



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY251951
Inspection date	12 July 2006
Inspector	Margaret Coyne
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 2003. She lives with her husband, one adult child and one child aged 14 years. They live in Northampton. The whole premises are used for childminding. This consists of a lounge, kitchen/diner and downstairs cloakroom and three bedrooms on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time and is currently caring for two children under five all day. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends a local toddler group and childminding support groups. The family have two pet cats.

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 are warmly welcomed into a friendly home environment where they can play, rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Children learn about simple hygiene practices and personal care through their daily routine and appropriate role modelling from the childminder. For example, washing hands after playing outside, after using the toilet and before eating. Some gentle reminders have to be given to younger children to instil the routine. Children are protected from infection because the childminder ensures the home, toys and equipment are clean, pets are well cared for and procedures are in place such as a 'sick child' policy. All necessary consent has been obtained from parents to ensure the children's health is maintained and the childminder holds a current first aid certificate. Younger children's personal care is fully supervised. The childminder checks nappies frequently and changes these as often as necessary following good hygiene practice with her routines.

Children's individual dietary needs are met by the childminder taking into account the parents' wishes. They enjoy healthy meals and snacks which parents and the childminder supply. For example, fresh fruit and home cooked meals which the childminder reheats. Children are encouraged to try new tastes during meal and snack times, along with having cooking activities. Children remain hydrated because the childminder ensures they have regular drinks throughout the day. She has a flexible approach to providing meals for children and through discussion she demonstrates a good understanding of healthy eating.

Children enjoy a wide range of energetic physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Children are beginning to learn the control and abilities of their bodies and adapt their skills to enable them to take part. For example, when playing on the equipment at the local park and when walking in the woods. They take part in many physical activities in the toddler and childminder groups they attend. This helps them develop self-confidence in their skills as they use a range of indoor and outdoor toys and equipment. Children's dexterity and hand and eye coordination is developed as they use brushes and pencils, build jigsaws and manipulate small figures in the dolls house. Children are able to rest or sleep according to their individual needs and routines.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an environment which allows them to be relaxed and feel very much at home. There is space to play, explore and move independently. The childminder supervises the children and is on hand to interact and support their play which enriches their experiences. Children are very safe in and around the home and extensive measures are in place, such as stair gates, safety glass, socket covers and fire safety equipment. Alongside these all written procedures and documents help extend and promote the children's safety. These prevent accidents and minimise potential risks. Children have opportunity to practise evacuation procedures to develop their understanding of how to leave the home in the event of an emergency. Children display an excellent understanding of keeping themselves safe in the home

as they follow the rules and boundaries such as not throwing toys or climbing on the furniture. Children are well supervised when out of the home because the childminder is vigilant and committed to their safety. They enjoy walks to the park and other places of interest, The childminder reinforces road safety with the children at all times to extend their understanding of safety when out of the home. They follow simple safety rules such as always staying in sight, holding hands and holding the buggy.

Children have access to a wide range of toys and equipment which enables them to develop at their own level and individual needs are met. They are able to choose from the available resources and can request or help themselves to favourite items. Children are introduced to exceptionally clean, safe household items as well as manufactured toys so they can extend their own play in a safe and stimulating manner. They also enjoy visits to the book and toy library. Children are beginning to help tidy up when they finish playing or when making space for another activity such as floor puzzles. This helps children to have respect for other people's belongings and to prevent accidents. Children experience different play environments due to the childminder incorporating outings to toddler groups and childminder support groups into her daily activities.

Children are protected from possible abuse and neglect. The childminder has a sensitive understanding of the procedures to follow and has supporting documents in place to refer to in the event of any concerns. There is a confidential system in place to record any concerns. She has an excellent awareness of all aspects of child protection and is confident she can act on any concerns she may have about a child in her care in order to fully protect the child. She is exemplary about keeping her records and documents up to date to provide clear evidence of her good practice and to support the care she provides for each child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are well-settled and happy at the childminder's home. They are secure and confident in themselves and with the other children attending. Children are sociable with the childminder and visitors, relaxed and contented in their play. When different ages of children are attending they play well together, share activities and acquire new skills such as sharing and taking turns. Lots of lovely conversations take place in this language rich home and children have become vocal and articulate due to this positive interaction. Lots of open-ended questions produce answers from the children as they think things through for themselves. Children's independence skills are developing as they take part in child-initiated activities using their own imaginations. For example, when playing with the dolls house they use their imaginations to extend their play sharing the equipment between them. The children respond positively to the childminder and the interaction between them all is happy, calm and harmonious. This benefits the children as they know the childminder well and feel safe and valued in her company.

