

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 221170            |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 21 September 2007 |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Jan Burnet        |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Childcare         |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](http://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 1994. She lives in a residential area of Northampton with her husband, adult son and 12-year-old daughter. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and one first floor room is used for sleeping babies only. There is a rear, enclosed garden for outside play. The family has no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time and currently has four children aged under five years on roll. She walks or transports children to local schools and attends local parent and toddler groups.

The childminder is a member of the Northamptonshire Children Come First Childminding Network and she is a member of the National Childminding Association. She holds an early years qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is assured because they are aware of very good practise with regard to hand washing and because the childminder's cleaning routines are very thorough. The risk of cross infection is minimal because parents are fully aware that their child should not attend if he or she has a contagious illness or sickness and diarrhoea. Parents will be contacted if the child becomes ill. Children's best interests are served in case of accident, emergency or illness because the childminder ensures that she continually keeps her first aid certificate in-date. She regularly checks that the first aid box is well stocked.

Children learn about the benefit to their health of good food and, '5-a-day' fruit and vegetables is promoted by the childminder. She is aware of children's individual dietary needs and provides healthy and nutritious cooked meals if asked to do so. Parents currently provide packed lunches and in hot weather these are stored in the fridge. However, there is no system for ensuring that the fridge operates at a temperature within a safe range and potentially this has an impact upon children's health. Children's emotional well-being is assured due to a good settling-in procedure that is agreed with parents to meet the different needs of each child. Children are happy, settled and sociable. They enjoy good and regular opportunities to develop skills and confidence with use of large physical play equipment.

### Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are safe because as they move around the ground floor of the childminder's home, all potential hazards have been identified and comprehensively addressed. Their different needs are met in extremely well organised play space and the childminder creates a friendly and welcoming environment. They play mainly in the sitting room and dining room, the kitchen is used for meals and for messy activities and a conservatory is used for quiet activities. The childminder is pro-active in promoting children's independence as they have easy access to the ground floor toilet and are able to choose and select resources.

Risks to children are minimal as a result of the childminder's robust procedures, they play in a very safe environment and learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, when out walking they walk in an orderly fashion and young children always hold hands, all children learn how to cross the road safely and they gain an awareness of 'stranger danger'. The childminder is alert to her responsibilities with regard to supervision at all times. She has identified and comprehensively addressed potential hazards inside the home and in the garden and security is given a very high priority. The children are fully aware of procedures in case evacuation is necessary because the childminder has superior precautions in place and the fire drill is regularly practised. The childminder keeps a record of the fire drill. She has drawn up and reviews a risk assessment of her home.

Children's welfare is comprehensively safeguarded because the childminder has a working knowledge of the signs of abuse and neglect. She is fully aware of her responsibilities with regard to local referral procedures and has drawn up a policy for parents to explain her responsibilities with regard to protecting children.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn and develop because the childminder constantly offers excellent support and encourages children to think and extend their vocabulary as she skilfully asks open-ended questions to extend their learning. She provides an extensive range of resources and activities. Children are happy, settled and confident and the childminder is proactive in enabling them to become independent learners. They benefit enormously from the childminder's knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Children explore, investigate and experience a range of activities that encourage the development of their senses, they learn shapes and colours, count and practise manipulative skills on a daily basis. Children experience a full range of art and craft activities and develop skills with large physical play equipment. They choose from a plentiful amount of high quality resources that are suitable for different stages of development and activities are successfully adapted to challenge children at different stages effectively. They benefit from learning and play opportunities outside as well as inside the childminder's home, and through visits and outings. For example, they visit the park and adventure playgrounds, buy vegetables at the farm shop and develop social skills at parent and toddler groups. Children develop an excellent understanding of healthy eating and the benefit of exercise on their bodies. One child asks the childminder, 'can we do our exercises?' and when the inspector asks why, he replies, 'to make us grow!' .

Children's self-esteem is given an extremely high priority and they are confident and sociable. Initially parents are asked to complete a booklet on their child's stage of development and include their likes, dislikes, what makes them happy or sad, communication and social skills, physical development and favourite books, toys and songs. The childminder uses her knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and Foundation Stage curriculum to plan effectively and complete comprehensive files for parents detailing their child's learning. She records observations and takes photographs of activities and uses what she knows about children to lead them towards the next steps in their learning.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are known and addressed by the childminder. They benefit from very good communication between the childminder and parents that ensures consistency of care and promotes learning and development. Children's emotional security is addressed comprehensively and begins with a gradual introduction for each child that is agreed with parents. Admission information is thorough and valuable information for parents on the childminder's service is contained in a folder that she shares during the child's induction and includes, qualification and training certificates, insurance details and information on activities and resources. The childminder demonstrates a commitment to assessing and improving her service as she has developed a written complaints procedure. Parents are given copies of policies and procedures and are asked to sign to confirm that they have read them.

Children gain a good understanding of diversity. The childminder has drawn up an equal opportunities policy and identifies that she respects all children and aims to, 'recognise, value and encourage their individuality and their potential'. They are able to choose from a range of books and toys that reflect positive images and are learning to appreciate and value each others' similarities and differences by talking together and by celebrating a range of religious and cultural festivals. The childminder has past experience of providing for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She ensures that all children are valued, included and challenged

effectively. In a policy drawn up for parents she states that she will keep observations and share them with parents on a regular basis, consult with parents with regard to involving specialist services and, 'provide all children with relevant activities and play opportunities to promote well-being and development'.

Children behave well. Their self-esteem is given a high priority and the childminder ensures that behaviour is managed consistently and sensitively so that children never feel humiliated. A managing behaviour policy, effectively put into practice by the childminder, identifies that priority is given to the setting, 'reasonable and realistic limits to help manage the behaviour of children', and states the importance of a, 'positive approach to managing behaviour using praise whenever possible to promote a sense of well-being and self confidence'. Children learn to share, take turns and show consideration for others. The childminder is a good role model and takes account of different levels of development.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's individual needs are supported in a very welcoming, child centred environment. Space and routines are well organised and the range of available activities and plentiful resources ensure a stimulating atmosphere. Play space is organised to inspire and encourage children to enjoy and independently select resources. The childminder makes effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum and her practice comprehensively promotes children's safety, enjoyment and achievement. She holds a Nursery Nursing Examination Board (NNEB) qualification and she demonstrates a commitment to assessing and improving her childcare service as she regularly attends training. Courses completed between 2005 and 2007 include, managing behaviour, child protection, the autism spectrum and healthy eating. The childminder has achieved 'Children Come First' accreditation and has received funding for nursery education, although she has temporarily 'stepped out' of the local network.

All legally required documentation is in place and is kept in good order and up to date. A good partnership with parents is enhanced by policies given to all on parental involvement, care learning and play, confidentiality, health and safety, child protection, special needs, equal opportunities, sick children, nutrition and complaints. Overall, children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the time of the last inspection the childminder was asked to make sure the garden is secure and that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. This has been satisfactorily addressed to ensure children's safety.

### **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):

- develop food hygiene procedures, for example by monitoring the temperature of the fridge.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)