



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220725
Inspection date	25 August 2006
Inspector	Carol Mansell
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 1996. She lives with her husband and three children aged 17, 15 and 13 in Barton Seagrave, Northamptonshire. The whole of the ground floor and one bedroom for overnight care are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside 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 years, four children aged between five and eight years and three children aged over eight years. The childminder provides care for children during the school holidays as well as before and after school care. She drives to local schools to take and collect children. The family has two dogs, two cats and a goldfish.

The childminder supports children with disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children understand simple personal hygiene practices. They recognise the need to wash their hands after playing outside and before participating in a baking activity. They appreciate the need to wash their hands during the activity if they touch their noses or face. They acknowledge that this is because they need to wash away the germs which could make them unwell. Children benefit as the childminder keeps a clear record of any accidents. These records are shared with the parents who also sign them. This ensures children receive continuity of care. The childminder has details on file from the parents regarding children's additional medical needs. She works in line with parents wishes and supports older children when they use their inhalers. The childminder maintains a record of all medications administered and shares these with the parents. This ensures children's well-being is safeguarded.

Children have their dietary needs met as the childminder is aware of any allergies, intolerances, preferences or religious restrictions. She provides a sample menu for parents to see and happily works with those who wish to provide food for their children. The childminder provides a varied range of fresh fruit and other snack items, for example, children share a plateful of freshly sliced fruit, sultanas and chocolate chips. They enjoy having a barbeque with the childminder with their favourite items being chicken, salad and jacket potatoes. The childminder ensures the children are well nourished. Children have access to drinks throughout the day. Older children are able to help themselves whilst younger ones ask the childminder when they need a refill. Children are gaining a greater understanding of the need to have a drink after participating in energetic activities such as, when using the dance mat. This helps the children to learn about healthy living.

Children take part in regular physical activities both indoors and outside. They have an allotted time to use the dance mat and are then encouraged to play outside when the weather allows. Children enthusiastically bounce on the large trampoline. They stretch their arms and legs in all directions. Children use the outdoor area for a wide range of activities. They use their physical skills playing with equipment such as, the sand, the 'stomp rockets' and the swing ball. This helps to refine their large motor development. Children also use a wide variety of indoor toys and resources. They participate in art and craft activities using glue spatulas, scissors and selotape dispensers. They build intricate models and pick small items up with their fingers. The children participate in baking activities vigorously stirring the mixture. These activities enhance their hand and eye co-ordination and their fine motor skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a homely environment that is light, airy and child friendly. They have access to a wide range of resources that are stored at a reasonable height to allow them to make independent choices. Children enjoy playing with the sand, making castles and burying different items such as, marbles. Children are inventive and use the puppet theatre along with other house hold items to build a den. As they build it they discuss how to make it safe and

secure. Children enthusiastically use the swing ball in the garden. They are given gentle reminders by the childminder when other children are playing in the same area. Children play with the 'stomp rockets' on the decked area of the garden. They vigorously jump on the launch pad to see how high they will go. Safety issues arise when the rocket is launched sideways across the garden, hitting a child jumping on the trampoline. The childminder discusses with the children why this angle is not safe and what the consequences of this have been. This helps the children to understand they have a part to play in keeping everyone safe.

Children stay safe when they are away from the setting. The childminder uses suitable equipment such as, a pushchair for the younger children. She allows older children some degree of independence as they walk in front of her. They understand the need to show the younger children how to walk sensibly and safely. They follow sensible procedures when crossing the road and when using public transport. They are encouraged to think about what they are doing and why. This helps them to avoid accidental injuries. Children are generally kept safe as the childminder has devised and practiced a suitable emergency evacuation plan. Although she has only practiced using one exit point, the childminder discusses the plan with the children on a regular basis, ensuring they know what to do in an emergency. Children stay safe as the childminder has taken sensible precautions in her home and garden. She ensures children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised and has a padlock on the shed and the hot tub. The childminder stores some alcohol and sharp knives on a kitchen worktop. These are stored behind other pieces of equipment to ensure younger children cannot access them. Older children understand that these items are not toys and this encourages them to be sensible and keep themselves safe.

