



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	219632
Inspection date	11 October 2006
Inspector	Kelly Eyre
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 1987. She lives with her husband and adult son in the Putnoe area of Bedford. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five during the day on a part-time basis, and four children over five before and after school on a part-time basis. Care is also provided for children over the age of eight. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler group and support group for childminders. The family has no pets.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a comfortable, clean home. They are well nourished because the childminder has a good understanding of healthy eating, producing a policy regarding this and ensuring that children are offered a well balanced diet which contains the required nutrients to promote their growth. Children's dietary requirements are discussed with parents and clearly recorded. They are offered nutritious snacks and meals which are cooked using fresh ingredients and include fruit and vegetables. Their physical health is promoted and the spread of infection is minimised because there are good daily hygiene practices, including the provision of liquid soap and separate towels for each child. Children are learning about the relevance of good personal hygiene because the childminder talks with them about this, discussing issues such as washing germs away so they don't make us ill. This area is further supported as there is written policy and guidance regarding the exclusion of children who are unwell, thus minimising the spread of infection.

Children participate in a wide variety of physical activities, contributing to their good health. They have regular opportunities for outdoor activities, such as walks to school, the local park and woods, where they enjoy activities such as running, playing football and climbing on logs. They play in the garden with toys such as balls, ride-on toys, the slide, stilts and the mini-trampoline. They also attend the local childminder's support group where they have opportunities to use larger play equipment, helping them to develop control of their bodies and improve their physical skills. Younger children's growth and development are promoted because the childminder has much experience and a good understanding of child development, enabling her to provide appropriate activities to encourage children to try out new skills. For example, a child who has just learned to talk is gently encouraged to extend their vocabulary and to form sentences.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and safe environment. Their work and photos are displayed, helping them to feel valued and at home. Their daily safety is given a high priority and they are able to move around the home safely because the childminder has a good understanding of this area, taking positive steps to prevent accidents and plan for emergencies. All areas are checked before children arrive and there are clear written procedures. For example, there is a detailed plan for emergency evacuation. This has picture prompts for younger children and is practised regularly so that all children become familiar with this procedure. Children use safe toys and equipment and the childminder makes sure that these are appropriate for their ages and developmental stages, for example, changing the resources in the afternoon so that these are appropriate and stimulating for the older children returning from school.

Children are building up their knowledge about keeping themselves safe. They are well informed as the childminder offers them clear explanations, enabling them to understand safety issues and make decisions. She talks with them about road safety and practises this on the daily

journeys to and from school. Their welfare is effectively promoted as the childminder has a clear understanding of her responsibilities regarding child protection. However, some information is out of date and this would result in a delay in taking action.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and settled, happily choosing toys and moving around the home. They have good, secure relationships with the childminder who joins in enthusiastically with their play, helping them to feel welcome and valued. For example, a child sits on the childminder's lap to look at a book and they laugh together as they look at the pictures and make the animal noises. Younger children also have opportunities to play and socialise with other children through regular attendance at a local childminders' support group. Older children who are cared for after school are offered appropriate opportunities because the childminder has a good understanding of their needs. They are able to rest and relax after a structured day at school but also have opportunities to participate in activities such as crafts and cooking.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities including imaginative play, reading, construction and outdoor play. Their overall development is promoted and they are encouraged to extend their knowledge because the childminder has a good understanding of child development. Some activities are planned in advance and the childminder takes time to ask the children what they would like to do, preparing any necessary resources before they arrive.

Children's needs are well met and their current interests promoted because the childminder talks with them about these and makes sure that she has appropriate resources. For example, she puts up posters displaying French vocabulary on a Wednesday as this is the day one of the children covers this subject at school. She has provided a teaching clock and explanatory poster for another child who is learning to tell the time. Children's play and learning is extended because the childminder makes good use of open questions to encourage them to think further, for example, a child looking at a book is encouraged to talk about a recent bus journey.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are set consistent and realistic boundaries. They are encouraged to respect each other and their behaviour is good as they play together and learn about sharing and turn-taking. They are confident within the childminder's home, happily making choices about their play and activities. The childminder has a good understanding of behaviour management and uses appropriate strategies, reinforcing positive aspects and explaining issues to children so that they can understand their behaviour and make decisions about this. The childminder has a good practical awareness of how to provide appropriate care for children who have special needs and she has previous experience of this. All children are included in the activities and daily routines and have access to a wide variety of toys. The childminder has attended additional training in this area to enable her to communicate appropriately and care for children with specific needs.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. They are offered an effective range of opportunities to learn about society and diversity. They read books and play with toys which give them positive images and promote their understanding. They learn about their local community through the use of facilities such as the toddler group, shops, parks and outings to feed the ducks. However, their understanding of the wider world and other ways of life is minimised as they are not offered a consistent range of activities to promote this. Children benefit from the childminder's good relationship with parents. She has a good understanding of parents' needs and discusses all aspects of her practice with them, keeping them well informed of their children's progress and activities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. They are able to feel comfortable and relaxed, assured that their needs will be met due to the childminder's practical organisation of her work. They are given plenty of time to play, eat and relax because the childminder organises her time well. There are written policies and procedures covering the main areas of child care, enabling the childminder to act in the best interests of children at all times. Paperwork and records are well organised and are easily accessible, ensuring that children's safety and welfare can be consistently promoted.

Children are confident within the childminder's home and can therefore initiate their own play and learning. They enjoy the childminder's company and input but are also happy to play independently, knowing that the childminder is always available to help them when needed. For example, a child plays happily with the cars and trucks and then goes to sit with the childminder to look at books and the stacking dolls. Children's development in all areas is promoted as a result of the childminder's attention to detail in the organisation of daily routines, ensuring that children are always offered a range of stimulating activities and opportunities. For example, there is time for quiet play, outings to the park and woods, crafts, homework, reading and free play.

Improvements since the last inspection

At her last inspection, the childminder was asked to ensure that written parental permission for emergency medical treatment is in place. She has now ensured that this is in place for each child, further promoting their health and safety in an emergency situation. She was also asked to make sure that the daily attendance register is signed. This is now signed by all parents, ensuring that attendance is accurately recorded and there are no misunderstandings with parents.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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):

- further promote children's welfare by ensuring that there is adequate knowledge and information regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board so that any concerns can be reported without delay
- ensure that all children are offered an appropriate range of activities which promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

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