



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	255983
Inspection date	15 June 2006
Inspector	Tessa Margaret Betts
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1991. She lives with her husband and their two children aged 15 years and 24 years in a four bedroomed bungalow on the outskirts of Norwich. All areas of the bungalow are available for childminding, with the exception of the bedrooms. There is a fully enclosed back garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding six children under five years, all of whom attend on a part time basis. Overnight care is not provided. The childminder attends many local groups within her community. The family have a cat.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. The childminder welcomes children with special needs. She is a member of an approved childminding network and is in receipt of nursery funding.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a positive understanding of simple health and hygiene practices. They are skilfully prompted to think about what they need to do before having their snack to ensure their hands are clean and why this is important. Positive messages are reinforced as children watch the childminder wipe the table after activities and before preparing snacks and meals, so that cross infection is suitably minimised. Through well planned projects children are learning an awareness of their own bodily needs. An older child asks for a heart sticker because she has a heart in her tummy which pumps blood around and a younger child recognises when she is cold in the garden and independently goes inside to get a cardigan.

Children are well nourished. They greatly benefit from the childminder's home cooking, which supports a healthy diet. Trips to the local shops to buy fresh produce allows children the opportunity to see a wide variety of different fruits, talk about where they come from and develop their taste buds. Children have ample opportunities to increase their knowledge of healthy foods as they help to prepare a chicken stir fry. They cut up the vegetables and chicken and watch the noodles being cooked before enjoying the final product. Children begin to learn about the growing process as they plant and watch their runner beans in pots develop and sow cress heads. Regular drinks are offered throughout the day to ensure children do not go thirsty.

Children are able to exercise in the fresh air daily developing strong bodies to fight infection and stay healthy. Through a good range of outdoor play resources children develop skills at manoeuvring around objects on bikes and scooters, balance confidently on stilts and run about. On outings their skills are extended as they dig in the sand at the beach, use larger play structures at the local park and attend Tumble Tots to increase their self confidence and mobility. Due to the warm care given to children by the childminder children's emotional well-being is fully promoted. Children confidently move around freely in the childminder's home accessing all rooms to meet their changing needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children learn through example and reasoning from the childminder about how to keep safe. Children are gently reminded to pick toys up off the floor so they do not trip over and hurt themselves. Children understand how to hold a knife properly when they cut up their fruit and how to use scissors safely through the close supervision and support they receive from the childminder. Older children demonstrate their understanding as they explain to younger children in the garden that carrying child size plastic chairs on their back is not a good idea as they may hurt themselves. Whilst most safety aspects have been addressed within the home to ensure

children's safety the smoke detector near the front door is not maintained in good order and as a result could not be relied upon in the event of a fire.

Children are able to play safely with a wide range of appropriate resources which are regularly checked by the childminder to ensure children's safety. Children enjoy activities such as a car wash in the back garden where they have fun with water as they clean down the outdoor toys. The outdoor sand pit has a cover which ensures the sand remains in good clean condition ready for the children to use. Children have opportunities to practise safe procedures as they learn about the green cross code, take part in regular fire drills and talk about safety in the sun as part of their seaside project.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder has taken time to update her knowledge of child protection. She is fully aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and what action she should take in the event of a referral.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and become immersed in a good range of activities available to them. Younger children are positively supported by the childminder who is making effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Children are provided with an increasing range of experiences that are well suited to their specific stage of development. Younger children benefit from the sensory activities offered as they explore water and sand and enjoy the sensation of banging African drums and listening to the sound they make. Children are confident to communicate their wishes and make their feelings known through the strong relationships developed with the childminder. Younger children ask to go outside and the childminder responds appropriately. Younger children are beginning to make connections for themselves as they work out how to operate scissors to make cuts in the paper.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals as the childminder has taken every opportunity to access relevant training to strengthen her existing knowledge. She has a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and how this steers children's learning so that they make good progress. She organises the daily activities well to incorporate the six areas of learning ensuring the children receive a balanced programme. The childminder is developing a useful approach to assessing and evaluating children's learning, however this information is not yet consistently used to ensure more able children have sufficient challenge to maximise their individual progress. Children benefit from a well planned topic approach to the curriculum where they engage in exciting themes. A recent project about the seaside encourages children to develop an appreciation of the world around them, learn about sea creatures, the dangers around water, how to look after themselves in hot weather and they then creatively make their own fish tanks using a range of materials.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is progressing very well. Children are forming close relationships with their peers as they enthusiastically share their achievements

