

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260819
Inspection date	30 November 2007
Inspector	Anne Archer
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 2001. She lives with her husband and three children aged 14, 11, and nine in the East Northamptonshire market town of Thrapston. The ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time and is currently minding one child under five during the day and three children over five after school. The childminder walks to collect the younger children from the local Primary School. The family has a cat, two guinea pigs, a rabbit, a hamster and two hens. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends a local childminder support group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Children have their own towel in the cloakroom to dry their hands on and learn

from any early age that they need to have clean hands before they can have anything to eat. Food preparation and eating surfaces are cleaned before and after use and the childminder also follows sound procedures to maintain good levels of hygiene when nappy changing and toilet training. Children's health needs are well met because the childminder has effective procedures in place such as written details of children's health, consents for obtaining emergency medical advice or treatment, consent and recording forms in relation to accidents and medication. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and feels competent to administer first aid when necessary.

Children enjoy physical play which contributes to their good health. They have daily opportunities for fresh air on the walk from school, playing in the childminder's garden and from visits to the local park to use the equipment or play chasing games. Children are able to rest or sleep according to their needs and their parents' wishes.

Children are well nourished. The childminder has written information from parents about their child's dietary requirements and likes and dislikes. She is willing to provide snacks and meals although her current children have only snacks which include pieces of fresh or dried fruit and savoury biscuits or bread sticks. Children are also reminded to have regular drinks of water. Children have their snack sitting together round the kitchen table providing a social occasion for children and childminder to sit and talk about their day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming home where potential risks and hazards are identified and action is taken to minimise them. The childminder is aware of children's developing abilities and takes appropriate measures to avoid potentially dangerous situations. For example, a safety barrier is used to ensure that young children do not have unsupervised access to the stairs. This enables all children to move around the house safely and independently. The childminder is confident about emergency evacuation procedures and drills are carried out regularly with the children. She keeps a fire blanket appropriately sited in her kitchen in case of emergency.

Children learn about keeping safe when walking from school because the childminder asks them to wait near the kerb, look and listen for any vehicles and then decide when it is safe to cross. Wrist straps and reins are used appropriately when young children are walking near busy roads. Whilst the childminder shows good understanding of the signs and risk to children from abuse, she is not familiar with the current Local Safeguarding Children Board recording and reporting procedures. Children have a broad range of suitable toys, games and activities to choose from which the childminder ensures are safe and clean for children to play with and use.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and happy in the childminder's care. They experience warm relationships with the childminder which promotes their confidence and self-esteem. They can independently choose from a range of toys and resources building on their natural curiosity as learners. For instance, a child enjoyed kicking and throwing a soft ball and was delighted when shown and encouraged to feel the texture of it. Children also participate in painting, art and craft, singing, music and baking activities and with the childminder's support, children of all ages enjoy the experiences. When caring for younger children the childminder uses the 'Birth to three matters'

framework to support her observations of their development. She plans a range of activities for children taking account of their interests.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children show confidence in their relationship with the childminder as she clearly values and respects them as individuals which promotes a sense of well-being and aids their emotional development. Children learn about diversity during the discussions they have with the childminder about her sponsored children who live in other countries and during the activities they participate in relating to this. For instance when looking at maps of the world and doing research to find out how people live and work in other countries of the world. In addition, children play with a range of toys and resources that reflect ethnicity and disability. Children are polite, behave well and respond positively to the childminder's appropriate behaviour management strategies which take account of children's stage of development and level of maturity.

Children's care, welfare and learning is well promoted because the childminder develops positive working relationships with parents. She shares her policies and procedures with them by giving each new parent a copy of the 'Sheila's Busy Bees Childcare' parent pack. Included in the pack are copies of commendations from past parents and details of what they should do if they wish to complain about any aspect of her service. The childminder has written business agreements with each parent which include details of which adults may collect the child. Unfortunately, the agreement for one child was not up to date. Clear settling in procedures mean that children settle quickly and parents are able to confidently leave their children in the childminder's care. Parents are kept well informed about their child's time with the childminder because she provides a written diary in addition to sharing of information verbally each day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Space, routines and resources are organised effectively to ensure children are comfortable and content in the childminder's care. They have opportunities for free choice play with a good range of toys, games and dressing up clothes as well as an option to participate in a wide range of more structured activities planned by the childminder. Their environment is safe and secure because the childminder has thought carefully about which areas of her home to use for childminding activities after assessing the potential risk or benefit to children. Children's care and welfare are safeguarded by clear documentation and good practice except for minor issues mentioned elsewhere in this report. Policies and procedures are shared with parents to ensure they are fully aware of the service that is being provided. Children's individual records are stored securely and confidentiality is maintained. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to request written consent from parents to seek medical advice or treatment in the event of an emergency, increase the range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and to devise a system to record children's existing injuries. The childminder has met all the recommendations and in doing so has enhanced the level of care provided to 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 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):

- ensure that concerns are recorded and reported in accordance with current Local Safeguarding Children Board advice
- review the written agreement with parents to ensure that it sets out the expectations of both parties as to all aspects of care for children (this relates to the names and details of other adults likely to collect 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