



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY318235
Inspection date	22 March 2007
Inspector	Rosalie Mary Turner
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 2005. She lives with her husband and three children aged three, five and seven years in a village to the south of Norwich, Norfolk. All areas of the childminder's home, except for the shower and utility room, are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three children at any one time and is currently minding eight children on a part-time basis. The family keeps cold water fish.

The childminder holds an appropriate early years qualification and she is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and well maintained home where the childminder encourages them to manage their own personal hygiene. She discusses the importance of keeping their hands clean and reminds children to wash their hands before they eat their meals. However, they could be at risk from cross infection because all children share a towel to dry their hands and the childminder does not use disposable gloves when she changes babies' nappies. Children's well-being is assured as the childminder maintains a robust record of accidents and all medicines that have been administered. Parents have also given their consent to enable her to seek emergency medical care so that their children are able to receive prompt assistance if they are ill or injured.

Children's growth and development is well promoted because the childminder checks their dietary requirements before she provides care and caters for individual likes and dislikes when providing food. They display very good table manners as they sit together to enjoy their mid-morning snack sitting correctly and saying 'please' or 'thank you'. Children are offered a range of nutritious options that contribute to their understanding of a healthy diet, such as soup, pasta and cereals. Their learning is reinforced by planting and picking fresh vegetables from the garden to encourage children to make healthy choices. Drinks of fresh water are readily available throughout the day and toddlers relish the close personal comfort they are given while they are drinking their milk.

Children have plenty of opportunities to access fresh air to help them to develop a positive attitude to healthy living. Outside play is offered when the weather is fine and children look forward to playing in the large garden where they can run around and use up their surplus energy. The childminder provides a worthwhile range of large physical play equipment including a low climbing unit and slide, swing and trampoline to encourage children to recognise that regular exercise will help to keep them fit and healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are emotionally secure because the childminder is very kind and friendly towards them. She helps them to settle quickly by providing their favourite toys and encouraging them to bring a comforter. Children receive a warm welcome into her child-centred home and feel at home when they see the attractive range of good quality age-appropriate toys set out in the lounge. The colourful display of art work in the kitchen also helps them to easily separate from their carers.

Children have a very safe environment in which to play because the childminder has a thorough understanding of safety issues and she takes robust steps to reduce any potential hazards so that they can play freely. For instance, she ensures that hot drinks are placed well out of reach of children and keeps the front door locked when she is childminding so that they cannot leave unsupervised. Children are confident in their understanding of how to keep themselves safe

when they are taken for walks. The childminder talks about road safety so that they know they must hold her hand, look both ways and listen to avoid the dangers from traffic.

Children are appropriately safeguarded from the risk of possible harm. They are protected from possible 'stranger danger' because they are never left alone with persons who have not been vetted or released to adults unless the childminder has permission from their parents and a password is known. Furthermore, children are effectively protected through her sound ability to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible child abuse. The childminder also keeps Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance to hand so that she can respond quickly to any concerns and has developed a detailed policy to ensure that parents understand her responsibilities to safeguard their children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, relaxed and contented in the childminder's company. They have formed a strong bond with her because she is kind, affectionate and clearly enjoys working alongside them. Children's development is assured because of the childminder's commendable interactions with them and they benefit from the close personal attention they receive. For example, she reassures toddlers through praise and encouragement, such as 'Well done! That's difficult isn't it?' In addition, she skilfully asks older children 'What noises do sheep make?' and 'Where's the tractor?' or refers to colours to help them to make progress. Children's communication skills are very well promoted because the childminder looks at them as she is talking to them. She speaks clearly and often repeats words so that they learn to talk and extend their vocabulary.

Children are meaningfully occupied as they can independently access the bright, colourful resources and they are becoming self-assured from an early age. Toys are regularly circulated so that they remain appealing to the children and the childminder sits with them to develop their play. For example, she helps toddlers to sequence numbers by counting the scoops of soil needed to fill each pot as they plant sunflower seeds and there is a low-level number line to help older children to recreate numerals. She continually chats about what they are doing asking 'What insects like flowers?' and she reads 'Ben plants a butterfly garden' so they appreciate why it is important to grow flowers. Children are interested in books and they enjoy stories because the childminder holds the book so that they can see the pictures. She points out items of interest so that children quickly learn that words carry meaning and they develop early reading skills.

As a result of the childminder's valuable support, children enjoy themselves and have great fun while they learn.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children from all backgrounds are treated equally and fairly. They are respected and valued by the childminder who meets their differing needs very well. For example, she divides her time so that each child benefits from individual attention and quickly detects when they become

tired so that they can enjoy quieter activities. Children learn about the lifestyles of others and are able to value diversity through the range of positive resources that reflect our multi-cultural society. They are helped to feel good about themselves because the childminder uses their names and looks at them when she is talking to show that she is interested in what they say and do.

Although the childminder is not currently providing care for children having learning difficulties and/or disabilities, she has an in depth awareness of the stages of child development. She is able to recognise any delays in reaching milestones and she would immediately note and discuss any identified concerns with parents or carers so that their children receive appropriate support. Consequently, children of all abilities are able to reach their full potential and make rapid progress.

Children behave very well because the childminder has a positive policy that she uses to agree her practices with parents so that they are consistent with those used at home. Therefore, children know what is expected of them and they behave very well. The childminder provides pleasing guidance and gets down to the children's level to talk about their actions, calmly explaining 'We sit on chairs or we may fall'. She quietly praises their positive actions so that they are repeated and, as a result, children are learning right from wrong.

Firm relationships with parents and carers have been developed. As well as collecting comprehensive details about each child, the childminder ensures that their parents have all the information that they require before minding commences. For instance, her detailed policy pack ensures prospective parents are fully informed about the service that she provides and helps them to understand the standards of care that will be offered to their children. This valuable exchange of information continues once minding is established through daily conversations when children are delivered or collected. Consequently, children's current needs are met and parents state that they are pleased with her provision. They particularly like the 'very stimulating and educational' activities and say that their children 'really enjoy the time that they spend with the childminder'. Despite their satisfaction, the childminder has systems in place to guide parents on actions that they may take if they have future concerns about her practice. Therefore, children's welfare, care and learning is very well supported.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's well-being is suitably supported through the skilful management of the premises and the pleasing organisation of the resources. The childminder is clear about her responsibilities and she makes sure that all adults living in the household are vetted to safeguard children's welfare. She holds an appropriate early years qualification and displays a valuable knowledge of how young children learn. However, the childminder is committed to continual improvement and has secured a place on short courses, such as behaviour management and child protection to ensure that her knowledge and skills remain up to date.

Children benefit from a happy atmosphere and the company of an enthusiastic childminder who plans her time to ensure that they are safe and well stimulated. For instance, she organises her minding arrangements so that care is provided for children from one family at any one time

so that she can meet their individual needs extremely well. Children can initiate their own play and confidently access the stimulating toys that are presented at their level. Toddlers have plenty of carpeted floor space to explore so that they gain control over their bodies and the wipe clean kitchen table enables children to experience messy play, such as painting, gluing or cooking.

Most legally required documentation is robustly maintained and records relating to the minded children are retained ensuring that the childminder is able to care for them in a safe and effective manner. Children's personal details and contracts with parents are reviewed as soon as details change, to ensure that the care provided is appropriate to their current requirements. However, the register of children's attendance is not marked as soon as they arrive to ensure that their welfare is fully safeguarded.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- improve practices to prevent the spread of infection, in particular for drying children's hands and changing nappies
- improve record keeping to ensure the register of children's attendance is accurately maintained.

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