



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 251239
Inspection date 07 February 2006
Inspector Lynn Denise Smith

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 1990. She lives with her four adult children in Hadleigh, near Ipswich. The whole of the ground floor with exception of the front reception room is used for childminding and there is an enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children. She takes children to the local park.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently caring for four children under eight years and two over eight years on a part time basis.

The childminder has a pet dog, 4 cats, a rat, a rabbit and a guinea pig.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are kept healthy within the childminder's home as she has clear procedures for encouraging them to wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals. After changing young children's nappies, the childminder washes her own hands as a good role model for the children and to reduce the spread of infection.

Children who are unwell in the childminder's care are well cared for as they are comforted by the childminder and their illness is dealt with by her using her clear understanding of children's health to assess their needs. Parents are contacted for advice and to collect children and, if they have anything contagious, they stay at home until fully recovered. Children who have accidents in the childminder's care have their injuries dealt with by the childminder using her first aid knowledge. Accidents are appropriately recorded in the accident book and shared with parents.

Minded childminder play an active role in caring for the family pets. Their health needs are well considered by the childminder carrying out regular health checks on her pets and ensuring that the children follow clear hand washing procedures after stroking and feeding them.

Children have daily access to fresh air when they walk to and from school. They often visit the park or go to the local duck pond to feed the ducks. They access a large, enclosed garden which provides them with ample space to run around and experience fresh air.

Children's dietary needs are well considered by the childminder providing healthy snacks and drinks for them. They bring their own packed lunch and are encouraged to eat the healthier options first. Their food is appropriately stored in the fridge to ensure it is fresh and safe to eat by lunch time. Children sit together at mealtimes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children mostly play in the lounge of the childminder's home. They move freely around the lounge and are able to access some play space in the dining area, although this room has a dual use as a bedroom at night time, therefore clear floor space is reduced. Children access the large garden through patio doors.

Children make free choices from a range of toys and play materials. These are mostly stored in boxes on the floor, for easy access. They play with clean resources as the childminder regularly sprays and wipes the toys and play materials with anti-bacterial spray.

Children learn about keeping safe within the home, as the childminder encourages them to think about safety, for example, they are encouraged to clear away some of the toys to prevent them causing a tripping hazard. When out walking or when participating on trips, children are encouraged to consider walking sensibly along the road. They talk about finding a safe place to cross and are often accompanied by another childminder to provide additional supervision.

Children are protected from potential harm as the childminder understands her responsibility with regard to child protection and follows the appropriate procedures for referring any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the childminder's house. They are actively involved in an exciting range of activities which are suitable to meet their needs. They enthusiastically become engrossed in free imaginative play, making use of a large selection of small world figures, cars and animals. They co-operate and are excited about their game. Their play is further developed by the childminder interacting with the children and talking about the figures and characters they are playing with.

Children learn about growing and nature as they grow their own vegetables. They take a trip to the shop to purchase the seeds, choose what vegetables they want to grow, sow the seeds and then transfer them to the ground when the seedlings are strong enough. They water them and look after them until they are ready to be harvested. They prepare them for eating and use them in cooking activities and some children take their produce home for their parents. They develop physical skills as they learn to negotiate the spades for digging and transport soil from one section of the garden to another using a miniature wheelbarrow.

Children play an active and important role in caring for the family's pets; they feed them and help to pass the childminder materials to clean them out with. They follow clear hygiene practices to ensure they are handling them safely. Children enthusiastically learn about their local environment when they participate in trips to the local parks, the beach, toddler groups and the zoo. They have good opportunities to socialise with other children as the childminder regularly meets up with other local minders for coffee and to provide social interaction for the children.

Children participate in matching games to encourage them to develop their thinking and language, they name the objects detailed on the game cards and have fun picking the correct card when playing matching games.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's well-being and individual needs are shared with the childminder by the parents. They discuss the children's home situation, likes and dislikes prior to the

childminder commencing caring for them, to ensure she is fully aware of their personal circumstances. Children learn about other people's needs and cultures as the childminder is committed to developing their understanding of equality of opportunity. They learn to show respect for each other as the childminder is a positive role model who values their individuality. Children who have specific needs are well cared for as the childminder uses previous experience to adapt activities and to fully integrate all children into her care.

Children are well behaved; they play nicely together and understand the childminder's boundaries. They are spoken to in a positive way and encouraged to be kind and considerate towards each other. They consider other people's feeling and are encouraged to say sorry if they have hurt another child.

Children are well supported in their care environment as the childminder and parents develop excellent working relationships. They are open and approachable towards each other and parents are proactive in sharing their thoughts about the care their children receive. They have provided the childminder with a number of extremely positive letters of recommendation, stating how pleased they are with their children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by and are always in the supervision of the childminder. Children's needs are well-supported as the childminder uses her many years of childcare knowledge to provide them with a caring and stable provision. She is committed to updating her knowledge through training and is currently studying the information in the 'Birth to three matters' framework guidance to further inform her practice with children of this age.

Children are cared for in small numbers to ensure the childminder can provide them with some individual attention. Their attendance is appropriately recorded in individual notebooks.

Children's well-being is promoted as the childminder uses appropriate documentation to record their needs and to share with parents. All records are available with the exception of some contracts with parents.

Overall the needs of the range of children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Children are now in the proximity of adults who have been vetted as the childminder has ensured that her adult children have completed relevant checks. Clearance has been received for three of the children, one check is currently being processed.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted has received four complaints since the time of the last inspection - 11/05/2004. These are as follows:-

Ofsted received a complaint which was not investigated through a visit as the childminder sent a letter to Ofsted before an investigation could be carried out. She covered all of the complaints made and denied the allegations made. As all points had been covered fully, no further action was taken.

Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns about the numbers of children the provider was caring for (Standard 2) and the presence of the dog around children (Standard 6 and 7). Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit on 12 April 2005. Ofsted is satisfied that the provider was meeting the required ratios under standard 2 and that the dog posed no risk to the children. The provider was however given an action under Standard 14 to ensure records are always available for inspection by the early years child care inspector. A satisfactory response to the actions has been received and the provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns about National Standard 1 (Suitable Person), National Standard 2 (Organisation) and National Standard 6 (Safety). Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the provider on 06 September 2005. There was no evidence to substantiate the concerns in respect of Standard 2. The provider was however given 7 actions to complete in relation to Standards 1, 4 (Physical Environment), 6 and 14 (Documentation). The actions have been met. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns in respect of National Standards 1 (Suitable Person) and 6 (Safety). Ofsted had previously obtained information about the concerns during visits to the provider on 12 April and 06 September 2005 therefore no further action has been taken in response to this complaint. The provider 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.

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):

- ensure the premises are well-organised and provide adequate clear floor space to enable children to explore their environment safely
- ensure that written contracts are in place for all children being cared for

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