

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	250832
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 May 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Andrea Caroline Snowden
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

This childminder has been registered since 1992. She lives in a north Suffolk village between Diss and Stowmarket. There are local shops and a school within walking distance. All areas of the property are used for childminding, with the exception of two bedrooms. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to provide care for six children under the age of eight. She also cares for children over the age of eight. Currently there are 16 children on roll all attending on a part-time basis. The childminder is able to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but there are no children on roll with specific needs at this time.

The childminder keeps five cats and caged birds as pets. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and runs a local carer and toddler group.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted. The childminder seeks information about allergies, dietary needs and health issues before care commences. She is able to respond to accidents because she has the necessary knowledge to do so, however the first aid box is not fully stocked having the potential for children's treatment to be affected. Parents have given written consent for her to seek emergency medical help if required. Children who are poorly with contagious illness are asked to stay at home so that the spread of infection is minimised. Children are learning about their personal hygiene through their normal daily routines. They are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times and the childminder provides them with individual hand cloths to further reduce the risk of infection spreading. The childminder demonstrates good hygiene practices in the home and as a result children are playing and growing in a clean environment.

Children eat healthily whilst at the childminders' home. They are offered a cooked lunch and the childminder ensures she introduces children to a variety of tastes. As a result children are eating cauliflower, sprouts and broccoli and developing healthy tastes for future life. Meals meet children's dietary needs and fresh drinks are available to quench their thirsts.

Children enjoy opportunities for outdoor activity. They play in the childminder's garden and enjoy trips to the park where there is space to play football and use larger, more challenging apparatus. There are good facilities for children who wish to sleep as the childminder provides travel cots and separate bedrooms to ensure children are undisturbed. Children sleep according to their individual needs.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children appear settled in the homely environment. They can play and rest as they wish to and are able to access facilities independently. The childminder ensures toys and equipment are cleaned and checked regularly, therefore children use a fair selection of play equipment which is safe and suitable for their use. They generally select equipment for themselves, promoting their independence and free choice.

The childminder has minimised most hazards in her home and as a result children are able to play without fear of hurting themselves. However, there is a quantity of screw top alcohol bottles within reach of children which are being collected for a summer fair. These bottles present a potential hazard to children. The childminder has identified emergency evacuation routes but has not practised the fire drill to ensure everyone can be safely evacuated. As a result children's safety has the potential to be compromised. Children are given opportunities to develop an understanding of their personal safety. The childminder talks to children about road safety and they practise stopping at the kerb and looking and listening for cars. Whilst at the park they are helped to use equipment safely and understand the dangers of walking in front of a swing if someone is on it. The childminder has spoken to older children about dialling 999 in an emergency to ensure they can summon help.

Children are generally protected by the childminder who has a sound awareness of child protection issues. She is able to recognise possible signs of abuse and understands how to make a referral. Although she clearly understands what is required of her, she cannot find the

contact details or supporting documentation to ensure referrals are made without delay. As a result children's welfare has the potential to be compromised.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children have clearly formed friendships as they play harmoniously together. They share toys and develop their own imaginary games. Interaction from the childminder is nice, and she is gentle and kind. Children show affection and demonstrate a sense of security as they scrabble up onto her lap for a cuddle and eventually fall asleep. She kisses their fingers better when they hurt themselves and generally creates a caring and warm environment.

Children's social skills are fostered as the childminder takes them to local venues where they often meet up with friends. They learn about the world around them as they enjoy walks in the local lanes, collecting conkers and watching nature. Visits to the Steam Museum helps children understand a little of history, whilst the childminder promotes their early literacy skills by encouraging them to recognise their names on flash cards. Children enjoy imaginary games. They build dens under the table, use equipment to construct towers and play games which hold significant meaning for them. They enjoy art and there is a selection of equipment suitable for older children including computer games which are monitored.

Children's days are balanced to ensure they have time to be active and to rest. Children after school enjoy hearing favourite stories as a group activity.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal regard by the childminder. She seeks information from parents to help her meet their needs effectively including their likes and dislikes and any specific requirements. Older children are able to voice their own opinions and the childminder talks to them to ensure their needs are met. Children are helped to develop respect for others and taught to value differences in people. There are some resources which promote diversity and raise children's awareness of the wider world. The childminder demonstrates a positive attitude towards working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She explains how, through working with parents and other professional agencies, she would be more equipped to meet children's specific needs.

Young children are beginning to learn right from wrong. The childminder adopts a calm approach towards unwanted behaviour and uses strategies which are relevant to the age and level of understanding of each child. Young children are distracted to different activities and encouraged to share, whilst older children receive explanations in order to understand the consequences of their actions. Children understand the reasonable boundaries which have been set and the childminder ensures parents are made aware of her behaviour management strategies.

The children benefit from the working relationship which has developed between the childminder and parents. The childminder describes an open and good relationship where concerns can be discussed and addressed quickly. Parents are informed of how to make their concerns known and the childminder keeps documentation relating to complaints. Time is spent each day ensuring that parents are updated about what their children have been doing, and the lovely photograph albums give parents a good insight to their child's time with the childminder.

Certificates and information are displayed so that parents can be reassured that the childminder is suitable to work with children.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder is appropriately qualified and suitably vetted. The organisation of the setting is satisfactory and the children are able to move around, and play as they wish to. The childminder takes time to reflect on her practice at the end of each day to try to make improvements and offer activities appropriate to children's individual needs and interests.

Most of the required record keeping is in place and maintained to a satisfactory standard. A daily register is kept in order to ensure ratios are maintained and children's records are updated as necessary to ensure they are cared for according to parents' wishes. The childminder ensures that information is held confidentially. Overall the provision meet the needs of the range of children attending.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure parents gave written permission to seek emergency medical help and to ensure the register was completed each day. Following the recent complaint the childminder was asked to ensure written agreements were in place with all parents, to ensure the register is completed each day and to minimise hazards regarding dress making pins, scissors and the sewing machine.

Parents have now given their written consent for the childminder to seek emergency medical treatment or advice and there is a written agreement in place with parents setting out the expectations of both parties. As a result children's welfare can now be better assured, and they are cared for according to their parents' wishes.

The register is now completed on a daily basis with accurate records of arrival and departure and there is a system in place to ensure ratios are not exceeded. As a result children's attendance can be monitored and their safety better maintained.

Hazards relating to the sewing equipment have all been removed and are stored out of reach of children and as a result children are no longer in danger from these items.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Concerns were raised in January 2008 regarding the care and welfare of the children. These concerns relate to National Standard 1 – Suitable Person, National Standard 2 – Organisation, National Standard 6 – Safety, National Standard 11 – Behaviour and National Standard 14 – Documentation.

In order to investigate these concerns an inspector made an unannounced visit. During the visit the inspector interviewed the childminder, discussed and reviewed documentation and made observations.

As a result of information gathered 3 Actions were set.

All the information has been reviewed by a childcare inspector team manager.

Ofsted confirms that the registered person remains qualified for registration.

## 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 the first aid box is appropriately stocked
- formalise and practise the emergency escape plan
- minimise potential hazards to children by ensuring dangerous items are placed out of reach
- ensure the government document 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused' is available along with contact numbers for the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)