

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY356757
Inspection date	14 April 2008
Inspector	Sarah Johnson
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 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged six and seven years. They live in a house in Ipswich, Suffolk. The ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has a pet goldfish.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding four children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends local toddler groups with the minded children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are supported to be healthy whilst in the care of the childminder as they follow good hygiene procedures. Children begin to learn the importance of good health and hygiene practices through the daily routine. They are prompted to wash their hands before eating and after using

the toilet. Liquid soap, towels which are washed daily and individual wipes are provided, helping to protect children from the spread of infection. Nappy changing procedures are sound in maintaining children's health as the childminder cleans the changing mat after use, disposes of nappies appropriately and washes her hands before and afterwards. Children's individual sleeping routines are respected and they are able to rest comfortably on the sofa with their own blankets, in their pushchairs or a travel cot with clean bedding.

Children are well cared for if they are feeling unwell or have an accident because most of the required documentation and consents with regard to sickness, medication and accidents are in place to support this. Although clear records are kept detailing any medicines administered to children, the children's care is potentially compromised as parents are not consistently asked to sign to acknowledge each entry in the medicine record. A well stocked first aid kit is easily accessible in the kitchen and the childminder has gained appropriate knowledge after completing training in first aid for babies and young children. Children's well-being is promoted further as there is a well-written sickness policy in place which sets out clear information for parents about how long their children should stay at home if unwell.

Individual children's dietary needs are well met as the childminder gathers information about these from the beginning. All snacks such as fresh fruit, raisins and yoghurts are freshly prepared every day and information about what children have to eat is passed onto parents verbally at the end of the sessions. The childminder respects the wishes of parents by offering a flexible approach to offering meals. For example, she is willing to prepare meals for children herself or to serve those provided by parents. Children's health is protected as the childminder has completed training in food hygiene procedures. Children have access to drinks from their own easily recognisable cups, helping them to remain well hydrated throughout the day.

Children readily request to play outdoors and the childminder happily provides them with daily access to the enclosed garden. They have good opportunities to develop their physical skills, including coordination, movement and balance. For example, they enjoy regular trips to the local park, where they climb and balance on the larger apparatus and run around in the spacious area. Younger children confidently begin to pull themselves up and learn to walk whilst holding onto low level furniture, with lots of encouragement from the childminder.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a homely and child-friendly environment which is organised effectively to provide maximum space for them to move around freely. For example, the furniture in both the living room and dining room is laid out appropriately to create ample space in the centre for floor activities. Children have access to clean toilet facilities on the ground floor and are supported to reach the kitchen sink for hand washing routines. A safety gate is installed at the bottom of the stairs, ensuring children cannot access the first floor. Children enjoy a balanced range of safe and stimulating toys and resources, which are set out at their level to encourage them to self-select and initiate their own play. Toys and equipment are regularly washed and checked for damage so children can play with them safely. Children sit comfortably to eat meals together as they are provided with appropriately sized chairs, table and high chair.

Children play in safe surroundings as the childminder takes time to consider potential hazards to children when carrying out daily visual risk assessments. However, children's unsupervised access to the kitchen is not fully prevented. For example, they potentially have the opportunity to enter the kitchen whilst the childminder is tending to other children's care needs in the living

room. All the required precautions are in place to ensure children are protected in the event of a fire including a fire blanket in the kitchen, fire alarms on each level and a clear evacuation plan, which is practised at regular intervals with the children. Children are protected further as they play in a safe and well-maintained garden, which is fully enclosed and secured with a bolt on the gate. They show an awareness of their own safety from a young age, as they stop to wait for support from the childminder before attempting to walk down the steps in the garden. Vigilant supervision of children ensures they are supported to take safe risks, helping them to develop a meaningful understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

