



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250706
Inspection date	07 February 2006
Inspector	Hazel Meadows

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 1998. She lives with her husband and her 3 children aged 14, 13 and 11 in the village of Trimley St Martin. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is an upstairs toilet and bathroom. There is a fully enclosed and well equipped garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding eight children, all on a part time basis, throughout the week. The childminder drives to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder occasionally attends the local parent and toddler group and local childminder group.

The family has a pet cat.

The childminder is a member of the Felixstowe and District Childminding Group .

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted because the childminder follows current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines and procedures. Children are protected from infection as the childminder she keeps her home to a very good level of cleanliness and ensures pets do not present a health risk.

Children follow simple good health and hygiene practices such as cleaning their hands before meals, touching pets or going to the toilet. For example, children wipe their hands with a damp j-cloth and towel which they pass around the table prior to having their snack. Children rest and sleep according to their needs and toddlers are able to sleep on the settee where the childminder can supervise them.

Children enjoy a wealth of physical activities and have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They regularly play in the garden which is extremely well equipped, which includes a large trampoline with a safety net, climbing frame, swing-set, ride on toys and bats and balls. Finer manipulative skills are developed and practiced as the children do puzzles, writing and colouring and craft activities.

The childminder provides all of the children's meals and snacks. Children benefit from a reasonably healthy diet of foods such as roast dinners, spaghetti Bolognese and snacks of fruit or crisps. For example, they were offered apple and squash for their snack and pasta and pizza for their main meal. All the children are offered the same foods but the childminder liaises with parents and considers children's allergies, intolerances and preferences. Children have access to a water dispenser in the conservatory or can ask for drink at any time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment where the childminder has taken steps to minimise risks. For example, hazardous items such as medicines and chemicals are stored out of reach in high cupboards, the hot water is regulated and the childminder is watchful of children.

Children play safely using a broad range of suitable and well maintained equipment. The large outdoor equipment is regularly checked and other toys are checked as they are used. Outside, children play securely in an enclosed garden where the back gate and sheds are kept bolted. There is a secure decking area to enable younger children and toddlers to play safely whilst the older children are on the large play equipment.

Children learn to keep themselves safe through reminders and clear explanations from the childminder. There is a clear, written safety policy, displayed in the conservatory, for playing on the trampoline. Children know the rules and tend to respect them. They can take achievable risks to develop their confidence and competence, for example, whilst playing on the larger equipment in the garden.

Children are kept safe on outings as they sit in appropriate sized car seats and the childminder ensures they fasten their seatbelts. The childminder plans in advance to anticipate potential risks. For example, she carries a laminated sheet in her car stating that she is registered childminder and that the children she is caring for may not be her own, plus her husbands mobile contact number, in case of emergencies.

Children are well protected from harm because the childminder has a clear understanding of potential signs and symptoms of abuse. She has recent training and understands her role and responsibility in child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and contented with the childminder and her home and routine. Children develop confidence and self-esteem as the childminder is attentive to them and treats them with kindness and respect. She listens to their contributions and gives them time to think and respond to any questions or requests.

Children are given opportunities to make their own choices and they select toys and activities from the broad range available. The toys and equipment offer children varying degrees of challenge enabling them to develop and increase their skills. Children show interest in what they see and do, for example, they enjoy a game of eye-spy in the car, taking turns and listening to one another. They enthusiastically engage in writing their own newspaper articles, increasing their thinking and learning and using their initiative. The childminder offers encouragement and positive praise for the children's efforts and patiently answers their questions.

Pre-school children enjoy a range of puzzles, construction and activity toys and craft activities. Toys are rotated to provide ongoing interest and variety. They also have opportunities to go to local parent and toddler groups. The childminder has downloaded and printed off 'Birth to three matters' framework and has not yet actively used it to support her care of children under three.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and their individuality is valued and respected. Children with particular needs are integrated and able to participate and enjoy activities. Children learn about the wider society through books and outings and some of the toys and resources promote positive images of diversity.

Children understand responsible behaviour through consistent and reasonable expectations from the childminder. For example, eating their food up at the table and sitting sensibly in the car. The childminder knows all the children well and recognises their different moods and manages their behaviour using sound and positive methods. For example, when they become particularly noisy in the car she uses a 'Who can be quiet the longest' game which successfully calms the children again and enables her to concentrate on the road. Children have healthy self-esteem and are confident and sociable. For example, they talk enthusiastically together and share ideas when doing their newspaper.

Children benefit from positive and trusting relationships between the childminder and their parents. Frequent ongoing communication is encouraged to promote the children's well-being and offer continuity of care. For example, the childminder speaks with parents when they drop off or collect or telephones them if it is not appropriate to talk in front of children. She is flexible to accommodate the needs and routines of parents and children. She encourages parents to ensure information is kept up to date to promote their child's welfare.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a sound knowledge and understanding of child development and a high regard for the well-being of all children. She maintains the required level of training to support the care of the children. The current ratios ensure that children receive adequate support and care to meet their needs.

Children's care and well being is promoted by good organisation. All documentation is effectively organised to help keep children safe and support their care. It is orderly, up to date and stored discreetly and confidentially in a box file but accessible. All the necessary parental consent forms are in place and any medication administration, accidents or incidents clearly recorded.

The childminder organises her home and time effectively and efficiently to meet the needs and routines of the children and to ensure a fun and stimulating environment.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to update training such as child protection and to consider making a safe area for storing excess rubbish prior to collection. She attended a Safeguarding Children Training course in September 2005 to update her knowledge of child protection and any rubbish is now safely stored and disposed of.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been two complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

In June 2004 Ofsted received a concern regarding a change of childminder's domestic circumstances and care of minded children by other parties whilst childminder on holiday. A visit was carried out by Ofsted. Children being collected by other parties over 8. Childminders domestic circumstances changed. Action given regarding notification of significant events to Ofsted.

Ofsted received a complaint regarding the childminder's supervision of children. In addition the complainant stated that the childminder has a new household member and Ofsted had not been informed. An Ofsted childcare inspector made an unannounced visit to the childminder's home on 26 September 2005 to investigate these concerns under National Standard 1: Suitable person, National Standard: 2 Organisation, National Standard 6: Safety, National Standard 12: Partnership with Parents and National Standard 14 Documentation. There was no evidence at the time of the visit to suggest any breaches in these standards and Ofsted will be taking no further action as a result.

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):

- continue to develop knowledge of 'Birth to three matters' to enhance existing good practice with children under three.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk