

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 251173
Inspection date 26 July 2007
Inspector Emily Alderson

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 has been registered since 1998. She lives with her husband and three children in a house, in a residential area, on the outskirts of east Ipswich. The family have three pet rabbits.

Minded children have access to all the whole house with the exception of the master bedroom, although pre-school aged children only play downstairs. Children predominantly play in the large lounge, dining room or kitchen. There is a downstairs cloakroom plus an upstairs bathroom. There is a secure, well equipped rear garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding eight children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder cares for children with disabilities. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

Local amenities such as schools, playgroups, parks and shops are all within walking distance or a short drive away.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children attend a setting which has good health and hygiene practices. The childminder has completed a food hygiene course and knows the correct procedure to follow. Food is stored correctly and is prepared hygienically with the surfaces wiped, anti bacterial spray used and hands washed prior to handling food. Sleeping arrangements are good with a travel cot provided for children to sleep. Nappy changing facilities are also good with the mat wiped in-between changes to minimise cross infection and the nappies disposed of in the outside bin. Children learn to understand simple good health and living as they are developing an understanding of the importance of washing hands after toileting and prior to eating. Older children do so independently using the soap provided.

Children receive good care when they are ill or had an accident because the childminder is trained in first aid and has a well equipped first aid box. Children's accidents are recorded in a book and parents asked to sign to acknowledge the entry. Parents give prior written consent for the childminder to administer medication. If a child becomes unwell during the day the parents are called and appropriate action taken resulting either in the child being collected or the parent asking the childminder to administer medicine. The sickness policy states that if children are unwell they are to be kept at home until they are fully recovered, other parents are informed if the illness is infectious.

Children's physical play experiences are well promoted because the childminder has a garden for the children to play in which is well resourced and includes a climbing frame, balls, bats, tennis rackets and a play house. In addition the children receive plenty of fresh air as they often visit the local parks, regularly walk to the school and adventure playgrounds giving them plenty of opportunity to run around and practise their skills. Children access a range of resources to promote their hand and eye co-ordination such as drawing, painting, puzzles and threading beads.

Children have their health and dietary needs well met as the childminder provides the children with nutritional healthy food. Snacks consist of bread sticks, raisins or rice cakes and lunch includes sandwiches, various fruits and yoghurts. Children have free access to drinks throughout the day. All food provided is done so according to parents wishes and taking into account any dietary needs or allergies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The environment is warm and welcoming for children, parent and carers as it is clean, child friendly and the resources are easily accessible for all children. Children use safe and suitable equipment as all the toys are regularly checked to ensure that they are safe, anything deemed unsuitable is disposed of. There is a good range of resources which include lots of natural toys such as an abacus, train tracks, cars, sit along toys, beads on a wooden block as well as a range of books, puzzles, dolls, dressing up clothes and pop up toys.

Provision arrangements meets most health and safety guidelines as the childminder minimises most of the risks. The stairs have been fitted with a gate to prevent children going upstairs, the plug sockets are covered and the front and back door kept locked to prevent any child

leaving the house. However, the garden has items that could potentially cause a risk to children making it currently unsafe for them to play in. Children are learning to keep themselves safe when they are walking as they are beginning to learn about road safety. They know to wait for the man to be green and to look both ways to make sure there are no cars. Children are safe on outings as younger children are in pushchairs or have reins and older children walk sensibly beside the childminder. When travelling by car all children are secure in appropriate safety harnesses in line with current guidance.

In the event of a fire children are well protected as the childminder has taken precautions by fitting smoke alarms which are regularly tested, keeping a fire blanket in the kitchen and has a well thought out evacuation procedure. The childminder has made an arrangement with a nearby childminder to use her house as an assembly point to contact parents. Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted because the childminder fully understands her role in child protection as she has attended training and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to be confident and develop their independence as the childminder offers the children lots of praise and support raising their self-esteem. The childminder encourages the children to try new activities by being actively involved in their play supporting their learning by showing them how to complete a task rewarding their efforts with praise and stickers. All the toys are stored in boxes or baskets on the floor so that the children can help themselves. The children are all familiar with where things are kept and if they have trouble finding something they will ask the childminder for help. Children are making choices about how they want to spend their time and as they self-select their toys their concentration is sustained.