Children's welfare is promoted at the setting as there is a clear written procedure in place for safeguarding them from harm. Children benefit as the childminder has recently completed relevant training in safeguarding children. The childminder is aware of her responsibilities regarding child protection and has the relevant guidance available to enable her to follow up any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the time they spend with the childminder. They settle with ease and respond well to the good levels of individual attention they receive. The childminder listens to children carefully before responding to them with interest and encouragement. All children are supported to get involved in all activities, ensuring they are all busy and engaged in their play. For example, younger children are invited to sit closer so they can also see the book being shared. Children are interested in what they see and do because the childminder provides a good range of play experiences. They enjoy listening to familiar rhymes and songs and spontaneously march as they listen to the 'Grand Old Duke of York'. The childminder uses incidental opportunities to help children to learn new skills. For example, children are encouraged to identify the colour of different bricks and then to connect bricks of the same colour together. Weekly visits to the local toddler group, children's centre and library offer children opportunities to interact and socialise with other children and adults.

Younger children receive very supportive care as the childminder draws on her experience and effectively reflects the 'Birth to three matters' framework in her practice. Their progress is enhanced as the childminder makes regular observations of their development. These are recorded in a book for each child and linked skilfully to aspects of the 'Birth to three matters' guidance. Younger children receive full attention when they are communicating their feelings and ideas, helping them to become skilful communicators. They confidently imitate the childminder when she makes the sounds of different animals and work towards developing a strong sense of self as they are encouraged to look at different parts of their own bodies.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder gets to know the children in her care and their families very well, which enables her to meet their individual needs and ensure they are all supported to be fully included. Children are able to develop a good sense of belonging as they are encouraged to bring items from home to the setting such as their special comfort blankets and soft toys. A range of resources and activities help children to develop a positive awareness of diversity. For example, they look at books which include people from different backgrounds and the childminder uses a calendar of traditional festivals and celebrations to plan different activities. The childminder demonstrates

a positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and understands that it is sometimes necessary to adapt the physical environment and activities to ensure all children can be fully involved. The childminder would gather information from the Internet and work closely with parents and outside professionals to ensure she could meet children's specific additional needs.

Children's behaviour is very good. They learn right from wrong from a young age as the childminder uses a number of positive strategies such as consistently praising good behaviour and being a good role model. For example, the childminder praises children when they kindly share their snack with other children and encourages them to tidy away toys before moving onto new activities. A well-written behaviour policy is shared with parents to encourage a consistent approach. This outlines a positive set of rules which encourage children to learn to listen to others, to respect toys and to tell the truth.

Parents are well informed when they first join the setting as the childminder shares a folder of information including copies of the written policies and training certificates. Parents are warmly welcomed in when they collect their children, which is when information is exchanged about their children's changing needs in relation to eating, sleeping and nappy routines. Younger children's progress is supported further as their parents read observations and look at photographs in meaningful books collated by the childminder for each child. Any concerns about the care of children can be dealt with appropriately as a clear complaints procedure is shared with parents and the telephone number for reporting complaints is displayed in the kitchen.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for as the childminder has a clear commitment to providing good care for children. They are effectively safeguarded as the childminder is vigilant to ensure they are never left alone with adults who are not vetted and as a result, all the required suitability checks have been completed. The childminder has completed a good range of initial training and has experience of caring for children of different ages. Children benefit from her interest in continuing her professional development. For example, the childminder aims to keep fully up-to-date with good practice by undertaking future training courses and meeting up with other childminders to actively share ideas at monthly childminding support group meetings.

Children's care, learning and play are supported by the way the childminder effectively organises the provision. Children experience good levels of supervision and individual attention. This is because the childminder is careful to ensure she cares for an appropriate number of younger children at any one time and is mindful to meet the conditions of her registration. Good contingency arrangements are in place for emergencies as the childminder has forged strong links with other registered childminders in the local area. An accurate record of each child's hours of attendance is maintained on a daily basis, ensuring their safety is promoted.

Children's welfare is positively supported as the childminder maintains up-to-date documentation, which is easily accessible for inspection. This includes a clear set of policies and procedures, which clearly set out the childminder's individual approach and ethos. The documentation is handled and stored effectively to ensure confidentiality and the childminder is aware that she must inform Ofsted of any significant changes or events. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- obtain a signature from parents to acknowledge each entry in the medicine record
- ensure children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.

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