



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256365
Inspection date	31 January 2006
Inspector	Pauline Margaret Todd

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1999. She lives with her husband and grown-up daughter in a village near to the city of Norwich, Norfolk. The whole of the childminder's house, apart from two bedrooms, is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for 6 children under 8 years at any one time and no overnight care is provided. She is currently minding 1 child full-time and also cares for her grandchild. The childminder can walk to the local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local groups and takes children to the local parks.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in extremely clean and tidy premises and the childminder follows appropriate procedures which ensure good standards of hygiene are maintained, for example, toys and equipment are cleaned regularly. Children have easy access to the bathroom and wash their hands after using the toilet, when they come in from playing outside and before eating. The childminder gives them appropriate assistance to ensure good hygiene practices are followed, for example, that they use their own towel. Children's health details are clearly recorded to maintain their good health and the sickness policy enables children who are unwell to be cared for appropriately to prevent the spread of infection. The childminder has first aid knowledge to ensure children's well-being should accidents occur.

Children are well nourished and have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating because they help to prepare their own fruit at snack time. They eat sandwiches at midday which are nutritious and promote their healthy growth and development. Children help themselves to a drink from their beakers whenever they wish to ensure they drink sufficient amounts to keep them healthy.

Children regularly play outside in the garden with the small climbing frame and swing and at the nearby parks to develop their physical skills. They go out for walks and go swimming to give themselves good opportunities to be active and use their energy. Children are able to sleep comfortably on the bed in the playroom after lunch which promotes their well-being and they can fulfil their own needs with regard to rest by using the settees in the living room throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children benefit from being cared for in a warm, welcoming and very well-organised environment. The childminder takes care to make her premises friendly and homely by displaying posters and children's art work on the walls. The rooms are prepared ready for them on arrival and the childminder makes extremely good use of the space available to offer a broad range of play experiences and activities which promote children's development, for example, messy play activities in the playroom, small world toys in the living room. Children are able to move around freely and safely because the childminder has identified and minimised risks, for example, child proof catches are fitted to cupboards and dangerous substances are stored out of reach. Children receive adequate supervision, for example, holding hands when going down the steps outside, and the premises and garden are secure. Fire fighting equipment is available but the childminder has not devised and practised an escape plan to protect children fully in an emergency.

Children can reach their toys and play equipment easily from containers stored at child-level to encourage self-selection and independence. Further items are stored in

a shed and on high shelves and are made available at intervals to provide children with variety and maintain their interest. Sufficient equipment is available to meet the varying needs of all children attending, for example, left-handed scissors, steps in the bathroom. The children can sit comfortably to eat, play and join in activities together by the provision of child-sized tables and chairs in the playroom and in the kitchen.

Children's welfare is satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted by the availability of documentation and because the childminder has an appropriate understanding of child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the childminder's house and spend their time playing freely and purposefully. They play happily with the shop, created for them by the childminder in the play tent, with clever use of priced goods to sell, till and money which encourage their personal and emotional development. The childminder plans an activity for each day, for example, craft, playdough, cooking to promote creativity. They go on trips, outings and attend local clubs to have the opportunity to mix with other children and develop their social skills. Children spend time playing independently, for example, with the small world toys and undertake activities with support and encouragement from the childminder such as painting. The childminder uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework to positively promote the development of young children.

The childminder provides a gentle, relaxed, caring environment for children and is developing a close relationship with them. She positions herself at their level, for example, when painting and at snack time, so she can maintain good eye contact and give children support which helps to raise their self-esteem and build their confidence. She values what the children say and do and responds well to their interests, for example, to blow bubbles and use the swing in the garden. She interacts affectionately with the children, plays with them, has fun, and encourages them to take part in a wide range of play experiences, activities and outings to meet their individual needs and promote their welfare.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are learning about diversity by using toys and play equipment that reflect a variety of cultural backgrounds and the childminder holds conversations with the children about their families. Children have adequate opportunities to learn about their immediate community by visiting the shops and going out for walks. The childminder treats children with respect, is sensitive in her handling and with the language she uses, for example, when asking them if they need the toilet. The childminder knows the children well and sufficient details of their specific needs, likes, dislikes and routines are recorded to enable appropriate care to be given. She is aware some children may have special needs and would ensure adequate steps are taken to promote their welfare and development.

Children learn right from wrong and the childminder encourages good behaviour by acting as a positive role model and using distraction and redirection. Although house rules are established, they are not always shared with the children and their parents to encourage consistency.

Children benefit from the positive partnerships that have developed between the childminder and their parents. There is a useful exchange of information daily to promote children's well-being and development and a longer discussion takes place weekly. Sometimes notes are sent home to say how well the children are doing with their toilet training and to remind parents that their child has been given medication. Child detail forms and agreement forms which promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained, but there are some gaps in the recording, for example, details of outings, food arrangements and the ground rules for behaviour.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There have been no changes to the childminder's circumstances and she remains suitable to look after children. She improves and develops her skills by undertaking childminding training. The children are very well cared for and supported during their time with her because she organises her space and resources extremely well and makes good use of her time to be able to play with the children and take them out.

Appropriate records are kept to ensure the childminder carries out her work efficiently and detailed contracts and consents promote the welfare and care of all children. The register is accurate and up-to-date and shows when children are present on the premises to keep them safe and ensure ratios are maintained.

Overall, the needs of the children attending are being met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to obtain a copy of the current guidance regarding child protection issues. This is now in place to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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 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):

- devise and practise an emergency escape plan
- improve details available to parents regarding food arrangements, outings and how good behaviour is encouraged.

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