There are resources promoting all areas of learning these include art and crafts, musical instruments and tapes, dressing up clothes, construction, cars, puzzles and books amongst others. The childminder organises an activity each day to ensure that children are having fun and learning. The activity could be a visit to the park or an art and craft activity which all children are involved in. They particularly like playing hair dressers and modelling with playdough. Children are encouraged to explore and do so when they visit the childminder's parents, where they spend time digging in the garden or looking for toads taking an interest enthusiastically asking questions.

Children are happy, smiling and having fun. They have clearly formed a good relationship with the childminder as they approach her for cuddles or ask her to play with them. The childminder encourages the children to ask lots of questions and does so by initiating conversation asking the children open ended questions so that they respond. She also uses books and music as a way to interact with younger children so that they can join in regardless of whether they are able to communicate using words. Children are well behaved at the setting and are learning to distinguish right and wrong through daily discussions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are all well included and their differences acknowledged because the childminder uses her time effectively to ensure that each child receives an equal amount. Children are able to

talk as a group or on a one to one. The childminder praises children's efforts helping them to feel valued and important. When children receive stickers they are very proud and excitedly show their parents when they are collected. They are equally very pleased with their work and show each other and their parents.

The childminder actively involves children by asking them their opinions and to make choices about what activity they want to do or what they would like to eat for lunch. This helps them to feel involved building their sense of belonging at the setting and encouraging them to make decisions. Children are in touch with their local community as they often attend toddler groups, childminder groups and the library who provide activities for the children. They often walk and use public transport so therefore see many different people. Children regularly ask questions about things they see such as 'why does that man have no legs?' the childminder positively responds explaining to the children the possible reasons. To reinforce their discussions the childminder has books that look at different issues and has resources that promote positive images of diversity.

The childminder currently cares for children with disabilities and has a very positive approach. She feels confident in her abilities to recognise potential developmental issues and has in the past. She discusses it with the parents who then take further action by consulting with professionals. The childminder would be happy to access further training if a child wanted to attend so that she could offer them the best possible care. Children are well behaved and are learning the boundaries and expectations. The childminder deals with behaviour in a developmentally appropriate way using the word 'no' and always explaining the reasons so that they are able to learn. Younger children are distracted and their play redirected. The childminder encourages children to share their toys and she praises wanted behaviour.

Children are cared for by a childminder who works well with parents to meet their individual needs and ensure that the child is fully included in the setting. This is achieved as the childminder asks the parents to provide her with relevant information on the registration form such as likes and dislikes, allergies and routines which enables the childminder to cater for each so that they can have fun and take part. Parents initially receive information about the setting via the prospectus which includes various policies and procedures, and then further information is given at the initial meeting with the childminder. The childminder is always available to speak to each parent at the beginning and at the end of the day giving them the opportunity to discuss their child. If the childminder receives something of interest such as an activity suggestions or a catalogue she either makes a copy and gives it to the parent or shares it with them so that they can be involved. The childminder is aware of her duties to inform parents on how to make a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a safe and suitable adult as the childminder has been fully vetted and deemed suitable to work with children. The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards and her responsibility to comply with these and the conditions of her registration. She ensures that she always maintains the correct ratio of adult to children. The childminder places great emphasis on her professional development and strives to keep her self updated by attending various courses. These include safe guarding children, food hygiene and first aid these are renewed every three years which is when the certificate expires. In addition she has undertaken training on running a business.

The lounge is the main play area for the children and the space is very well used. They also have access to a dining room which has a computer, a downstairs toilet, kitchen and the garden. Children's well-being is promoted by the well organised records and policies. The childminder keeps an accurate register detailing the times of arrival and departure. 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 have sun cream applied, be transported, observations, have medicine administered and for the childminder to seek emergency advice and treatment. This enables her to care for the children responsibly and according to parents wishes. All records are stored confidentially on the premises.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that written agreements are completed with all parents. This has been achieved.

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.

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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 that all hazards are removed from the garden

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