Children are very well supported by the childminder whilst enjoying a wide range of stimulating and challenging experiences. The activities are varied and appropriate to the children's development. This enables them to move forward and to progress. Children have opportunity to take part in both creative and cooking activities both within the home and when at the various groups they attend. The childminder is adept in introducing language and mathematical knowledge into everyday play as they take part in songs and counting. Children enjoy simple

activities based on their development such as shared reading and doing jigsaws. Children decide to play shopping and make a verbal list of the items to buy from the shops. This includes favourite things such as crisps, sandwiches and fruit. A play library card was found and children then suggested a trip to the library to get some favourite books.

Clear routines enable children to develop their sense of belonging as they know what happens next. This helps develop their sense of security and confidence as they freely access toys and activities. Most play is child initiated and the childminder is on hand to support and direct their play. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge and training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She understands how children achieve, settle and progress. Some planning has been developed in line with the Foundation Stage and helps her plan activities for the children to take part in. However, less planning is in place for younger children to develop their capabilities across the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Individual children's routines are respected which promotes their well-being and contributes to their progress. The childminder is considerate about recognising the individual needs of children and plans activities accordingly. This clearly demonstrates her understanding of the children and their need to develop at their own pace.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have a positive attitude and are provided with a well-balanced view of the world around them and an awareness of diversity through activities, books, discussion and other resources. Children's views are respected and the childminder can confidently answer their questions and involve them in discussions about the world around them. Children are encouraged to develop a sense of their own identity and culture and are helped to understand different cultures and life styles and have a positive approach to other people. They have joined in activities making flags for the World Cup and the celebration of Saint Georges day. Other less familiar festivals are celebrated such as Diwali. Children visit places in their community such as the parks, the local library and toddler groups to gain a wider view of the world around them and to be sociable with others. All children are accepted and valued and activities can be adapted to meet the needs of all. The childminder would consider caring for any child and has an equal opportunity policy in place which reflects this.

Children present are happy, secure and play well together. They have an excellent awareness of the boundaries and acceptable behaviour as they share toys and time with the childminder. Dramas are avoided through well-managed strategies and children are offered time out and discussion on a one to one basis. Children integrate well together and involve each other in their play. They respond well to direction and happily carry on with their choice of play. Children have a strong sense of belonging within their environment and with the childminder. This was evident in the way they play and interact together and with the childminder.

The childminder has developed excellent relationships with parents which impact positively on the confidence and security of each child. Children's progress and daily achievements are discussed and parents involvement is encouraged. Home link books are maintained and give details of the children's day spent with the childminder. This exchange of information contributes to the children's health, safety and development. Parents are provided with information about

the childminder's practice both written and verbally. All required consents have been obtained from parents to ensure their children can play a full part in the activities of the day. Parents are aware how to make a complaint and a policy has been produced for this effect. However, a complaints record is not in place to record any complaints and to identify the action taken to rectify these between parents and childminder. Parents have provided glowing testimonials to the childminder's flexibility, professionalism and caring nature. They feel she has had a positive impact and effect on the lives of their children. The childminder has policies and procedures which contribute to the professional and extensive portfolio for parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are relaxed, feel secure and comfortable in this well-organised environment. The space, resources and daily routine are organised extremely well. Children are confident when choosing their own play and seek adult support when needed. Documentation is very well-maintained and organised. This is used effectively to promote the care, welfare and learning of each child. Records are shared with parents and they can access them at any time. Verbal and written information is exchanged on a regular basis about their child's progress and achievements. This contributes to a trusting relationship which impacts positively on the children's feelings of security and trust. The children's daily routine is purposefully organised to meet their individual needs, such as sleep patterns, outings, meals and time to play freely. The children benefit from individual time spent with the childminder building trusting and caring relationships with each child.

Children benefit greatly from the childminder's awareness of the importance of record keeping. She maintains ratios in order to be able to fully support each child and meet their individual needs. The childminder continues to add to her own personal development through the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support younger children's progress and achievements and with other workshops and training she has attended or is booked to attend. This enables her to offer good care and facilities for children of all ages. Her organisational skills with her records and documents are extremely efficient and enables her to fully support each child's care, learning and play as well as providing enhanced evidence of her good practice. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to develop her knowledge of child protection and to ensure information required to provide appropriate care for children is up to date.

The childminder has gained additional information from the 'What to Do If You Think A Child Is Being Abused Summary' and other publications. She demonstrated that she is knowledgeable about different aspects of child protection. She is confident she can protect the children in her care. She is hoping to attend the basic child protection training course later this year.

All information required to provide care for the children is up to date and includes a daily journal to share information with parents about their child's time spent with her. Verbal information

is also shared with parents about all aspects of their child's care and learning which benefits the family as a whole.

Complaints 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.

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 your planning and provision of activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities, for example, through use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- introduce a system to record any complaints and the action taken to rectify these.

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