



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220452
Inspection date	17 January 2007
Inspector	Tracey Marie Boland
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 has been registered since 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and 12 years, in a residential area of Daventry. The town centre is within walking distance and other local amenities include parks, soft play centres, schools, pre-schools, shops and playing fields. The childminder has use of a car during the day.

Areas of the house used for childminding purposes include the large sitting room and conservatory. The back garden is not currently used for childminding and local parks and play spaces are visited to compensate for the lack of outdoor play space.

There are no pets.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently caring for three children under five years, two of whom were present during the inspection.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, well-maintained environment where they learn clear routines to ensure good personal hygiene. For example, washing their hands before meals, after using the bathroom and after messy play. Liquid soap is provided and children have their own wash bags with towels and flannels which are changed daily. The risk of the spread of infection is minimised because a written policy is shared with parents informing them of illnesses which mean their child should not attend. They are also aware that they will be contacted and asked to collect their child should they become unwell. Children's best interests are served following minor accidents as the childminder holds a valid first aid certificate. All required health documentation is in place which ensures their welfare and safety at all times.

Children's individual needs with regard to dietary needs and preferences are well catered for as parents provide a packed lunch which is stored in line with guidance. Clear routines with regard to the preparation and serving of foods ensures that children are unlikely to suffer a stomach upset due to unsafe food handling. Drinks are freely available, minimising the risk of dehydration.

Children access a wide variety of activities and equipment to enhance their physical well-being and development. They regularly visit the park and attend groups and soft play centres within the local area where resources and large equipment encourages them to co-ordinate and control their bodies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and rest in a safe and secure environment, and benefit from the steps taken by their childminder to minimise potential risks to their safety. Toys and equipment are checked daily to ensure their suitability. Any hazardous items are stored out of the reach of the children. A clear evacuation procedure is in place within the home and children regularly take part in a fire evacuation drill to ensure their safety is not compromised in times of an emergency.

Children learn to keep themselves safe both in the home and when out through the childminder's consistent reinforcement of safety issues. Road safety is encouraged and children understand the importance of using car seats and seat belts when in the car. A note is placed in the car and on the buggy for emergencies as it contains the phone number of a back up childminder should an emergency arise and it also states that she is a registered childminder and the children may not be hers.

Children's welfare is maintained as the childminder has a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect and is fully aware of her role and responsibility in safeguarding the children in her care. She demonstrated a good understanding of local procedures and ensures that children are not left unattended with people who have not been vetted. A well written child protection policy is in place and shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and relaxed in the childminders' home. Good relationships have been formed between the childminder, the children and each other and very positive interaction was observed. A good variety of suitable, age-appropriate resources are freely available and well maintained. Children are well supported and encouraged by the childminder who is aware of their interests, likes and dislikes and their individual stages of development. She encourages their understanding of letters, numbers and simple mathematical concepts are included in activities. Children enjoy a wide variety of resources which includes construction sets, dressing up clothes, role play equipment, books and puzzles. They benefit from individual time which is spent with them enhancing their social skills.

Children experience learning and play opportunities inside and outside the home for example, visiting local parks, places of interest and meeting with other childminders in the area. Their independence is encouraged in everyday routines and when using the bathroom. The childminder has a clear understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and has developed individual files for each child where she will keep records of the activities completed and their developmental progress and achievements to share with parents.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children choose from a good range of resources that reflect diversity and the wider world which includes dolls, small world figures, books and role play equipment. They learn about similarities and differences through discussion and through celebrating festivals. Children's individual needs are discussed with parents in detail. Any special requirements or information are discussed and consistent communication and information exchange takes place. Special needs of children are recognised and met sensitively.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents benefit from a very detailed, comprehensive prospectus that is shared with them and includes copies of policies and procedures in place within the home. Good communication each day ensures that their child's needs are met effectively and parents are kept informed of progress and activities undertaken. Children develop a sense of belonging because they are offered a settling in period and gradual visits build their confidence and feeling of security. A written complaints policy is in place and clearly identifies the new procedures to follow should a parent wish to make a comment or complaints.

Children are aware of rules regarding behaviour and learn to share, take turns and consider others. A well written policy is in place regarding behaviour which is shared with parents. Discussion and distraction are strategies used for dealing effectively with behaviour. The childminder is a good role model and takes account of different levels of development. Children respond very well to her calm, caring approach.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play in a relaxed, homely environment. The childminder's practice effectively meets the needs of the individual children she cares for. Their needs and requirements are known by the childminder and are respected. Children have clear space to move around in the lounge and the conservatory. Resources and activities are plentiful.

Documentation is well maintained, easily accessible and held within the boundaries of confidentiality. However, although the attendance record is maintained it has been completed until the end of January and therefore does not meet requirements or give a true reflection of the attendance of the children. Partnership with parents is well established and daily discussion keeps them informed and up to date with their child's day. Written policies are clear and concise and shared with parents. The childminder continually develops and enhances her knowledge and skills through her attendance at training courses in all areas of the childcare field.

Overall the needs of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children. This has now been done and a valid first aid certificate is held. Therefore, children's welfare is maintained at times of minor accidents.

She was also asked to ensure that the written agreement with parents sets out the expectations of both parties as to the care of the child, activities provided and business arrangements. Detailed contractual information is held following discussion with the parents. This ensures that their child's needs are met.

The childminder was also asked to further the development of an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. Children access a good variety of toys and resources that reflect diversity in a positive way. Therefore, their understanding of the wider world is appropriately fostered.

Finally she was asked to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. This information has been obtained, is detailed, concise and easily accessible. Therefore, the child's needs are well known in times of emergency.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- ensure the recording within the daily register reflects the times children are in attendance on a daily basis.

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