



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220971
Inspection date	20 June 2006
Inspector	Susan Marriott
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 their two daughters aged 15 years and 13 years in their house in the Abington area of Northampton. The childminder is registered to provide care for six children under eight years. She is currently caring for four children for a mixture of part-time and full-time hours. Childminding activities are centred upon the downstairs rooms with access to a bedroom for sleeping on the first floor. There is a downstairs cloakroom and a safely enclosed garden for outdoor play. The childminder can deliver and collect children from Bridgewater Primary School and The Pavilion Pre-School.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy an extensive range of activities that actively contribute to their good health. Children have the opportunity to play every day in the garden equipped with a vast range of outdoor equipment. The children walk everywhere with the childminder, as she delivers and collects children to and from schools and pre-schools. They enjoy regular visits to local parks, toddler groups and playgrounds and occasional visits to the swimming pool. This supports the development and improvement of children's physical skills.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Children learn to keep themselves healthy as they chat about brushing teeth in the mornings and washing the germs off their hands. Young children are able to sleep according to their needs in a suitable quiet area of the house. The childminder has a clear informal hygiene policy which she implements consistently to prevent the spread of infection when dealing with bodily fluids and changing nappies. Sound procedures are in place for children who are unwell and the childminder always acts in the best interests of the child concerned. She maintains an accident book in accordance with requirements and keeps her first aid certificate up to date. This ensures that children receive appropriate treatment in case of a medical emergency. Appropriate parental permissions are in place to safeguard children's welfare.

The childminder ensures that healthy snacks are available for children but most parents choose to provide a packed lunch from home. The childminder finds that this ensures that parents are in full control of their child's diet. Children enjoy choosing items such as peaches and grapes from the family fruit bowl and can access drinks at all times so they do not become thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for within a very clean, tidy, safe and secure home environment. The childminder makes good use of space to provide many purposeful activities and opportunities for children. Children independently select activities from a broad range of resources, efficiently stored in storage boxes brought into the living room or conservatory. Toys and equipment are in a good state of repair and are age appropriate. The childminder carefully monitors and supervises children's choice of toys, to ensure that small parts cannot present a hazard and that they are suitably challenging for the child's age and stage of development.

The childminder has identified and minimised all risks, ensuring children are able to move around and play safely, freely and independently. Appropriate safety measures are in place. The childminder gives high priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe, and has clear rules and routines in order to maintain their safety outside the home. Children know the rules well. For example, a young child insists that the dolly is strapped into the pink buggy and requests help from the childminder to achieve this. The childminder asks what will happen if the doll does not sit still and the child replies that the doll will fall and be hurt. The

childminder safeguards children's welfare and has a simple written policy which is shared with parents. Children are safe with the childminder, who has a secure understanding of child protection in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy themselves in this home from home environment where the childminder treats each child as her own. She actively involves the children in her domestic routine and consequently they make good progress in learning, leisure and personal development. For example, children help to make choices as they select the shopping and they count and talk about the colours of cars that pass by. Children form good relationships with the childminder which makes them feel secure and fosters a sense of belonging. For example, they happily accept the presence of the inspector and play at the feet of the childminder whilst she answers the inspector's questions. Children know the house rules and are familiar with the routine. For example, a child comes in from the school run and readily sits on the low hallway step to take off shoes. Children ask simple questions about what things are and the childminder responds with appropriate explanations. For example, a child exclaims that the people 'don't fit' in the beds in the hospital play set and the childminder shows the child how to put the little mattresses onto the beds and lie the wooden people down on them. Children develop confidence and self-esteem as they help to tidy up the toys before lunch and receive lots of praise for their achievements.

Children make independent choices in their play and are able to choose from a wide variety of toys and equipment, which are placed within easy reach. The childminder is highly skilled at developing the children's knowledge and understanding through discussions and their play. The childminder intuitively incorporates elements of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support her work with young children. The childminder is very attentive to the needs of the children and ensures they have a balanced and stimulating programme of activities throughout the day. Each child is able to have individual attention whilst one is resting, at school or not attending. They enjoy regular outings with their childminder, who takes them to a wide range of interesting places, including the local park where they can feed the ducks and an indoor playground where they can expend their energy during the winter months. The childminder regularly meets up with another childminder to provide social opportunities for the children in her care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others is actively increased because the childminder provides books and toys which reflect a range of disabilities and cultures to promote a positive view of the wider world. Children learn about their local community as they travel to and from school, and visit mother and toddler groups, other childminders and local parks. The childminder plans ahead and skilfully anticipates the potential needs of children in her care. She is caring and consistent and this ensures that children behave well because they know what is expected of them.

Children are highly valued and respected as individuals. The childminder initially seeks as much information about the child as possible to help the settling in process and then takes the time and trouble to get to know them really well. The childminder meets their needs through the daily routine as discussed with their parents. The childminder encourages all parents to discuss any problems they may have with the care given to their child and has a suitable complaints procedure in line with new requirements. The childminder ensures that daily discussion about the service provided keeps parents informed about their child's activities and provides a notice board for parents in her hallway.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are genuinely happy in the well-organised care of this flexible and caring childminder, who prioritises continuity of care for children. She combines this conscientious approach with her maternal experience to promote very good outcomes for children. Children are well-protected and cared for by this childminder with a good knowledge and understanding of child development. Children feel part of an extended family and are gently nurtured in the interesting and stimulating environment. The childminder is highly professional in delivering all aspects of her service and uses her developing formal procedures and routines to effectively promote the welfare, care and learning of all the children. The childminder up-dates her knowledge through contact with other childminders and reading relevant literature, seeking to further enhance her good practice. However, the childminder does not yet use continuous self-assessment to underpin accurate evaluation of the childminding practice. All written parental permissions are in place and the childminder effectively meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to give attention to four recommendations. She was asked to improve her knowledge of first aid and has now attended an appropriate course to gain a suitable first aid qualification. The childminder was asked to provide documentation to record any medicine given to children and to record the details of any accidents. She has devised her own forms for recording the administration of medicine and accidents. She now requests written permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. These steps now ensure that children receive appropriate care in the event of a medical emergency. Sharp knives, cleaning fluids and the front door key are now kept out of reach of children which improves the safety of children. The childminder has now obtained up to date child protection procedures which she displays on her parents' notice board and ensures children's welfare is suitably protected.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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):

- develop ways to support continuous self-assessment to underpin on-going evaluation of your childminding 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