

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY253300
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 August 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Julie Denise Edmonds
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 April 2003. She lives with her husband who is also a registered childminder. They live in Lowestoft within walking distance of local amenities. The whole of the bungalow is used for childminding. A fully enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time, with a maximum of three children under five years. When childminding alongside her husband all six of the children may be under five years. Overnight care may be provided for two children. The childminder and her husband currently care for five pre-school children and one school age child. In addition they care for four children over eight years. All attend on a part-time basis. The childminder takes the overall lead in childminding practice. The co-childminder works in partnership.

Children are transported by car. The childminder and co-childminder walk to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. They take children to visit varied local attractions and activities, the local library and parks.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment where they learn to follow good hygiene practices. This promotes their good health. Children and babies use clean toys and equipment. They benefit from the childminder having attended training to keep up-to-date with food handling advice. The children are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times. They begin to develop independence as they are able to access the toilet and hand washing facilities. Support is provided as appropriate for younger children when they use the toilet facilities. Hygiene practice mainly helps to prevent cross infection. However, use of shared towels is inconsistent with this. The childminder has the main daily responsibility for attending to children's personal care needs such as nappy changing and meets these well. The co-childminder has experience of being in sole charge of the children and providing for all their care needs in line with good practice.

Appropriate arrangements provide children with regular food and drink and a balanced diet, supporting their growth and development. The children eat healthy snacks, such as fresh and dried fruit. They enjoy meals provided by their parents or offered by the childminder. Varied menus are planned jointly by the childminder and co-childminder, with cooked meals including fresh vegetables. The co-childminder usually prepares the meals, with the childminder taking responsibility for this on occasions. Children are provided with regular and sufficient fluid intake. The amount of juice offered is limited, with fresh water always available.

Children benefit from regular physical activity that contributes to a healthy lifestyle. There is emphasis on daily walks to and from school and pre-school during term time to gain fresh air and exercise. The children use a variety of outdoor toys in the garden, including a slide, playing on rockers and bouncing on 'space hoppers'. Children and babies are able to rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Individual health and dietary needs are met because the childminder works well with parents to gain information and takes heed of this.

### Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in warm, welcoming and well-maintained premises. The available space is well-organised for children to play, eat and have undisturbed sleep. They are able to access attractively presented toys in the conservatory used as a play room. Wall space is used for children to display their craft work. The children also play in the adjacent room, with the lounge providing additional space. Children play and rest in comfort, with soft furnishings to relax on. Suitable arrangements for children and babies staying over night include use of a sofa bed and travel cot. Appropriate nursery equipment also includes a double buggy and baby seats.

The children are well supervised, with the childminder and co-childminder working together as a team. They are cared for in an environment where hazards are identified and reduced. This includes use of a detailed written risk assessment for both indoors and the garden. Measures in place include a catch fitted to the low-level cupboard containing hazardous household substances. Medicines are kept out of children's reach. Outdoors, the door leading to the garage from the garden is kept padlocked. Practice to ensure children's daily safety includes ensuring accessible toys are suitable and safe for the age and stage of those attending. Children learn about keeping themselves safe, such as about road safety when on outings. The emergency escape plan supports safe evacuation of the premises.

The children are protected as the childminder and co-childminder understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. The childminder and co-childminder are able to respond to any concerns they may have in line with local safeguarding children procedures.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are very well-settled, content and confident in the company of the childminder and co-childminder. They receive praise and recognition for their achievements, promoting their self-esteem. The friendly and welcoming atmosphere where children are valued helps them to feel good about themselves. Particularly warm and caring relationships are developed. Interaction provides the children with lots of reassuring eye contact. They receive appropriate and encouraging responses as they play.

The children make decisions and choices as they take part in activities. They choose from the appealing toys, games and books available. They are invited to take part in activities such as kite making and cooking. The childminder and co-childminder plan activities jointly in advance for the coming week. This includes stories, music time, puzzles and games, going for a picnic, art and craft with drawing and painting, using play dough and outdoor play in the garden. Children take part in a balance of free play and activities with adult support. Seasonal activities and celebrations include at Christmas and Halloween, playing outdoors in the snow and visiting the beach. There is particular emphasis on learning through play and encouraging children's interest in their surroundings. The childminder has the 'Birth to three matters' framework and is able to provide activities that meet the needs of younger children.

Children receive the childminder's and co-childminder's full attention. They play with them and become fully involved. The childminder talks with the children as they draw and colour. Children build with bricks. The childminder provides encouragement and support and promotes learning, such as colour recognition. Children use their own ideas and imagination as they construct vehicles and use play figures to 'drive'. They are encouraged to develop a love of books as they are taken to the library to borrow books of their own choice.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children behave well in line with the good example set by the adults caring for them. They are fully occupied in purposeful play. This supports the positive behaviour management techniques consistently in use by the childminder and co-childminder. The children are aware of what is expected of them as there are house rules in place. These include sitting down to eat and drink. Children's positive behaviour is encouraged through use of star charts. They learn about why behaviour is unacceptable through discussion. The children learn good manners and to be polite, such as saying please and thank you. Children are encouraged to have regard for each other.

The childminder and co-childminder know the children in their care very well, such as their likes, dislikes, sleeping habits and comforters. The children receive a high standard of care as this knowledge is used to provide for them effectively. All children are regarded with equal concern. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed into the setting. The childminder is involved in ongoing assessments in close partnership with parents and other professionals working with families to promote individual children's welfare and development. Overnight care offered provides continuity of care and additional support for children and

families. The children have opportunities to learn about the local community and surrounding area as they go on outings to feed the ducks and squirrels and visit the library. Other outings include taking part in activities at the nearby Sure Start centre and planned outings in the school holidays to children's attractions such as Pets Corner at Oulton Broad.

Children have their individual needs met by the childminder and co-childminder who work in close partnership with parents. Written agreements are in place, including appropriate consents, such as to travel in a vehicle and to take photographs. Parents are informed about routines and practices with a file accessible and some information displayed, such as the weekly plan. Daily communication ensures essential information is exchanged to meet children's changing needs. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have with the childminder and co-childminder, promoting early resolution and continuity of care for the children. Parents are very complimentary about the care provided for their children. Comments include about children's social skills development, that they value the service provided to collect children from their homes and return them and that the childminders are friendly and approachable.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are welcomed into the well-organised premises where they are cared for in comfort. The childminder and co-childminder use their skills to provide the children with a range of enjoyable play and learning experiences. The children are not left alone with unvetted adults, promoting their well-being. Routines and the time and attention given offer children a sense of security. The good quality care offered reflects the high regard that the childminder and co-childminder have for the children. Care of older children does not adversely affect care of the younger children attending.

The childminder updates training such as first aid and safeguarding children. She also attends additional training to extend her knowledge and develop childminding practice, such as baby signing. She shares her learning with her co-childminder and they implement any new practice in partnership.

The childminder has the main responsibility for documentation. Records keeping is comprehensive, appropriately maintained and complies with regulations, supporting efficient and safe management. Storage ensures easy access to information to support the effective operation of the provision. Overall children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to obtain a copy of the Government booklet 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused - Summary'. This is now accessible and supports safeguarding children.

### **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):

- provide suitable hand drying facilities to prevent cross infection.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)