

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256990
Inspection date	13 December 2007
Inspector	Carly Mooney
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1986. She lives with her husband and daughter aged 23 years, in Paston, Peterborough. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding purposes and there is a fully enclosed rear garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is currently caring for six children on a full-time and part-time basis. This includes three funded children. The childminder lives within a short walk of local shops and Park and attends many local groups.

The childminder is a member of the Peterborough Childminding Network and has completed the Quality First Framework. She is an accredited childminder and provides the Foundation Stage Curriculum. The childminder receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where good standards of hygiene are maintained at all times. Children learn the importance of good personal care through everyday routine activities, such as hand washing after messy play and before eating. The childminder ensures that any possible spread of infection is kept to a minimum by changing towels in the kitchen and bathroom on a daily basis and ensuring surfaces and toys are regularly cleaned. Children's medical welfare regarding accidents and illness is well maintained as the childminder has completed a suitable first aid course and keeps accurate records of accidents and administration of medication. A thorough sick child policy is in place which promotes children's good health and is shared with parents.

Healthy and nutritious meals and snacks are provided by the childminder, helping to promote their growth and development. For example, children enjoy a variety of snacks in one sitting, such as apple, banana and breadsticks. The children and the childminder sit together during snack times where it is used positively for general chatting or as a resting time. Children's likes and dislikes are taken into account when preparing food and children feel comfortable to ask for certain foods to eat, such as soup which a child particularly enjoys. Children learn about foods that are healthy, as they plant seeds in the garden throughout the year to grow their own vegetables and herbs. This also enables children to have an appreciation and understanding of where food comes from. The childminder gathers relevant information regarding children's allergies and dietary requirements from parents to ensure she can meet children's individual needs.

The childminder ensures children have daily opportunities to play in the fresh air and develop their physical skills. Children face challenges as they have access to different sized scooters and bikes, which they ride confidently up and down the garden path. Regular trips to the park allows children to further develop their large physical skills using the static equipment there, such as rope ladders. During their play children are given many opportunities to develop their fine muscle skills, as they cut with scissors, build with Lego and roll and press the dough with their fingers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a clean, warm and safe environment which is homely and inviting. The childminder organises her home to ensure it benefits the children attending and enables them to move about freely and comfortably. Children are able to choose independently from a variety of toys and resources, which are clean and in good condition.

Children are cared for by a childminder who is safety conscious and has put all necessary precautions in place to keep children safe, for example, appropriate car seats are used and on large outings, such as a teddy bears picnic, bands are worn by the children to identify them should they become lost. Appropriate permission has been gained from parents for children to

go on outings and travel in the car. Fire drills are regularly practised with the children and recorded. Children are fully involved, as they help to plan the escape routes within the home. A planned fire safety week further supports children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe and the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded as the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues. She ensures her knowledge is kept up to date through attending appropriate training on a regular basis. The childminder shares her policy with parents, which outlines her duties regarding the protection of children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have developed warm, close relationships with the childminder and are comfortable in her care. They enjoy attending the setting and are familiar with the rules and routines of the home, such as snack time in the lounge. Younger children's care needs are supported well regarding sleep and nappy changes and follow closely in line with their routines from home. The childminder is caring and sensitive and knows individual children's needs well. She gently encourages a child to sleep and provides cuddles when he wakes, allowing him to wake in his own time. Children have access to a good range of quality toys and resources, which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Activities are also adapted to the different ages of the children attending, which helps to maintain their interest, such as art and craft activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder has a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and provides a broad range of interesting and stimulating practical activities to develop children's learning. However, although plans of activities cover the six areas of learning they do not identify clear learning intentions linked to the early learning goals. However, the childminder demonstrates through discussion that she knows the individual children well and how they are progressing through the stepping stones. She carries out observations of children's learning and records these in their record's of achievements, supported by photographic evidence. However, she does not make a record of children's next steps in their learning in order to influence her future plans. The childminder provides a clear structure to the day but is flexible around children's individual needs and allows for spontaneous learning. Time and resources are used effectively to provide a balance of indoor and outdoor play. The childminder maximises all opportunities for children's learning by making good use of the local neighbourhood and groups.