on the outdoor play equipment. Children are using their initiative well through the choices they make about what toys to play with, whether to play indoors or in the garden and when they would like a drink. Children's language skills are well supported by the childminder. They are developing a keen interest in books as they make frequent trips to the local library to source projects and quickly settle on the sofa to await the story reading before lunch. Children handle books with confidence holding them correctly and using the pictures to make useful links with their everyday lives. The purpose of writing is reinforced as they notice labels in the living room that are displayed on the table where they are growing plants. Children enjoy the challenge of using chalks on the board outside and older children confidently write and recognise their name. Children enthusiastically make their own books with flair, showing good skills in early mark making, letter formation and drawing pictures.

Children show a keen interest in numbers. Younger children count four pieces of play dough with ease and the number of steps when using the slide. Everyday situations where children count the number of pieces of fruit on their plate strengthens the children's number skills. Children are developing their knowledge around weight and capacity as they fill their buckets with sand and work out which ones are heavier or fuller than others. Children learn about the environment as they use magnifying glasses when looking at insects in the garden and relish the opportunity to explore weather changes and play in the snow. Children learn about movement as they discuss the working of wheels on a train trip to the beach. Building materials are used effectively by children to create and design their own models. Children know about their local community as they regularly attend social groups with the childminder. Children are developing confidence in their use of technology as they make use of the computer and play with programmable toys. Art materials are readily available and children make good use of these to create their own pictures. Children benefit from the opportunity to extend their sensory experiences as they visit a local sensory garden. Children spontaneously engage in role play finding out what it is like to be a parent getting children ready for school.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a strong sense of belonging as they are warmly welcomed into this homely environment. They experience a familiar daily routine which fostered their security. Children's individual care needs are met and respected as the childminder has systems in place to update the information held so that she is kept fully informed. Children are learning to respect the needs and cultural differences of others as they experience at first hand how events around the world are celebrated. They creatively make their lanterns as part of the Chinese New Year festival. Although the childminder is not currently providing care for children with special needs she is aware of children's developmental stages. She has continued to update her knowledge by attending a range of short courses to equip herself with the necessary skills so that all children can be included and have their needs met. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Through the positive example set by the childminder children's behaviour is very good. They listen and learn from clear explanations given by the childminder and readily rise to the praise and encouragement freely offered. Through the childminder's calm approach minor disputes

are quickly resolved as they are well supported in their understanding of the need to share and take turns. This enables children to learn good social skills and grasping a strong sense of right and wrong.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the strong communication on arrival and departure between both parties which allows parents to develop a clear insight into their children's day. They share experiences enjoyed on family outings allowing the childminder good opportunities to become involved in the children's family life. Good visual information displayed ensures parents are kept fully informed about forthcoming educational projects, the daily routines and how these link into the six areas of learning. This strengthens children's experiences and fosters parents involvement in their children's learning. Systems are in place to regularly monitor the quality of care offered so that adjustments can be made when necessary.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder works within her conditions of registration ensuring all adults in direct contact with children are safe and suitable. The childminder shows a strong commitment to training and personal development to maintain the high quality of care. Space and resources are well organised enabling children to comfortably eat, rest and explore their play resources displaying their independence.

The childminder has well organised policies and procedures which are stored confidentially and securely. She makes good use of these within her care practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and their ability to make a positive contribution. All documentation is appropriately shared with parents.

Leadership and management is good. The childminder has a clear understanding of what she would like the children to achieve and is developing a monitoring system to support this. The childminder has started to evaluate her service in terms of children's learning, however this is not yet fully effective in supporting all children's progress at this time. The childminder is making good use of the local advisors to further develop her own knowledge and practice. In this way the quality of children's care and education continues to be raised.

Overall, children's needs are met.

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.

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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):

- improve children's safety by ensuring all smoke alarms are maintained in a working condition

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve opportunities for more able children to enjoy challenge and extend their learning by making effective use of the information held on children's assessment records within planning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk