

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256422
Inspection date	16 July 2007
Inspector	Christine Ann London

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 1999. She lives with her husband and two sons in a village near Norwich, Norfolk. The house is within walking distance of local amenities. The childminder has use of a car to transport minded children. The whole of the house is used for childminding. An enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play. The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time, with three overnight places. She currently has 10 children on roll, of which all attend part-time, including before and after school. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted as they are looked after in a clean and caring environment. They learn the importance of good personal hygiene through established routines for hand washing, for example, before eating or after using the toilet. Washing facilities are readily available and children are provided with detailed diagrams as to how to wash their hands properly, promoting their independence. Children are protected from the risk of cross-infection

as the childminder has a clear policy regarding the care of sick children and has information available on infectious diseases and exclusions from the setting. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and has a first aid box to hand, ensuring children's well-being should an accident occur. Children's health and medical needs are discussed with parents and relevant information recorded, enabling appropriate care to be provided.

Children benefit from a healthy and balanced diet as they enjoy meals and snacks with the childminder. Meals are provided in accordance with children's individual needs and in consultation with parents. Currently most children are provided with packed lunches by their parents. Some children have a healthy cooked meal provided in the evening. Snacks and meals include a choice of fresh fruit or vegetables, for example, chopped kiwi, banana and pear. Children are encouraged to try new foods. For example, the childminder with two other childminders organised a food tasting event where children had the opportunity to taste Chinese, Indian, Italian and Mexican foods. They also tasted different fruits and vegetables and were awarded a certificate to show they had tasted the foods. Children are learning to understand the importance of a healthy diet as they talk about foods which are healthy during mealtimes. Children recognise when they are thirsty and drinks are accessible throughout the day, ensuring they remain well-hydrated.

Children enjoy an excellent range of physical play experiences that contribute to their good health. Easy access to the rear garden gives them daily opportunities to enjoy the fresh air. An extensive range of outdoor toys promotes children's physical and co-ordination skills. For example, they demonstrate their skills by crawling through the tunnel or run up and down the garden. Children ably manoeuvre wheeled toys around the garden. The childminder helps children adopt a positive attitude to exercise by creating a fun assault course around the garden, incorporating a variety of physical skills. Physical activities are also available indoors, for example, they dance to music. The daily routine offers a mixture of active play and time for rests. The younger children sleep in cots or sleeping bags and the older children are able to rest or sleep on the comfy cushions, according to children's individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, welcoming and child-friendly environment where they feel comfortable and secure. They are able to move around freely and independently access a broad range of developmentally appropriate resources and equipment, that is maintained in good condition. Resources are stored at children's level so they are able to choose what they would like to do, promoting their independence and enabling them to pursue their own interests. The childminder carefully supervises children's play and offers explanations to help children develop an awareness of their own and other children's safety.

Children's safety is maintained indoors as hazards, such as, those presented by low glass, electrical sockets and stairs, have been identified and appropriate steps taken to minimise the risks. The premises are secure at all times children are present, to ensure their safety. Older children are able to play upstairs with age-appropriate resources and levels of supervision. Fire safety equipment is in place. However, the childminder does not have an emergency evacuation plan. Written and verbal procedures covering emergencies, such as, a lost or uncollected child, are shared with parents, keeping them generally informed of the practices in place to protect their child.

Children enjoy regular outings with the childminder, who has clear strategies in place to protect them. For example, children hold on to the buggy or childminder's hand when walking. The childminder has a secondary safety device of clipping reins to her belt to prevent children running into the road should they let go of her hands. Children learn about road safety whilst out with the childminder. Appropriate car seats are used at all times children are transported in the car and the childminder gives due regard to children's safety as children get in or out of the car, in order to protect them from harm. Badges detailing the childminder's emergency contact number are worn by the children as a safety precaution in case children should become separated when on outings.

