



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251326
Inspection date	25 July 2005
Inspector	Mary Gilbert

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since April 1991. She lives with her husband, who is registered as her assistant, and three children aged 14, 10 and 9 in Lowestoft, Suffolk. The whole of the ground floor is available for childminding with the exception of the summer house, together with one upstairs room used for sleeping. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding one child full time and eleven children on a part time basis. The family have a pet hamster. The childminder takes and collects children from local

schools and nurseries. She attends local parent/toddler groups and co-ordinates the North Lowestoft childminder network meetings.

The childminder has recently completed the Suffolk Kitemark and is a member of the Suffolk Childminding Network. She works as a buddy to help establish newly registered childminders.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children stay healthy because the childminder gives excellent attention to details related to children's well being. They enjoy an extensive range of activities which promote their good health. Planned activities enable children to learn about healthy living. For example, children experiment with a variety of fruit and vegetables to make drinks using a juicer. There are daily opportunities for children to participate in a wide range of physical activities outside in the well resourced outdoor area and on walks in the locality.

Children learn that it is important to develop good hygiene routines such as washing hands before eating and after using the toilet. Should a child become unwell whilst in the care of the childminder, there are good processes in place to inform parents and carers, or seek advice or treatment. Parents are made aware of these at time of placement. Records of medication and accidents are well kept and ensure confidentiality. Children are provided with the opportunity to rest and sleep according to their individual needs.

Children's dietary needs are met through the provision of an excellent range of healthy snacks and meals. The childminder is flexible and works with parents. She will advise them with regard to healthy choices if they choose to send in packed lunches. All food is freshly prepared and does not include the use of processed food. Cakes are an occasional treat given to celebrate birthdays and special occasions. Snacks are varied, providing children with a choice of fruit and vegetables, well presented and colourful. Drinks are available at all times. Snack time is an opportunity for children to develop their social skills. They help with the preparation and sit together to share the snack.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe environment. Children's safety is maintained by the childminder who is exceptionally proactive in identifying risks and implementing safe working practises. For example, the areas children use are risk assessed to ensure they remain safe, both inside and out. The toy room was specifically designed at the rear of the building so that it cannot be overlooked by strangers. All outdoor equipment is thoroughly checked before children use it, for example, the trampoline and outdoor activity centre are wiped down.

The extensive range of well-planned resources provide for children's needs. For example, furniture is at child height so children are able to sit comfortably and safely when playing games or eating. Children are encouraged to understand they need to keep themselves safe. For example, they help with maintaining the tidiness of the playroom as they are encouraged to get things out and put them away when they have finished and learn about the need to stay safe when taken out and crossing the road.

Children are kept safe on outings. The childminder is aware of potential hazards, and takes children's details out with her when she leaves the house. She ensures children are secure in the car when used, and when walking children are secured in buggies or restrained through the use of wrist straps or reins.

Children are protected by the childminder who has an extensive working knowledge of child protection issues and regularly ensures all up to date and relevant information is at hand for reference.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy, settled and confident in the setting. They develop excellent relationships with the childminder and with each other, as they learn to share and take turns. They are provided with a wide range of stimulating activities, both in the setting and also on visits to local childminder groups, the library and occasional visits to stimulating events in the locality such as the fish fayre. These are extremely well planned over long and short term periods of time which enables children to make good progress in all areas as they learn and play. For example, monthly plans are completed at the beginning of the year. These are well balanced and provide activities related to children's experiences and interests, for instance, healthy eating, recycling, music and the beach. The planning is extremely flexible and provides opportunities for children to share their own ideas and take part in spontaneous activities, for example, building a snowman.

Daily routines provide for children's needs, for example, in taking and collecting them from school and the local nursery. The childminder interacts well in the children's play, asking them questions and enabling them to develop their own ideas. For example, she asks children what they would like to do and suggests resources which would be appropriate such as dressing up clothes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children have access to an excellent range of activities and resources which meet their individual needs. Children are taught to have regard for each other's needs and older ones encouraged to help and support the younger ones when they can. Any special requirements are noted and adjustments made to meet specific needs.

Children learn to behave well through consistent management by the childminder who intervenes appropriately. Children understand the behavioural boundaries set and respond well to praise and encouragement. Parents are made aware of the expected code of behaviour, and the childminder works with them to resolve any problems.

Children benefit from the development of excellent relationships between their parents and the childminder. Parents are made aware of the service provided by clear policies which they read as part of the contract. A wide range of information is available for parents, both on display and in a specially kept file, to ensure that help and advice is readily available for them if they have any concerns with regard to their children's well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The environment is extremely well planned and highly organised to provide for the needs of the children. The childminder has a high commitment to providing a first class service. To this end she regularly evaluates her own practice and has recently completed the Suffolk Kitemark. She identifies any training opportunities which she might find useful to extend her already excellent practice. The use of an assistant positively impacts on children's care. For example, she can leave a baby asleep in the care of her assistant whilst she collects older children from school.

Children are given a high level of support which has a positive impact on their well being. Records, policies and procedures are clear and work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement. Records are reviewed regularly and written information shared with parents.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain information pertaining to the disability discrimination act. There is now a copy of this amongst the extensive amount of leaflets kept for information. This has had an impact on the resources selected and specific adaptations which can be made to provide for the needs of all children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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