



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250798
Inspection date	10 January 2006
Inspector	Gill Thornton

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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1990. She lives with her husband and adult son, who regularly works as her assistant, in Stowmarket in Suffolk. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding six children under five, one full time and the rest on a part-time basis and one child aged over five after school. The childminder walks to local schools and nurseries to take and collect children. She takes children to the local

library and park. The family has three rabbits.

The childminder has experience of caring for children with special needs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and comfortable home where they learn the importance of personal hygiene through regular routines such as washing their hands before meals. Their health is promoted because the childminder is well informed about children's health care matters and all the necessary consents are in place to support this. The childminder has attended first aid and food hygiene training to ensure she is aware of the correct procedures to follow to maintain children's health and prevent the spread of infection.

Children have their dietary needs met through the provision of healthy snacks such as bananas, tangerines or cereal bars and a cold lunch of sandwiches and fruit. The childminder promotes the importance of healthy eating through discussions with the children about food that is good for them and the need to have a balanced diet. Children are provided with frequent drinks to ensure they are not thirsty. Children are encouraged to rest and sleep according to their individual needs.

Children take part in a range of physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They regularly walk to the duck pond or local recreation ground to use the play equipment and in fine weather they enjoy playing in the garden.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment where they move about freely and safely. Their risk of accidental injury is minimised because the childminder supervises their play and has taken all the necessary steps to reduce risks to children. For example, fitting cupboard locks where required in the kitchen and using a stair gate to prevent access to the stairs. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through discussions about road safety and not talking to strangers.

Children have access to an extensive range of good quality toys and equipment that meet safety standards. They are kept safe on outings because the childminder ensures she takes emergency contact details and first aid kit and has parental consent. Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted because the childminder has attended child protection training and knows the correct procedures to follow if she has a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and well settled and have good relationships with each other and the childminder who is sensitive and caring towards them. This helps them develop their self-confidence through enjoying spending time with a familiar and trusted adult. Children play happily together and are learning to share and take turns, for example, while looking at books or exploring the large activity cube.

Children freely select from the stimulating range of toys and resources which the childminder rotates on a regular basis dependent upon the ages and interests of children attending. Children are interested and motivated by the activities available because the childminder ensures she is aware of individual children's interests and follows their wishes regarding obtaining new toys. For example, providing pop-up tents to extend their play in the garden during the summer.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem because the childminder values them as individuals and ensures all children are provided with suitable activities so that they are able to participate at their own level. The childminder is familiar with 'Birth to three matters' and incorporates some aspects of the framework into her practice.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a sense of belonging because they are all included and valued and enjoy activities suitable to their stage of development. They are able to make positive choices and decisions about what they would like to play with from the accessibly stored resources available.

Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong through the use of clear boundaries of expected behaviour and the use of strategies appropriate to their individual stages of development. Children are learning to respect the needs of others through discussions and explanations from the childminder. They are becoming aware of the wider world from walks in the local community and through access to some resources promoting diversity.

Children benefit from the positive partnerships the childminder fosters with parents. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure children's specific needs are met and to ensure their wishes are followed to provide continuity of care. Information is shared verbally on collection to keep them informed about their children's day. Parents are very happy with the care provided and make positive comments such as 'she is kind and generous and children trust and respect her rules'.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder organises her home to provide a stimulating and child-friendly

environment in which children take part in a range of activities to support their care, learning and play. Sometimes her son works with her as an assistant to contribute to the care provided.

Children's well-being is promoted by the well organised documentation maintained by the childminder. However, she does not currently provide parents with written information outlining the service she provides. The childminder follows sound procedures to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At her last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure the register of attendance was accurately maintained and to improve her knowledge of child protection issues. The register is completed daily on arrival and departure to accurately show children's attendance. The childminder has attended child protection training and is aware of the correct procedures to follow if she has a concern so enhancing children's safety and welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

A concern was received that the childminder had left 3 young children unattended in her house while she took 8 other children to school (Standard 6: Safety and Standard 2: Organisation). Ofsted telephoned the childminder to discuss this concern. The childminder confirmed that she has on occasion taken 8 children to school, but 7 of these are over 8. She does not look after the younger children before school, collecting them from the school once the older ones have been dropped off, or they arrive after she has returned from the school run, so this situation could not have occurred. Ofsted is satisfied the childminder has acted appropriately, and that no further action is required. The childminder remains qualified for registration.

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?
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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):

- develop system of sharing information with parents about childminding service provided, including informing parents of record of complaints

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk