



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256284
Inspection date	17 February 2006
Inspector	Jane Louise Tallent

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 for 25 years. She co-minds with her husband and they live together in a semi-detached house in a residential area of Norwich. All of the ground floor rooms are used for childminding. These include an open plan living room, kitchen and dining room. There is also a conservatory play room and fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The home is within walking distance of local schools and shops. Currently there are 12 children on roll, 3 of whom are being minded full-time. The childminder has a relevant childcare qualification. She is a tutor and teaches other childminder tutors on childminding matters. She also teaches the 0-3 matters framework to childminders and is a mentor to the local childminding

support group. The family has one Labrador dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very well cared for in a stimulating yet calm, friendly, warm, clean and homely environment. Here the children learn about the importance of good hygiene, because all aspects of their care are effectively prioritised to encourage even the youngest children to take part in familiar routines. Older children proudly assist the younger ones with their personal development as they pass them drinks and help them to use soap dispensers and towels while washing their hands before snacks. Children clearly understand why these routines are necessary. They comply readily and wash their hands appropriately as part of a learned lifestyle that helps them to remain healthy. Younger children's development is equally well enhanced because the childminder positively values the contribution that children under the age of three are able to make.

Children take part in a wealth of physical activities which are appropriate for their ages and actively promote their healthy lifestyles. They frequently climb, slide, and play ball games in the garden as well as spending part of each day outside in the local environment. They use their imagination well and frequently include musical movement and singing as they play together indoors. The children walk each day as part of their routine and are aware of how exercise makes them feel and how to behave well when walking together.

Children are developing an excellent understanding of healthy eating, through discussions and projects initiated by the childminder. They eat nutritious meals which are balanced with healthy snacks and cooking activities. These give children the chance to try new tastes and include fruit and fresh produce in their diet. The children's understanding of healthy eating is extended as they 'cook' with salt dough and prepare meals for each other as they play. All of the children benefit from their childminder's devotion to her role. As a tutor of childminder tutors in Norfolk she is fully conversant with the information that needs to be recorded to effectively meet the needs of all children in her care. Children's allergies, dietary preferences and individual needs are well understood and recorded impeccably. Any minor ailments are competently dealt with by the childminder who keeps a well stocked first aid box and has an up to date first aid certificate.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in a stimulating and safe environment because risk assessments are frequently carried out to ensure that they can explore and independently access their toys without being exposed to unnecessary hazards. The children are fully supported by the childminder who has considerable experience and the ability to balance

freedom with safety. As a consequence they settle well. All children have access to an excellent range of high quality play resources which are immaculately maintained and stored well. This makes them easily accessible to children of different ages.

The children have begun to share some responsibility for their own safety because the childminder has put simple rules in place, such as putting toys away once they are finished with them. These rules are consistently reinforced with simple explanations that are easy for children to understand. All older children readily demonstrate how they consider other people's safety and hold hands with younger children when out for a walk. They instinctively modify their own games and activities to include younger and less able children. The children are equally well protected when they travel by car. They have appropriate car seats and restraints and the childminder makes sure that permission slips, insurance cover, first aid equipment and risk assessments are in place.

There is also an efficient registration system in place and all records are extremely well maintained so that children's needs are fully understood by the childminder. In this way she is able to promote their welfare to a high standard. The childminder is a childcare tutor and is fully conversant with child protection procedures. She understands how to make a referral and gives top priority to children's welfare. Consequently the children are very well protected.

Children's parents are kept informed of the childminder's responsibilities through clearly written policies which support her practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children interact very well with all adults present, as they proudly count and say the alphabet to one another or discuss how the train track fits together. The childminder makes excellent use of smiles and facial expressions to create an extremely positive and friendly approach which helps the children to develop good levels of self-esteem. All of the children are able to choose toys from accessible storage units in the main play room which encourages their independence. They are also able to ask for additional resources or indicate when they want a cuddle. The childminder responds favourably to these requests and her co-operation has a positive impact on the children's confidence as part of their emotional development.

Children are stimulated by the excellent variety of toys available to them and some older children learn to speak French through card games while others 'reign' over the playroom dressed as princesses. There are plenty of opportunities for children to play alongside adults. Some children 'cook' with salt dough and others join the childminder on the floor in the downstairs living room, where they work out how connecting rail tracks fit together before becoming train drivers.

Children settle easily into this child-centred environment. They confidently make themselves at home when they arrive because they are familiar with daily routines and extremely secure in their relationships with the childminder. This contributes greatly to their strong sense of belonging and security. Care is taken by the

childminder to ensure that appropriate resources are accessible when babies and toddlers are present so that they can also begin to steer their own learning experiences.

Through thoughtful planning and skilled questioning, children are making swift progress in their play and learning, for example children are proud of themselves as they make the sounds of letters in the alphabet. Activities are balanced to include active play and time to look at a book or sing together. Children are often praised and their work is valued by the childminder who displays their pictures around the room to be shared with parents. This enables children to take pride as they show their parents what they have been doing.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are fully understood and respected by the childminder who arranges resources so that they are easily accessed by everyone. The childminder has previous experience of caring for children with special needs and is confident to judge how well individual children's needs can be met within existing routines. All children are included in planned activities and have free access to a vast assortment of toys, many of which introduce them to positive images depicting people of various cultures, roles, abilities and disabilities. Some of the children also play card games with the childminder to learn French as an additional language. These resources effectively enable children to widen their experiences as they play.

Children behave well together and they respond extremely well to the childminder's clear and consistent strategies to manage their behaviour. They are spoken to in a positive and respectful manner, and the children thrive on the praise and encouragement that they receive from the childminder.

There are daily exchanges of information that take place between the childminder and children's parents when children arrive and depart. In this way the childminder is able to obtain parents' permission for specific activities and keep them well informed about their child's care. Without exception, the children's parents convey their satisfaction with the level of care that their children receive. Parents even joined a year long waiting list to ensure a place for their child with this childminder. This effective partnership ensures that both parties are able to work together to meet the children's needs and ensure their protection.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely welcoming, child-centred, family environment which is clean, tidy, stimulating and well organised. The children benefit from the childminder's devotion to her role, her wealth of practical childminding experience and her exceptional organisational skills. They also benefit from the additional stimulation that co-minding arrangements offer them.

Children's safety and welfare is very well promoted and effectively maintained because the childminder is well qualified, experienced and keeps up to date with her knowledge of child development and first aid. Healthy eating patterns are well promoted and the childminder's policies are made easily available to keep parents up to date with children's routines.

Children interact together sensitively and comfortably with all adults present. They are well supervised and not left unattended with those who have not been vetted. This has a positive impact on the children's developing confidence and their sense of security, enabling them to settle quickly and feel safe.

The children's individual details are efficiently documented and well stored to make sure that their needs are fully understood and can be met. Professional levels of confidentiality are maintained. The children's needs are being met. Overall their welfare is being promoted to a high standard.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004. 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 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