



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256099
Inspection date	09 January 2006
Inspector	Andrea Caroline Snowden

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?

This childminder has been registered since 1996. She lives in Thetford and has two children aged eight and eleven. The whole house is used for childminding purposes and there is an enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for five children under the age of eight years. There are currently six children on roll, attending on a part-time basis.

The childminder keeps a pet hamster, tortoise and rabbit, but the children do not have access to the animals. She is a member of the Keystone Cluster Childminding

Network and also of the National Child Minding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health continues to be promoted as information is obtained about any allergies, dietary needs and health issues before care commences. Parents of sick children are encouraged to keep them away to prevent the spread of infection. Children learn about personal hygiene and are observed washing their hands after each visit to the toilet without reminder. They have developed good personal hygiene habits. The childminder can respond to accidents appropriately as she is trained and has the necessary equipment to treat injured children both in the house and when on visits.

Parents provide a packed lunch for their children, and the childminder discusses the contents of the lunch box with parents to ensure all children are eating a varied and healthy meal. Healthy option snacks and evening meals are given by the childminder and as a result children are learning about healthy eating habits from a young age. Children frequently ask for drinks and these are always provided without delay.

Children's physical development is well promoted. The childminder ensures they have daily exercise and children enjoy playing in the garden, at local parks and in the forest. The childminder takes children to organised clubs such as 'The Wiggle Jiggle Club' so that they experience physical play in different environments with different children and adults.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are settled in the safe and secure environment. The childminder has created a homely atmosphere where children can play, eat and sleep when they wish to. A vigilant approach to safety means that children can explore play equipment and space without fear of hurting themselves. Children are closely supervised especially when playing with water, or for example when eating an apple which may pose a choking hazard. There are clear procedures for emergency evacuation and children know what the smoke alarm means because they practice the fire drill regularly.

Children enjoy using a wide range of play equipment which belongs to the childminder, but also use equipment from the local toy library and network loan scheme. This means children experience variety and challenge in play equipment which is of good quality and safe to use.

The childminder is clear about procedures in an emergency and how to keep children safe. She is confident in her duty to safeguard children's welfare and able to act effectively in child protection concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very confident and independent. They are animated in their choice of equipment and eager to do different activities with the childminder. The children are put first and their free choice and contentment is the childminder's priority. Their individual play and personal needs are met exceptionally well by the childminder who is dedicated to their enjoyment and welfare. Children are happy and are occupied in a wide variety of activities both inside the home and elsewhere which provide high levels of stimulation and challenge. Their self-esteem is promoted well as the childminder praises and congratulates children on their achievements.

Children regularly attend activity sessions at the toy library and local sure start centre giving them opportunities to develop their social skills in meeting new people and becoming confident in different environments. Activity themes used at these centres, such as 'Where I live' and 'All about me' are built on and extended with the childminder at home. Children are learning through their play as they investigate colour, shape, number and their creativity is promoted effectively as they experiment with bubble paints, make masks and use their imagination in role play. Children's art work is valued and collected in a scrap book to look back on. The childminder is adept at asking questions to promote and extend role play for the children. Activities such as colouring a postcard, writing in their name and address then taking it to the post box helps children develop an understanding of how life works. They show great excitement at going to post box.

Children are building positive relationships and the childminder manages the demands of children expertly. She ensures there is enough equipment for all to use and talks to children about sharing toys and encourages them to help each other and to be kind. The childminder listens to children and shows she values what they say by responding with interest. She talks to them during activities and listens to their conversations. She has high expectations of what they can achieve and ensures all children participate on a level appropriate to their stage of development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are well met, for example their individual times of eating, drinking and sleeping are respected by the childminder. Resources which enable children of all ages to take place in similar activities are available. An older child can construct with small pieces of lego or create patterns with iron on beads, whilst younger children use duplo and thread with large beads. Alternatively activities can be moved or adapted to meet children's special requirements. There is a non stereotypical approach to play and children are learning about our diverse society as the childminder introduces them to different festivals and provides resources reflecting positive images.

Children are learning right from wrong because the childminder explains why behaviour is unacceptable and encourages children to think how to behave well, for

example older children have been involved in writing the house rules.

The partnership with parents is good and generally information is available via the notice board. There is a lack of policy information. For example there is no behaviour management or child protection statement and no sick child policy. This means that parents may not always be clear on the policies of the setting, which in turn could compromise children's well being and safety. Day to day liaison with parents ensures that they are aware of their child's achievements and development and enables them to be involved in their child's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is appropriately qualified and keeps updated with new ideas by attending workshops such as 'Learning Through Play' and 'Music', which benefits the children. She shows commitment to child care work by enrolling on further training to give her an NVQ level 3 qualification, thus ensuring that children continue to benefit from her knowledge and skills. She is suitably vetted and children are protected because the childminder does not leave them with any other person, unless there is an emergency. Parents are aware of this.

The required record keeping is maintained accurately and in a professional manner, ensuring children are cared for according to parent's wishes and their health needs are promoted effectively. The provision meets the needs of those attending.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain play resources to help raise children's awareness of disability issues, to obtain the child protection document and to obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical treatment.

The childminder has obtained a selection of play resources such as the 'Playmobil' hospital to help raise children's awareness of disability issues. She has the correct documentation to help her, should she need to make a referral concerning child protection issues and so is better able to safeguard the welfare of children. Written permission has been obtained to enable the childminder to seek emergency medical treatment. This means that should parents not be contactable, children can be medically treated without delay.

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):

- Review the policy document to ensure that it contains policies and procedures relevant to the setting. Make these available to parents and carers.

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