

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	257952
Inspection date	18 July 2007
Inspector	Anne Walker
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 2000. She lives with her husband, who is also a registered childminder, and two children in South Wootton, on the outskirts of the town of King's Lynn, Norfolk. The whole of the ground floor and two bedrooms and the bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding two children who attend on a part-time basis. The childminder has a car for taking and collecting children from the local school and pre-schools. The family have five guinea pigs as pets.

The childminder is a member of the King's Lynn Cluster of the Norfolk Childminding Network and a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have their own towels and all the necessary resources for washing hands readily available. They understand the need to wash their hands after using the toilet but occasionally they are not reminded of the importance of this before eating. The childminder has maintained an appropriate first aid certificate and first aid kits are available in the home and the car. This ensures that any accidents children have can be dealt with effectively to ensure their well-being. Records of any medicines show parental consent and what has been administered so that parents and the childminder work cooperatively to promote children's health. Parental permission to seek emergency medical consent has not been sought for the children currently cared for. This means that if a medical emergency occurs parental wishes are not clearly stated.

The children have snacks and drinks at regular intervals during the day so that they are not hungry and remain alert, and are able to play. Some regard is given to healthy eating and children after school are encouraged to eat fruit first before other snacks are offered. Packed lunches prepared by parents are stored in the fridge so that food remains fresh for children at lunch time. Relevant information is recorded when the child starts so that the childminder is aware if children have dietary needs.

The garden has a range of equipment to promote children's physical skills and provide them with opportunities to be in the fresh air. On occasions, children walk to local venues or school although more often the car is used.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a suitably safe and secure environment as potential hazards are minimised. Stair gates prevent access to the kitchen when cooking is taking place and the dining room where computer equipment is stored. Areas of the home are organised for them to play, rest and eat. A child sized table in the lounge is provided for their meals and there is sufficient floor space so that they can spread out their toys and still move safely. They are encouraged to help tidy away before getting more toys out so that they begin to understand how to prevent trips and falls. Play materials are clean and in safe order. A written emergency evacuation procedure is in place in the event of a fire but it does not have regard to the first floor, which is used for minding. There are not clear plans to show what would be done if children were on both levels, or if everyone was upstairs at the time the fire broke out. Children receive appropriate levels of supervision indoors and during outings to ensure their safety and well-being. The cars used to transport children are properly maintained and insured and children are restrained in suitable car seats to keep them safe.

The childminder has a suitable knowledge of how children can be harmed and understands how and where to report any concerns. Some child protection information is displayed in the hall for parents to see. Overall, the systems for ensuring parents are aware of the child protection responsibilities that the childminder has, do not fully guide parents so that they understand how to work cooperatively with her. The childminder's awareness of when to record injuries children arrive with is not fully secure. This means that children's welfare could potentially be compromised as full and clear information would not necessarily be recorded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children have appropriate support and attention as they play. A pre-school child concentrates and shows persistence as they build and balance using blocks of shapes, happily trying different arrangements. The childminder sits alongside them and talks with them about what they are doing and is encouraging them. Children are comfortable in the environment and know what play materials there are. When they are not immediately available they are happy to ask. A selection of play materials are out in boxes in the lounge and are generally age appropriate for the children present.

Regard is given to providing children with a balanced day. Most mornings are spent at activities in the local community such as toddler sessions or the local farm park. This enables them to mix and socialise with their peers and provides some opportunities to be outdoors. Afternoons are quieter as the children have free play in the home. The day takes into account young children's individual routines. Craft activities are planned and adapted for the different age groups so that they have appropriate challenges.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs including dietary or medical issues are recorded prior to the child being cared for. This enables the childminder to provide appropriate care for them and help them to settle and feel at home. Where children's needs are more complex, such as behavioural issues, there are no defined strategies to gather relevant information quickly in order to understand how to manage and respond to their needs. Generally children quickly establish warm relationships with their carer and understand the boundaries set for them. The range of ways to foster positive behaviour with more challenging children are less confidently employed. As a result, it may take longer for these children to settle and feel secure. There are satisfactory resources and activities that help children understand people's similarities and differences. The children have frequent outings to local amenities and toddler groups which provides them with opportunities to mix and socialise in their local community.

Satisfactory strategies are in place to include children with disabilities. Appropriate information is exchanged with parents which includes daily written information when babies are looked after.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are looked after in a family orientated environment where they get to know the adults in the household who are both registered as childminders. Regard is given to ensuring children have appropriate safe space to play and rest according to their developmental needs. The childminder has undertaken a range of training and a quality assurance programme to develop her knowledge and skills. She remains committed to furthering her knowledge so that she can support children and keep up to date with current trends in early years.

All required paperwork is in place and used satisfactorily to underpin the day to day management of the childminding business. Records are used and adequately stored in ways which ensure confidentiality. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to improve the information to parents about the childminding service provided. Some written information has been developed to assist parents in understanding how the childminder runs her business and the play opportunities children will have during the day. This information has been translated into Portuguese to support families in the area who do not speak English as their first language. Some photographs of the children at play and information booklets are displayed in the entrance hall for the parents to see.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard 11: Behaviour. The complaint related to inappropriate behaviour management strategies used with children. Ofsted visited the childminder on 18 May 2007 to investigate the concerns and as a result two actions were raised under Standard 11: Behaviour. The childminder has written a behaviour management policy and undertaken some training. She remains qualified for registration.

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 by 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 satisfactory. 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):

- further promote children's health and well-being by ensuring that they wash their hands before eating and that parental consent to the seeking of emergency medical treatment is requested
- improve the fire evacuation plan so that it reflects all areas of the home that are used for childminding and develop knowledge of child protection procedures in relation to existing injuries and systems for informing parents of child protection responsibilities
- further develop knowledge of behaviour management strategies so that they can be more clearly based on children's individual needs.

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