Children are protected from abuse as the childminder has a sound knowledge of child protection issues. She understands her role in child protection and is aware of the appropriate procedures to put into practice when necessary. This ensures children are safeguarded against harm or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy close, loving relationships with the childminder. She engages in play with them and enjoys their company. Children positively gain confidence and self-assurance as the childminder offers plenty of praise and encouragement. She organises activities which all children can join in with, adapting them according to the children's ages and abilities. Children enjoy participating in a wide range of planned and spontaneous activities. They bake cakes and make choices regarding the additional ingredients they put in. The children negotiate, discussing which ones they all like, for example chocolate chips and sultanas. The children work in two groups, the younger ones being supported by the childminder. The older children work from a recipe and seek support when needed. The children delight in being allowed to lick their fingers at the end of the activity. Some children need to lick more than one finger stating 'I'm going to use two fingers so I can lick more'. They observe the changes to the ingredients once baked and enjoy eating the end results. This enables children to develop their learning through well organised, stimulating play. Children benefit as the childminder devises a flexible routine which includes activities inside and outside the home. They visit the local wind farm and on

their return to the childminder's they explore and investigate it fully. They draw pictures of their visit and find more information from local newspapers. Children thoroughly enjoy other visits such as, using the assault course at Stanwick Lake, riding a pony and visiting a local Country Park where they are allowed to challenge themselves and climb trees. These outings help children to learn about their local environment, encourages them to show an interest in what they do and enables them to acquire new knowledge and skills.

Children enjoy following different themes such as, Italy. They make their own pizza and Italian bread. They also seek out music by Italian composers and listen to it, for example, 'The Four Seasons' by Vivaldi. This is a topic chosen by the children after Italy won the World Cup as they wanted to find out what else Italians had done. Children are able to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world and can build their confidence and self-esteem. Children design and build their own den. They try to use the ground under the trampoline but find this too damp. They seek inspiration elsewhere. The older children ask permission to use the puppet theatre as part of the structure. They also ask to use chairs from inside the house. They drape blankets over the structure and peg these in place. When they realise the space inside is too small, the children discuss how they are going to extend it. They readily respond to this challenge. The older children recognise that they cannot all fit in the den together and choose to allow the younger ones inside first. The children work together well as a team. They are able to negotiate and compromise as necessary. They are encouraged to use their initiative and to work harmoniously together.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have access to a variety of resources which show positive images of culture, gender roles and disabilities. They participate in activities that focus on different festivals and celebrations. This helps them to understand their own culture and become aware of other cultures. Children receive appropriate support as the childminder has a sound awareness of any additional needs. She takes advice from the parents and outside agencies to ensure she is able to perform any physiotherapy required. This ensures children's individual needs are met and enables all children to be included fully in the life of the setting.

Children are encouraged to share and take turns. They know the behaviour expectations and are gaining an understanding of the need to respect each other. The childminder is aware of any behaviour issues and deals with these appropriately for the children's level of understanding. She works with the parents which ensures there is continuity of care for the children.

Children benefit as the childminder has built strong partnerships with the parents. She shares her policies and procedures to ensure they fully understand the services being provided. The childminder has a flexible approach to the hours she cares for the children to ensure she meets the families needs. Parents and children provide written feedback for the childminder. The children make comments about why they like to come to the childminder such as, 'I go to places that I have never been before'. This information is used to enhance the provision for all children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming homely environment. They self-register, placing named photo-cards on a chart which hangs from an internal door. The childminder also records their presence in her diary which ensures she is aware of who is present. This helps the children to stay safe and secure. Children benefit as the childminder has attended numerous training courses since her last inspection and is currently working towards the 'Quality Standards' as part of a childminding network.

Children benefit as the childminder's policies and procedures work in practice to promote their safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution in the setting. The childminder ensures her documents are stored appropriately. She updates emergency contacts to ensure they are relevant and makes changes to collection procedures when notified by the parents. However, she does not review her contracts and children's information regularly which potentially compromises children's welfare.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to develop a range of activities to support children's creative development. She also agreed to make sure that electric sockets in areas accessible to children are fitted with socket covers.

Children benefit as the childminder provides a range of planned and spontaneous activities which includes a wide range of art and craft activities to support children's creative development. Children are safeguarded as the childminder ensures all socket covers accessible to them are fitted with socket covers. This helps to keep children safe.

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

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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):

- ensure all documents required for childminding purposes are reviewed and updated regularly, such as, contracts and children's information.

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