

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256680
Inspection date	01 May 2008
Inspector	Melanie Calway

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 satisfactory. 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 1994. She lives with her husband and two children, aged 10 and 16 years, in a village near to the town of King's Lynn. The whole of the ground floor, with the exception of the office, and two of the upstairs bedrooms are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks and drives to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. She also takes children to the local park.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding six children under eight, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The family has a cat and a guinea pig.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because there are sound hygiene procedures in place. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet and so are learning about hygiene through the daily routine. Nappies are changed in the downstairs toilet. The childminder washes her hands after changing nappies and disposes of them appropriately. The home is clean and well maintained.

Children's medical needs are met as the childminder has a current first aid qualification and keeps a first aid kit in the hall so that she can deal with minor accidents and injuries appropriately. An accurate record of all accidents is maintained. There is a system for recording the administration of medicines and parents' written permission is always obtained. Consent has been obtained from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice so that the childminder can seek help in the event of an emergency. Children are protected from the risk of infection as she will not accept children with infectious illnesses.

Children are able to sleep and rest according to their needs. They can sleep in travel cots in two of the bedrooms and the childminder checks on sleeping children by using a baby monitor. Children walk to school or pre-school on most days and so have some fresh air and exercise. The childminder also takes them to the park. The garden is well used in the summer but children have limited opportunities for outdoor play at other times. The childminder provides balanced meals and snacks for the children and some children bring their own. Children have fruit for a snack and a hot lunch is provided for those who want it. Children are offered drinks at regular intervals and older children can help themselves to water although fresh drinking water is not always accessible to younger children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises which are safe and suitable. Children have plenty of room to move and play freely in the large living room. Toys are placed within easy reach of toddlers and babies. Children access appropriate toys and the childminder checks that smaller items are kept out of the reach of younger children.

Children are kept safe as the childminder maintains a good level of supervision. She checks on sleeping children by using a baby monitor. The environment is made safe as hazards have been removed from the kitchen and stairgates are in place at the top and the bottom of the stairs. Children begin to develop an awareness of safety issues because explanations are given, for example, children are asked to be careful when climbing onto toys because they might have an accident. Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder takes her phone with her, which has all the emergency contact numbers in. Children are kept in buggies or on reins to keep them safe when walking. The childminder talks to them about safety rules when out and about. All the necessary permissions for outings and transport have been obtained from parents. The childminder talks to the children about safety rules. Children are protected from the risk of fire as there is an evacuation procedure which is practised regularly so children know what to do in the event of a fire.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder has recently attended child protection training and knows what to do if she has a concern about a child. She has all the up to date information on child protection procedures including the referral number which is also displayed on her notice board for easy reference.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. They can choose from a range of appropriate toys which are placed at floor level. Toys are stored in plastic boxes in a storage unit and children can help themselves. Puzzles and books are also available in cupboards in the living room. However, the range of activities offered is limited with few opportunities for active outdoor play, messy play, craft or imaginary play.

The childminder sits with children, at their level, and involves herself in their play, giving them smiles and eye contact and chatting to them to encourage their language development. She sings and chats to children when changing their nappies or when they have their meals. Children's self-esteem is fostered as they are given praise and encouragement. Their independence is promoted as they choose what to play with and help to tidy the toys up. Older children can relax after school and play on the Playstation or do their homework.

Children under three are cared for appropriately, although the childminder has not received the 'Birth to three matters' framework pack and so has not referred to it. Children under three are given appropriate comfort and reassurance.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are met as the childminder gathers information from parents about their care when they first start, as she chats to them and on the record forms. She gets to know the children in her care well so that she can respond to their needs. There are some resources, which reflect other cultures and lifestyles, although the range of activities and equipment to enable children to learn about the wider world is limited. Children are given appropriate support. Although she has no experience of working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities she would work with parents to ensure that children's differing needs could be met.

Children behave well in the childminder's care as she has consistent boundaries so that children know what is expected of them. She uses positive methods to manage children's behaviour such as removing them from the situation and explaining why some behaviour is unacceptable. She attaches a behaviour policy to her contract so that parents are aware of her approach.

The childminder communicates with parents at collection times when she talks to them about their children's day. Most information is communicated verbally, although there are policies on behaviour and complaints. She talks to new parents to find out about children's needs and routines. All parents are shown the complaints policy so they know how to make a complaint. The policy is clear and detailed and reflects current regulations. A complaints record has been set up in line with current requirements.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder and her household have the necessary clearances to work with children and evidence of these is kept with her paperwork. She has attended training to ensure that she has the knowledge and skills to work with children, including courses on first aid and child protection.

The premises are well organised to ensure children's safety. The childminder ensures that children are always supervised and gives them the attention they need. The childminder organises her time to incorporate school and pre-school collections and also to respect children's routines. An accurate record of children's hours of attendance is kept.

The required documentation is in place and is maintained in an orderly and accessible manner. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was found to be inadequate and three actions were set:

to update the first aid certificate; improve knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures and ensure that the current referral number is obtained and kept for easy reference; improve knowledge and understanding of the regulations regarding complaints and develop systems for the recording of complaints.

The childminder has met all the actions. She now has a current first aid qualification to ensure that she has up to date knowledge in dealing with emergencies. She has attended child protection training and is now aware of how to proceed if she has a concern about a child. All the relevant information is kept and is easily accessible and she is now familiar with the regulations regarding complaints. She has a clear and detailed complaints policy which she shows to parents so they know how to make a complaint.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- extend opportunities for outdoor play and make fresh drinking water accessible to all children
- develop the range of activities offered to include more opportunities for messy play, craft and imaginary play
- develop the range of resources which reflect other cultures and lifestyles.

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