Children are confident when attending the childminder's home and have developed good relationships with their peers. They happily play together and share the resources, such as play dough. Children are independent in their self-care, as older children take themselves to the toilet, put on their own shoes and fasten their coats. They are encouraged to help tidy away after themselves which gives them a sense of responsibility. Children communicate effectively with each other and the childminder. She offers good support in activities and initiates

conversations to develop children's communication and thinking skills. Children are given opportunities for name recognition, such as on their coat pegs. Older children make attempts to write their own name independently on their work, encouraged by the childminder.

Children learn about numbers, shapes and colours through a variety of practical, everyday routines. For example, through talking about the shape of the bread and the colour of the yoghurts at lunch time. They work together to solve problems when completing a new jigsaw and regularly access resources which develops their sorting and matching skills. Children enjoy singing familiar counting songs, such as 'five little men in a flying saucer' which introduces them to simple calculation.

Children are given good opportunities to learn about their environment through interesting planned and spontaneous activities. For example, they collect leaves in the park to paint and plant and grow seeds, including tomatoes and herbs. Children's learning is further enhanced by looking at books on how vegetables grow and drawing their own pictures. There are regular opportunities for children to use technology in their play, such as cassette recorders and cash tills, which underpins learning in other areas. Children are provided with daily opportunities to express their creativity through a range of art and messy play activities. For example, they enjoy drawing, sticking, play dough and water play in the sink or garden.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into the childminder's home, where their art work and pictures of themselves are attractively displayed, giving them a sense of belonging. The childminder takes the time to really get to know the children in her care, therefore enabling her to successfully cater for their needs in the activities and the care she provides for them. For example, the childminder has learnt a number of words in another language in order to be able to communicate more effectively with children who speak English as a second language. A loving environment has been created where children are valued, respected and treated with equal concern. Children are given good opportunities to gain a positive view of the wider world, as the childminder has themed weeks relating to different countries, such as Spain and Africa, when, for example, children sample foods from the country and learn about their culture and traditions.

Children behave very well within the childminder's home. She is calm and sensitive in her approach and gives clear explanations to children, which helps them gain an understanding of right and wrong. Good manners are encouraged at all times and the childminder reinforces this by being a clear role model. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement to help promote their self-esteem, especially when they do something positive, such as riding a large scooter for the first time or going to the toilet on the potty. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Close, secure relationships have formed with all parents which benefits the children's time at the setting. Parents receive clear information about the topics and themes their child will be learning about on a regular basis and are advised how they can contribute to them. For example, bringing in items from home. Children's records

of achievements are shared with parents each term and the childminder has an open door policy to discuss their children's progress at any time. Parents have positively praised the education their child receives through written appraisals of the childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. The childminder organises her time and premises sufficiently to ensure that children are happy and settled. All children receive good levels of support from the childminder, which meets their individual needs and allows them to engage in appropriate play opportunities both inside and out.

Children's care, learning and welfare is fostered by the use of clear and comprehensive policies and procedures which are well organised and shared with parents. All of the required documentation is in place to support the smooth running of the setting, although children's attendance is not always accurately recorded in the register and up to date at all times. Therefore, there is potential for children's welfare to not always be safeguarded.

The childminder is very experienced in childcare and has a positive attitude to training. She regularly attends courses and local network meetings to update her knowledge of childcare issues. She is supported well by the local authority and meets other accredited childminders on a regular basis to share her knowledge and to discuss her own strengths and weaknesses in her practice. Appraisals from parents provides further opportunities for the childminder to improve the quality of childcare and education she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to improve her procedures for recording the dosage of medication given to children and for seeking emergency medical treatment. These have both been addressed and have a positive impact on the care, safety and welfare of the 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.

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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):

- improve the recording of children's attendance.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop planning and assessment to show clear learning intentions and how the next steps for children's learning are identified.

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