



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250840
Inspection date	20 February 2007
Inspector	Karen Pretty
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 1997. She lives with her partner and two children aged fifteen and twelve in Leiston, Suffolk. The whole of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three children at any one time and is currently minding four children on a part-time basis. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools. She attends the local parent and toddler group, takes children to the local library, park, beach and swimming pool.

The family has two cats and two rabbits.

The childminder is a member of a local childminder support group and the National Childminding Association. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and comfortable home where they are encouraged to follow good simple health and hygiene practices. Children are given opportunities to develop their own knowledge about personal hygiene as they are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Their health is promoted as the childminder obtains appropriate information from parents about their individual health care needs and all written consents are in place to support this. The childminder has attended first aid training and has accurate procedures in place to record accidents which are countersigned by parents. She is aware of the procedures to follow if administering medication. Children are protected from the spread of illness as the childminder has a clear policy in place, which she shares with parents, about the exclusion of children if they are ill.

Children are learning about healthy eating as the childminder provides children with healthy snacks, which feature fruit and vegetables. All meals provided by parents are stored appropriately. Children have constant access to drinks to ensure they do not become dehydrated. All children rest and sleep according to their needs, a travel cot is available for younger children and older children can rest on the sofa.

Children enjoy a range of physical play experiences that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They have regular access to the safe enclosed garden where they can use a range of equipment including footballs, bikes and ride-on toys. Babies have plenty of space indoors to pull themselves up and move around safely, the childminder provides a range of cause and effect toys to promote their physical development. Children frequently go with the childminder to the local park which gives them further opportunity to have the freedom to run around in the fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment, where they can move around freely and independently under the childminder's supervision. Children's safety is enhanced and the risk of accidental injury is minimised because the childminder has taken simple steps to reduce possible risks. For example, excluding children from the stairs and placing all hazardous chemicals in the kitchen out of children's reach. Fire safety precautions such as a fire blanket and smoke alarms are in place and the childminder has developed an emergency evacuation procedure to follow which she is aware she needs to practise with the children.

Children have access to a suitable range of toys and equipment that meet safety standards. These are mainly stored in the lounge and are rotated to ensure the children have a varied selection. The childminder regularly cleans and checks toys ensuring the risk of cross-infection is minimised. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe on outings as the childminder teaches them about road safety and they know to stay close. Children are transported in appropriately sized car seats and buggies and reins are available to keep children safe.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminder is conscious of her responsibilities to protect children, however, she does not have current information regarding the correct procedures to follow should she have a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very relaxed and content in the childminders care. They form good relationships with her and respond well to her caring and encouraging manner. Children can independently access resources which enables them to self-select and play with toys and equipment according to their preferences. Children's confidence and self-esteem are promoted because the childminder praises their achievements and knows their likes and dislikes. The childminder's accurate knowledge of child development enables her to provide children with a range of activities to suit their needs and interests. She gets down to the children's level and joins in with their play; her open ended questions allow her to extend and consolidate learning. Children are able to enjoy their favourite activities and play imaginatively, for example, using the tea set or moving vehicles around the rail and road set. Children confidently ask questions and use their initiative to satisfy their curiosity and solve problems.

The childminder reflects aspects of the 'Birth to three matters' framework in her good practice. She encourages young children's early communication skills by patiently listening and responding to their questions so that they know their views are valued. Children enjoy sharing books with the childminder and through her encouragement confidently name objects in the pictures. One child who attends has Spanish as a dual language, the childminder has obtained some Spanish books to support his language and she has also learnt several common words and phrases. The childminder is alert to the needs of younger children such as when they are tired, comforting and reassuring them by providing opportunities for them to snuggle in.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a strong sense of belonging because the childminder knows them and their families well and ensures they are all valued and included. Children have built good relationships with the childminder who responds sensitively to them and respects their individual personalities. All children have equal access to toys and equipment which meets their individual needs so they can become confident and independent. The childminder has several resources reflecting diversity and discusses people's similarities and differences with children, to help them develop an understanding of others.

The childminder has a positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, she works closely with parents to provide individual care required to promote children's welfare and development. She is willing to work with other agencies to further increase her knowledge and would undertake further training to accommodate an individual child's needs and promote their welfare.

Children learn about responsible behaviour as the childminder is a positive role model and has a good understanding of appropriate managing strategies depending on their stage of development. The childminder deals with behaviour in a calm and consistent manner. She has clear views on managing behaviour, which are shared with parents, to help promote this consistent approach.

Parents are able to share all written policies and procedures and information is provided to parents to ensure children are looked after according to their parents wishes. Information is exchanged verbally to ensure children's changing needs are met and to provide continuity of care. The childminder has good relationships with all parents, there are several references available from parents to support this which also outline the childminder's good practice. The childminder makes parents aware of how they can make a complaint and is aware of her duty to log complaints, should she ever receive any.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder organises her home to provide a secure, welcoming and child-friendly environment in which children can take part in a range of activities to support their care, learning and play. Space and resources are well organised to provide children with a good balance of interesting activities. The childminder follows accurate procedures to promote children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards and her responsibility to comply with them and the conditions of her registration, however, at the time of inspection her certificate was not displayed as required. Appropriate checks are in place to ensure children are cared for by a suitably vetted person and children are never left alone with any person not vetted. The childminder has attended relevant training to support her registration but is still keen to develop her knowledge and skills further. Children's needs are met by good adult to child ratios and children benefit from the individual care and attention given.

Children's well-being is effectively promoted by the documented information kept, this is well organised to support the care and welfare of children. All children's details are kept confidential and the childminder ensures children are cared for in accordance with their parent's wishes.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to continue to develop toys and resources to reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. The childminder now has several books which reflect diversity and some small world play figures. One child currently being minded uses Spanish as a dual language, the childminder has obtained some Spanish books to support his language development. Children are now surrounded with toys and resources which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability.

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):

- update knowledge and understanding regarding child protection issues
- ensure you comply with the conditions of your registration at all times, regarding displaying your certificate.

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