



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251114
Inspection date	16 November 2006
Inspector	Margaret Elizabeth Roberts
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1986. She lives with her husband in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. The ground floor is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding 12 children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group, takes children to the local library and the local park. The childminder has one dog and three rabbits.

She is an accredited member of the Suffolk Childminding Network and currently provides funded nursery education for children. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well because the childminder maintains a good standard of hygiene which helps to prevent the spread of infection. Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through the daily routines and the good practices that the childminder encourages them to follow. For example they are able to explain when they need to wash their hands, before eating and after going to the toilet and know that this is to get rid of the germs. Children's medical needs are met because the childminder has been trained in first aid and all relevant documentation is in place. First aid boxes are available in the home and on outings, written parental permission has been sought to allow for the seeking of any necessary medical advice or treatment. These practices ensure that children can be cared for appropriately should an emergency arise.

Children's healthy growth and development are promoted through nutritious packed lunches that are provided by the parents in consultation with the childminder. Fresh fruit and drinks are offered regularly ensuring that children do not go hungry or thirsty at anytime. They are taught the importance of good wholesome food by the childminder who includes them in an activity that teaches them about healthy eating.

Children's physical skills are promoted through the use of a range of small and large equipment. They have opportunities to play outside either in the garden or on the beach, which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They learn to run and jump by joining in with organised sports days or going to the local park. Indoor activities such as threading and using scissors helps to develop their eye-hand coordination skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into premises that are suitable for their purpose, welcoming to children and offer the necessary facilities and range of activities that help to promote their development. They are able to access a toilet situated off the playroom that helps to promote their independence. A quiet area has been made in the dining room so that babies can sleep without being disturbed. A wide range of safe, well-maintained furniture, equipment and toys helps to meet the varying needs of children, creating an reasonably accessible and very stimulating environment.

Children play safely because the childminder has taken reasonable steps both inside and outside to ensure that hazards to children are minimised. For example all dangerous substances, such as cleaning materials and medicines are inaccessible to children. Although the outside door is not locked, children understand that they are not to open the door and are supervised by the childminder at all times, ensuring that they do not leave the premises unsupervised. Fire safety precautions that are in place, for example fire alarms and a fire blanket situated in the kitchen, help to promote children's safety further. They learn about personal safety through practising

the emergency evacuation plan that the childminder has devised and know that if a fire breaks out they need to leave the building and dial '999'.

Children can be protected should abuse or neglect be suspected because the childminder has a good awareness of safeguarding children. She is able to recognise signs and symptoms, has attended training and has a reference pack to refer to on how to contact the relevant outside agencies.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time spent at the childminder's, where they have access to a wide variety of play and learning activities which helps to promote their emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities. Children are able to make decisions about their play through some self-selection and by asking the childminder for activities that they are unable to reach. They have opportunities to explore and investigate, particularly when playing outside, where they are able to plant seeds and watch them grow. Children benefit from the very positive relationships that they have with the childminder, who listens to children and supports them exceptionally well in their play and learning. Extremely good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework ensures that very young children are valued and that they become competent learners and skilful communicators from a very early age.

Nursery Education

The childminder is an accredited member of the Suffolk Childminding Network and therefore provides nursery education for some children.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children who receive funding are making good progress towards the early learning goals because the childminder has a secure knowledge of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and how children learn. She plans and provides a broad and balanced range of activities for children who learn through their play, covering all six areas of learning. She extends children's learning through asking simple open-ended questioning and giving them time to answer, helping them to achieve by giving gentle prompts. For example she will ask a child what number comes next and if they are unable to remember she will help them to count up to that number and then pause, giving them time to remember what does come next. Parents are included in their child's learning because the childminder takes time to find out what children already know and can do. Observations of how children are learning are recorded in their 'Step by Step' learning booklets and the childminder has begun to use this to move them onto the next stage of their learning. However, because children's folders are disorganised it is not always clear what needs to be included to ensure that the child's next steps of learning are promoted.

Children are confident learners, taking an interest in what they do and sustaining that interest for a period of time in self-chosen and adult led activities. They are kind and caring to others, sharing and taking turns, often with much younger children. They communicate well and often initiate conversations, talking animatedly about what they have been doing. For example, explaining every detail about what had taken place when they visited the fire station and that

they had held the fire hose and sprayed it everywhere. Children are able to recognise their name and are beginning to sound out letters.

Children are able to count to 12 and beyond, recognise written number and are beginning to understand simple calculation, such as more or less. They learn about our diverse culture through planned topics, such as the celebration of different festivals. Outings taken to the local zoo and watching things grow, helps children to discover the world around us. Children's creative skills are promoted very well through a variety of activities. They enjoy making clay pots and then painting them after they have set, discussing colours and finding out what happens when two colours are mixed together. Their imaginative skills are encouraged through role play situations, where they enjoy dressing up in a range of outfits.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about equality through their play and learning because they are encouraged to be kind and caring to one another. All children have access to an appropriate range of activities and facilities that helps to meet their individual needs. Children are treated with equal concern and all age groups have access to the same opportunities. For example toddlers are encouraged to do painting along side their older peers, with the childminding adapting the activity as necessary, so that they can achieve an outcome. Children with special needs can be cared for because the childminder works closely with parents and carers. She observes children and if concerns arise she consults with parents, so that steps can be taken to ensure that appropriate care can be given to promote their welfare and development.

Children behave exceptionally well. They are lively but respond positively to the childminder because she is able to manage a wide range of behaviour. Children follow her good role model which encourages them to behave well. The use of positive techniques such as intervention and distraction, with praise for good behaviour, helps children to learn about right and wrong while promoting their self-esteem. Parents are informed about behaviour management through the childminder's policy which is reflected in her practice. Children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is exceptionally good. They have access to good quality information about the childminder's provision which includes some information about the national curriculum. Children's care and learning is enhanced because the childminder actively involves parents and carers to become involved in their child's learning by using daily diaries, informing them of their child's activities and progress throughout the day. They have access to their children's assessment folders on an informal basis, when they can view them at anytime and also when they are given them at the end of each half term. Regular newsletters and questionnaires to complete ensures that the childminder seeks and acts on parents' views, promoting children's well-being, development and progress at all times.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care and learning is promoted because the childminder has the appropriate skills, experience and qualifications. She has been minding for 20 years and holds a level three qualification in childcare and education. Space is organised so that children are able to self-select activities within the playroom. However, because of the organisation of the many varied resources, children are not always able to randomly select what they would like to play with which, on occasions inhibits their independence. The childminder has developed an operational plan which is very comprehensive and works very well in practice.

All relevant documentation is in place and the childminder has a working set of policies and procedures, which helps her to carry out her work effectively and has a positive impact on the care children receive. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain written parental permission for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment; complete a first aid course which includes training in first aid for infants and young children within six months; obtain written parental permission for children to be transported in a vehicle and provide separate information sheets for each child's details.

The childminder has made good improvements. Children's medical needs are now fully met because the childminder has completed a first aid course which included training in first aid for infants and young children; also, parental permission for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment has been obtained. Their safety has been further enhanced because written parental permission for children to be transported in a vehicle has been requested and separate information sheets for each child are in place, which ensures that there is no confusion should an emergency arise.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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.

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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):

- improve the accessibility of activities to promote children's independence more effectively.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to improve the recordings of children's assessments so that the next steps of learning are clear.

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