

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256655
Inspection date	05 September 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 1990. She lives with her husband and adult son in a village near Great Yarmouth. The ground floor of the house is used for childminding with access to an upstairs bedroom for sleep. There is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is registered to work with an assistant, who at agreed times may have sole charge of the children. When they are working together they may care for a maximum of eight children. They are currently caring for 10 children aged under five years, and five children aged between five and eight years at various times during the week. An additional child over the age of eight years also attends. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has a dog, cat and keeps fish in garden pond.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment where they benefit from good levels of cleanliness and hygiene throughout the home, which effectively contributes to limiting the risk of cross-infection. For instance, children use paper towels to dry their hands and the childminder and her assistant use effective hygiene practices during nappy changing routines. This helps to limit the risk of cross-infection.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate which means she is able to give children appropriate care if there is an accident. However, the childminder has not ensured her assistant has appropriate skills to offer children appropriate care in the event of a child requiring first aid treatment when the childminder is not present. Parents give prior consent for the childminder to administer medication which ensures children receive the correct dosage according to their needs.

Children enjoy varied and nutritious meals which meet special dietary needs and ensure children remain healthy. They have grown tomatoes, cucumbers and marrows in the garden, and have grown other vegetables and fruit at the local allotment. The childminder rewards children with a special 'five a day' certificate whenever this is achieved during meal times. This helps children to develop good eating habits and enables them to recognise foods that are good for them.

Children have regular walks and have good access to a range of large play equipment both inside the home and outdoors at the local park. This enables children to engage in a good range of physical activities that help keep them healthy and supports their overall physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder has created a welcoming and child-friendly environment where children's photographs and creative work are freely displayed within the home. This encourages children to feel secure within the setting and shows children that adults value their creative achievements. Children benefit from playing in a spacious and well-organised environment which allows them to move around and play safely. For instance, they move freely while playing with the toys and equipment in the living room, conservatory and play room.

Children are able to play with a very wide range of toys and resources which are of good quality, clean, safe, and age appropriate. Toys and resources are stored at low level so that children can access them safely and easily. Children are able to make important decisions in their play and learning because they are to self-select their own toys. For example, one child decides to play with the puzzles so selects one which he completes before choosing another one. This enables children to spend time concentrating at self-chosen activities to further their enjoyment.

Children enjoy playing in a safe and secure environment because the childminder has identified hazards within the home and put in place appropriate safety equipment. For instance, safety gates protect access to the stairs and kitchen area, and spillages on the floor are quickly cleaned away. This means children can play, learn and explore without danger. Children are confident in explaining the safety rules such as no running on the stairs and understand why they must hold the childminder's hands when they cross the road.

The childminder has sound knowledge of child protection issues and appropriate policies and procedures are in place with contact numbers readily accessible. This promotes and safeguards children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder uses gradual settling-in procedures where she asks parents relevant information about their child to ensure she has good knowledge of their individual needs. This enables children to settle quickly and helps them to feel secure and comfortable within their surroundings. Children are encouraged to talk about important events in their lives. For example, children chat freely about recent holidays and recall seeing boats and animals such as sharks at a sea life centre. They talk affectionately about their pets and are very keen to build a boat similar to one they have seen during their holidays, out of constructional toys. This helps children to develop a sense of belonging within the setting.

The childminder readily praises children's achievements and consequently children are very confident and feel good about themselves. They proudly tell the childminder when they have written their names on their pictures telling her 'that's a good one' while pointing to their writing. They are very keen to show other children returning from nursery what they have made out of the constructional toys eagerly telling them 'come and look what I have made' while beaming proudly.

Children have good opportunities of expressing their ideas and feelings through using a range of creative materials. They concentrate very well when painting pictures of their parents and explore both natural and manufactured materials. Children are eager for the childminder to join them during their imaginary play and pretend to make her cups of tea and sandwiches. They are helped to extend their vocabulary when they learn new words such as 'stethoscope' when they dress up as doctors. There are good opportunities of learning about the local environment because children regularly walk to the local village to post letters and visit the mobile library van. They enjoy feeding the ducks and visit the resident llamas in the village.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are encouraged to join in all activities to ensure they have equal opportunities to maximise their enjoyment and potential. Children are learning about their own and other cultures through using a range of resources and planned activities. They are helped to appreciate other languages spoken by children attending the setting because this is incorporated into different activities. For instance, all the children are now able to count in Spanish. Resources reflect positive images of diversity which help children to develop a positive attitude towards others. The childminder is able to demonstrate an understanding of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by using appropriate strategies, to ensure all children's needs are well planned for and met.

The childminder uses appropriate strategies according to the age and stage of children's development to help children understand right from wrong. Children learn important social skills such as sharing and taking turns, and they show respectful behaviour towards each other. For example, one child offers to help another child use the dressing up clothes and is praised for his kindness. Consequently, children play well together and enjoy each other's company.

Relationships with parents are friendly and supportive. Care diaries that record younger children's daily play activities, food intake, sleep and general disposition help to establish continuity of care. All the parents regularly discuss their child's progress with the childminder and work together to encourage children to achieve certain goals. Parents are well informed about the service because they are able to read written policies and procedures. This helps parents to make an informed choice.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is complying with all conditions of her registration. She is very clear about meeting the agreed ratios of children and is able to demonstrate her responsibility in respect of notification of changes. This helps to promote children's welfare. The childminder is meeting the qualification requirements because she has maintained a first aid certificate and has attended a child protection course for childminders. This ensures she is able to give appropriate care for the children she looks after.

The childminder has established effective working relationships with her assistant and they work closely together equally sharing the care of the children. This enables children to receive good support and supervision during their play. Effective organisation of the premises provides children with lots of space to play and access resources independently. Children feel at home and at ease and daily routines provide children with opportunities to relax as well as be busy and actively occupied.

Written policies and procedures guide the childminder in her daily practice. This ensures children's needs are met and all relevant information is shared with parents. A good two-way flow of information ensures continuity of care. All mandatory records are in place and are kept in a confidential manner and are well maintained. This guarantees the safe and effective management of the setting in order to promote children's welfare. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop further documentation relating to child protection. She has now obtained all relevant child protection procedures and has attended further child protection training. This enables her to fully safeguard children's welfare.

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):

- ensure the assistant has appropriate skills and ability to look after children in the event of an accident requiring the child to receive first aid 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