellent example to children. The childminder speaks very positively to the children praising good behaviour. She helps them to understand the consequences of their actions through the discussions that take place and through open-ended questions encouraging them to think about their answers reflecting on their feelings. Parents are informed of the childminder's procedures through the excellent policy. The childminder is consistent with her approach to behaviour management and children are asked to apologise to one another so that they acknowledge their behaviour and the effect it has on the other children.

Children are cared for by a childminder who works excellently with parents to meet their individual needs and ensure that the child is always fully included in the setting. Parents initially receive information about the childminding practice through the very professionally prepared parent pack. It includes lots of extremely useful information about the setting. Parents are also given a copy of the policies. Parents are asked to provide vital information about their children via a registration form to enable the childminder to fully meet their needs. Parents are offered a settling-in period as the childminder feels it is extremely important for all children to be happily settled and content. The length of time will vary upon the differing needs. The childminder has excellent relationships with the parents and communicates with them on a daily basis through informal discussion. Children under two years of age have a diary and older children have a scrapbook full of photographs and beautiful examples of their work. In addition, the childminder has a parent notice board displaying further useful information about their child's day. The childminder is very proactive and asks parents for feedback via a questionnaire. This enables her to assess her practice and make future improvements to better meet the needs of the children and the parents. Parents are fully informed about how to make a complaint via the settings' policy, furthermore, posters are displayed in the setting displaying useful contact details.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are informed about the Foundation Stage through the discussions that take place with the childminder. The childminder writes a termly newsletter which informs the parents of activities for the term and topics chosen. The parents are asked if they are able to contribute or whether they have any specialist skills they would like to share with the children. There is a suggestion box for future activity ideas so that parents are able to contribute to their child's learning. Parents can meet with the childminder at any time to look through their child's step by step record of achievement. In addition, the childminder has also planned an open morning at the weekend to give parents a further opportunity to look through records and ask any questions. The children's learning benefits from the very good relationships formed between parents and the childminder with any observations made by parents recorded and used to inform planning.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children are developing their self-esteem, have formed very positive relationships with staff and children, excellently behaved and are developing an awareness of different cultures through excellent discussions, resources and activities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a safe and suitable adult as she is deemed suitable to care for children. The Childminder has good understanding of the National Standards and her responsibility to comply with these and the conditions of her registration. The childminder places an emphasis on training and is continuously attending different courses. These have included treasure baskets, puppets by post, building self-esteem amongst many others. The childminder has completed the Suffolk Quality Assurance Scheme and is currently working towards a Level 3 qualification in early years.

Children have access to a dedicated playroom which houses the majority of the toys accessible on the floor or in low level boxes. The playroom has a comfy sofa for children to sit and read books and plenty of floor space for games. The conservatory offers the children another room to play in and is often used for art and craft activities. The kitchen has a table where the children sit to eat together and they have access to a downstairs toilet. The garden has lots of fun resources for the children to enjoy.

Children's well-being is promoted by the very well-organised records and policies. The childminder maintains an accurate register recording the times of arrival and departure of each child. The childminder asks parents to provide her with information on their child's dietary and medical needs, emergency contact details amongst other information. In addition, she seeks consent from parents for their children to be transported, go on outings, have observations made, medicine administered, photographs taken and for the childminder to seek emergency treatment. This enables her to care for the children responsibly and according to parents' wishes. The childminder has very well written policies in place so that parents are clear about how the setting operates.

In addition, the childminder has put together a very well-presented operational plan which gives an in-depth insight into the setting and how it operates, providing further useful information for parents. All records are stored confidentially on the premises.

Children's overall needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to develop toys and resources that reflect positive images of diversity. The childminder now has excellent resources. These include a range of books which are often used as part of discussions such as the 'Elmer books'. Puzzles and small world toys such as the 'happy people' dressed in the national clothes of different countries. Multicultural craft books help the childminder and children to choose different activities.

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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- seek permission for emergency advice or treatment.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

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

- ensure that planning includes a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities.

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