Children are protected as the childminder understands her role and responsibilities in child protection and has a sound knowledge of the local child protection guidelines and procedures. She has recently attended relevant training to update her knowledge and understanding and has a written statement which she shares with parents, in order to safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thrive on the wealth of play equipment and activities provided by the childminder. They are able to make choices from the broad and varied range of resources which are easily accessible to them, promoting their independent learning. The childminder involves herself in children's play, provides sensitive support and encouragement in order that children can achieve. She uses good questioning techniques to help children communicate their ideas or express their views, for example, asking the children where Bob the builder's eyes are and then praising the children when they show where their own eyes are. Children are eager to play outdoors and explore the wet or dry sand, make maximum use of the physical play resources, engage in imaginative play in the role play area protected by a canopy for the hot weather. Children use their imaginative ideas to create pictures of their own design and make collages from the different items they collect when out walking. They initiate their own imaginative games and chat together whilst playing. Friendships between children are developing and they engage in co-operative play, are aware of the need to share and take turns and be considerate of others. Numbers and colour recognition are introduced by the childminder in a fun way whilst children are playing, enhancing children's learning. Children enjoy outings and frequently visit the local park, which offers more challenging physical experiences, or walk through the local woods. The childminder offers children lots of choices and is guided by what they wish to do. They thrive on the praise and encouragement they receive. Their achievements are rewarded by the childminder ensuring they feel valued. Children ask questions and older children are confident communicators. They have established trusting relationships with the childminder, enabling them to feel at ease and eager to participate in all activities. As a consequence, children are making good progress in all areas of their development.

The childminder has acquired some knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and links this to some of the different aspects of the activities she provides for younger children. Children under three are sociable and the childminder is encouraging them to communicate by talking and listening to them. The childminder provides an appropriate range of resources and activities to promote their development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and treated as individuals. Their needs are met because the childminder knows the children well and is attentive to their needs at all times. Children are given appropriate support, contributing to them becoming confident and secure within the childminder's home. Children are encouraged to make choices and decisions and respond well to the praise given by the childminder, promoting their self-esteem. All children have access to toys and equipment which foster their learning and development. The childminder provides a positive role model for children, helping them develop a positive and caring attitude towards others. Resources and discussion enables children to gain an appreciation of the wider world. The childminder has some experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and would adapt activities in order to meet children's needs.

Children are happy, sociable and behave well. They are encouraged to be polite, share and play together through the childminder's caring attitude. Good behaviour is valued and children are given praise and encouragement. Children receive gentle guidance with regards to rules and boundaries and clearly know what is expected of them. Strategies used to manage behaviour are discussed with parents to provide consistency.

Children are cared for effectively because the childminder has a good relationship with their parents. All the required documents and consents are in place to ensure children are cared for according to parents' wishes. The childminder ensures parents are kept well informed through friendly daily discussions as children arrive or leave. Parents are made aware of the procedure to follow should they wish to make a complaint or raise a concern. The childminder has provided consistent care for children over several years, demonstrating parents' ongoing satisfaction in the care provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A calm, welcoming and child-centred environment is provided by the childminder, ensuring children feel happy and secure. Space is well-organised so children can play, eat and rest in comfort, meeting their individual needs. Children make maximum use of the garden where they can run freely, use a range of resources to test their physical skills, explore materials, such as, sand or water and join in imaginary games in the role play area. The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of all the children in her care, organising her time and resources appropriately to ensure children are stimulated and enjoy their time in her care. Children take an active part in deciding what activities they would like to do, fostering their confidence and independence. Parents' wishes are actively sought and respected, enabling appropriate care to be provided.

The childminder has completed training in childminding practice and has a sound understanding of the National Standards, which is reflected in the care she provides. She regularly attends training to update and develop her practice. Checks have been completed to ensure that persons living in the household are suitable. An extensive range of written policies are shared and discussed with parents to inform them of the service provided and the care their child receives. Detailed contracts, consents, child records and additional information sheets are completed, promoting the welfare of each child cared for. The childminder accurately records the times children arrive and leave the setting to ensure they are fully safeguarded. Overall, the needs of the children who attend are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to continue to undertake relevant training to maintain the high quality of care for the children.

Since the last inspection the childminder has undertaken many relevant training opportunities to maintain and improve the high quality of care she provides for the children attending.

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 an emergency evacuation plan and practise to safeguard children.

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