



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250711
Inspection date	31 January 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 outstanding. 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 1999. She lives with her husband and 2 children aged 9 and 12 near Felixstowe, in Suffolk. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is an upstairs toilet and bedrooms 2 and 3 are available for use by older children. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children under 8 years at any one time and is currently minding 6 children on a part-time basis, throughout the week. The childminder walks to and from local schools to take and collect children. She attends a local parent and toddler group and the local childminder group. The

family has a pet dog, two rabbits and gerbils.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends their local and national conferences. She is also the chairperson of the Felixstowe and District childminding group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is very well promoted because the childminder stringently follows current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines and has clear policies and procedures to protect children from infection. She keeps her home to a high standard of cleanliness and ensures that pets do not present a health risk to children. She has an excellent knowledge of food hygiene and food is stored and prepared in accordance with recommended procedures.

Children have an excellent understanding of simple good health and hygiene practices. For example, the older children independently wash their hands prior to snack and after toileting using liquid soap and individual hand towels and flannels. Children observe and follow good hygiene practice from an early age, for example, the childminder uses hand gel to clean her hands after changing nappies and toddlers spontaneously raise their hands for some gel.

Children are well nourished and benefit from healthy and nutritious meals and snacks provided by the childminder. A typed menu is available for parents and the childminder is careful to consider any particular health, dietary needs and preferences the children may have. She is promoting healthy eating within her household and children are given options such as yoghurts or fruit as snacks. Children can easily access a drink at any time. Children rest and sleep according to their individual needs and their home routine is maintained as much as possible to ensure continuity of care.

Children thrive as they enjoy many physical activities and have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They regularly walk to and from school and have access to a well equipped garden and local play areas to develop their coordination and physical skills using bats and balls, a slide, roller skates and ride on toys. They enthusiastically engage in more challenging movements at the local leisure centre where they take part in a mini gym session. They delight in music and movement sessions where they can dance and stretch to taped music. Their finer manipulative skills and control are encouraged through interesting craft activities and doing puzzles and construction.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and settled in a welcoming and child-friendly home.

Examples of their previous craft work and activities adorn the walls. Children play with suitable and safe toys and equipment which they can easily reach.

Children play safely in a secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment. For example, they primarily play downstairs where the childminder can easily supervise them and she always accompanies them when they play in the garden for any length of time. The childminder has anticipated potential hazards, for example, all potentially harmful items are well out of reach of children. She has a clear written policy for, and has practised, the emergency evacuation routine. Children learn to keep themselves safe and take achievable risks, developing their confidence and competence. For example, using a climbing frame in the local play area under the supervision of the childminder.

Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder considers where they are going and possible risks. She takes a mini first aid kit with her and always carries her mobile to contact parents. The childminder ensures children are securely strapped in when travelling in a car. Mostly, they walk to and from school with the childminder holding their hands securely or using reins or a wrist strap.

Children are well protected because the childminder has a thorough understanding of her role and responsibility in child protection. She updates her training as required and is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary, with local contact numbers readily available. She only releases children to authorised carers, sometimes using a password system in consultation with the parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy, contented and relaxed with the childminder and her home and routine. They develop confidence and self-esteem as the childminder treats them with kindness and respect and is attentive to them. She encourages toddlers to use words rather than just sounds but is attentive to their needs and requests and understands what they want.

Children are able to select their own resources and initiate their own games. Toys are within easy reach and they make up their own games using the plentiful resources. Children enthusiastically explore the toys within their reach. The childminder is skilled at playing with them to help focus their attention and increase their concentration. Children show interest in what they do and enjoy role play utilising stimulating variety of props and resources.

There is a wealth of toys and equipment for children of all ages, offering varying degrees of challenge and progression. Children are able to request additional items from the garage where toys are neatly stored and invitingly presented. Children delight in doing an imaginative range of craft work and take pride from their artwork being valued and displayed on the wall.

Children acquire new knowledge and skills as the childminder extends their learning through fun activities, for example, exploring Chinese New Year and doing a topic on

American Indians. Children also enjoy a delightful range of activities such as baking, doing crafts, making Christmas wreaths and enjoying outings to Cheeky Monkeys mini gym sessions, the zoo and doing a sponsored obstacle course. Children appear thrilled with their artwork and absorbed and engaged in their play, delighting in the activities and having great fun together.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children become aware of and develop an appreciation for their wider society through a variety of books and by doing stimulating topics and crafts on various festivals and events. For example, they learn about Chinese New Year and enjoy a variety of associated crafts and try Chinese food. Children also learn first-hand by the childminder using their personal experiences of visiting other countries and bringing diversity to life for them. For example, contacting relatives in the United States and celebrating Thanksgiving. Children's experience is enriched by playing with a variety of resources reflecting positive images of diversity.

All children are welcomed and their individuality is valued and respected. They are all offered opportunity to take part in activities at their own level. They are encouraged to be considerate of one another and appreciate differences or particular needs, re-enforced by the positive example and approach of the childminder. Children's independence and involvement is supported through additional equipment such as left-handed scissors and a toilet stool.

Children flourish in a secure environment where boundaries of acceptable behaviour are clear, consistent and fair. Children learn to keep themselves safe through positive and firm reinforcement from the childminder. For example, toddlers learn it is not safe to climb on furniture. Children fully understand the benefits of positive behaviour as they are rewarded, praised and offered more attention for behaving well, for example, use of a good behaviour book on an outing to the zoo.

The childminder establishes positive and trusting relationships with parents and liaises closely with them to meet children's individual needs. Children are settled in gradually and with sensitivity and ongoing communication is encouraged to promote the child's wellbeing and to offer continuity of care. For example, the childminder completes a daily diary for parents of younger children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder consistently provides a high standard of care for children. She has an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development and a high regard for the well-being of all children. She has completed an extensive range of training and has a commitment to ongoing training and development. This positively impacts on the children as they benefit through new ideas and activities, plus her skilled and enthusiastic approach to childminding.

Children's care and wellbeing are significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. All documentation is orderly, up to date and well presented. The childminder has written policies and procedures which are well thought through, individual to the setting and applied in practice. She is well informed about childminding and childcare issues both locally and nationally, which is reflected in her documentation, positive approach and practice.

The childminder organises her home and time effectively and efficiently to meet the individual needs and routines of the children and to ensure a fun and stimulating environment. Her consistent and reliable approach offers security and reassurance for children and their parents, coupled with flexibility and a variety of play and learning experiences. Children thrive through the high quality of care given.

Overall, the childminder is meeting the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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

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The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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:

