

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260809
Inspection date	21 November 2007
Inspector	Andrea Ewer
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 2000 and is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is currently has 14 children under eight years on roll. Children attend various times and days.

The childminder lives with her husband and two children aged 14 and 17 years in Rothwell, Northamptonshire. Care is provided on the ground floor of the house and children share access to the fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder has completed the National Childminding Association Quality Assurance scheme and is part of the Northamptonshire Childminding Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are gaining an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy. They enjoy healthy, nutritious snacks of fresh fruit and a drink and have free access to drinks at all times. The

childminder ensures they eat sufficient quantities from their packed lunch to meet their individual dietary needs and sits with them eating healthily herself to set a good example to children. Children regularly participate in physical exercise and benefit from fresh air. They build on skills they already have during regular walks and visits to the local park where they develop co-ordination and control of their bodies as they use the large play apparatus. Children have free access to the garden for outdoor play and regularly visit toddler groups where they push and ride wheeled toys with increasing confidence and control.

Children are cared for in a clean and tidy home where active steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. For example, disposable gloves are worn during nappy changing, changing mats are cleaned with antibacterial cleaners and food preparation surfaces are cleaned before and after preparing food. Children develop simple good hygiene practices and understand the importance of cleanliness. The childminder washes her hands before preparing food, and talks to children about washing away the germs as they readily wash their hands at appropriate times during the day. This contributes effectively to children starting to take responsibility for their own good health.

Records that support the childminder to promote children's good health are well kept. The accident and medicine books contain all required information and written consent from parents is obtained for the childminder to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. The childminder holds an up-to-date first aid qualification and a well-stocked first aid kit is readily accessible, which ensures children receive appropriate care and attention in the event of minor accidents or illness.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very well organised home. Attractive displays of their artwork, brightly coloured posters and readily accessible resources create a welcoming, child-centred environment where they feel a strong sense of belonging. Children move around confidently in the conservatory where they participate in a wide range of activities that captures their interest and they make very good use of the securely enclosed garden for outdoor play. Children independently choose what to play with from the readily accessible toys and equipment that are of good quality and meet their play and development very needs well.

Children's safety is promoted very well because active steps are taken to ensure potential hazards are minimised. The childminder carries out regular risk assessments where she clearly identifies any action taken to reduce the risk of accidents. Safety gates prevent children using the stairs unsupervised and catches on cupboard doors ensure harmful cleaning materials and sharp utensils are inaccessible to them. Smoke alarms are fitted to both floors of the house and tested regularly. Children practice the emergency evacuation plan periodically which ensures they are confident with the procedure to follow in the event of a fire. Records show the childminder answers their questions about fire safety and reinforces the information through stories about fire fighters. The childminder supervises children vigilantly during outings and outdoor play and takes effective measures to ensure their safety at all times. For example, safety mats are placed under the climbing frame to cushion children's falls and she makes sure toys with small pieces are out of younger children's reach.

Children are extremely well protected from harm or neglect because the childminder has secure knowledge of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. Relevant, up-to-date documentation including Local Safeguarding Children's Board guidelines support the childminder to carry out

procedures correctly. The childminder keeps a record of any injuries children arrive with and understands the importance of keeping clear, factual records which ensures their welfare is effectively safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder who they share warm, friendly relationships with. They enthusiastically participate in a broad range of stimulating activities that meets their play and development needs and are supported very well by the childminder, who takes an interest in what children do and say. Records based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and Curriculum Guidance for the foundation stage show clearly what children can do. The childminder uses this information effectively to plan and provide activities that challenge children to build on skills they already have. For example, children find their named photograph as they arrive each morning and older children gain a sense of achievement as they correctly identify some of the letters in their name during everyday activities. This supports them extremely well to develop early reading skills as they gain an understanding that print carries meaning.

Children confidently make decisions about what to play with and show very good levels of involvement as they purposefully engage the many activities available. They enthusiastically mould models out of play-dough and cut out shapes before confidently counting the animal shapes up to 10. They enjoy simple games where they find the coloured bricks and respond enthusiastically as the childminder asks them to find an item of the same colour. Children explore colour and texture during craft activities where they express themselves creatively. They paint brightly coloured pictures at the easel and paint the models they make out of recycled materials. Children use their imagination well as they imitate real life during role play activities. They dress up as fairies, ballerina's and fire fighter's and act out real life situations with small world toys which helps them start to make sense of the world.

Children become socially confident during regular visits to toddler groups where they learn to share, take turns and co-operate in larger groups. They become fully involved in the childminding environment and gain a strong sense of belonging as they enjoy simple cooking activities, help to wash up after snacks and feed the guinea pigs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children receive consistently good quality care because of the strong partnership between the childminder and parents. She has friendly, open relationships with their parents where information about children is shared regularly and positive comments on parent questionnaires show they value the care given. The use of daily diary sheets keeps parents fully informed about their children and the complaints procedure provides reassurance to parents that their children's welfare is safeguarded. Although there are no children currently attending who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the childminder has previous experience and demonstrated through discussion that she is able to provide care which would fully include them in the life of the setting. The childminder discusses children's specific needs with parents to ensure their needs are met. She uses British Sign Language to communicate with deaf children and other minded children thoroughly enjoy using this method of talking to each other which successfully promotes the inclusion of all children.

Children develop a positive self-esteem in the warm and caring environment. The childminder consistently implements her written behaviour management policy which promotes the use of positive strategies to support children to behave well. Children know what is expected of them, feel secure with the everyday routines and respond very well to the regular praise and encouragement. Children enjoy taking their turn as the helper at snack time and use very good manners, for example, they readily say thank you when the helper brings them a drink.

Children are developing a positive view of the wider world. They have regular access to a wide range of resources that reflect themselves and people of other races, cultures and abilities. For example children look at books and complete puzzles with positive images of people from around the world, they have fun dressing up in traditional outfits from India and make Easter bonnets and cards for their families. This helps children gain a very good understanding of our similarities and differences.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall the needs of the range of children who attend are met. Children benefit from the extremely well organised environment where their welfare, care and safety are promoted very well. Space and resources are organised effectively to allow children to participate in a wide range of activities that meets their physical, intellectual, social and emotional needs. The daily routine takes account of children's home routines and meets their individual needs for meals, quiet and active play.

Relevant checks have been carried out on all household members to ensure they are suitable to have regular contact with young children, which promotes their safety and welfare. The quality of care is enhanced because the childminder continues to attend training courses that keeps her up to date with best practice. The childminder has attended training in 'Behaviour management for older Children', the 'Birth to three matters' framework, 'Equality and Diversity' and 'Nutrition and Health'. This supports the childminder to continuously develop her own skills and knowledge, however, she does not yet use self evaluation to accurately monitor and evaluate the quality of care provided to minded children.

Records, policies and procedures are maintained to a high standard and shared with parents appropriately. An attractively presented portfolio that includes clear aims and written policies and procedures, such as equal opportunities, behaviour management and health and safety, provides parents with clear information about the service being provided. This ensures children receive very good standards of care and strengthens the partnership with parents.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended that the childminder develop her knowledge and understanding of child protection referral procedures and ensure medication records and parental consent to seek emergency medical treatment are clear. Children's welfare is promoted more effectively because since the last inspection, the childminder has attended training in Safeguarding Children which provided information about the correct procedure to follow when making a referral. This ensures that child protection procedures are dealt with promptly, appropriately and in line with current guidance and would protect children from further harm. Medication records and written consent to seek emergency medical treatment or advice has been revised and are now clearer which contributes to children's good health being maintained effectively.

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 the use of self-evaluation to identify more clearly what is being done well and areas that could be developed in order to continue to enhance the care provided.

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