



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	257423
Inspection date	19 April 2006
Inspector	Katherine Powell

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 has been registered since 2000. She is registered to provide care for five children under eight years; of these, not more than three may be under five years, and of these not more than one may be under one year. At present she cares for two children under the age of five years on a regular basis.

The childminder lives with her husband and two daughters. The house is situated on a residential estate on the outskirts of the market town of Sleaford. Shops, schools and pre-schools are all within walking distance.

All areas of the property are used for childminding although this mainly takes place in the lounge and conservatory. There is a fully enclosed back garden containing large play equipment which is used for outside play.

The family has a rabbit which is kept in a hutch in the rear garden.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and local childminding group. She has completed a recognised childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean home where they learn about the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines. For example, children wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children's dietary requirements, including their likes and dislikes, are met through close communication with parents. Children enjoy healthy snacks, such as fresh fruit, and have access to regular drinks. Through discussion children are developing their awareness of the benefits of eating a healthy diet.

Children enjoy participating in a wide range of activities which contribute to their health, for example, they are taken on regular walks around the local area and use the play equipment in the garden to practise and develop their physical skills and co-ordination. Children are able to rest and relax according to their individual needs as there is comfortable seating in the lounge.

The childminder maintains appropriate records and has effective systems in place to ensure children's health is promoted. However, written permission has not been sought from parents with regard to seeking emergency medical treatment. The childminder has completed a first aid course and an appropriate first aid box is provided. This ensures that any accidents can be dealt with effectively.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained, child friendly and safe environment. The childminder regularly assesses her home to ensure the risk of accidents is minimised. For example, electrical sockets are covered and hazardous substances are kept out of reach of children. The garden is fully enclosed and secure enabling children to play outside safely. Children benefit from being able to move around freely and independently within the home, accessing different areas for a variety of play activities. For example, the garden is used for outdoor activities, the lounge and conservatory are used for active play and a bedroom is available for quiet activities. Toys and equipment are of a high quality and are maintained in a clean and safe condition. Low level shelving enables children to reach toys and games safely and easily and the childminder is mindful of ensuring that young children are unable to

access games with small pieces.

Children are well supervised at all times, both indoors and outdoors, to ensure their safety. Effective procedures are in place when taking children on outings and children learn about road safety when walking around the village. The childminder has appropriate fire safety equipment in place, such as a fire blanket in the kitchen and smoke detectors. Children benefit from taking part in fire drills which enables them to learn how to evacuate the premises calmly in an emergency. The childminder has a generally sound awareness of child protection procedures which enables her to promote and safeguard children's welfare. However, current government guidance on child protection is not readily available to ensure correct procedures are followed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident in the childminder's home. They enjoy participating in a broad and stimulating range of activities which engage their interest and meet their individual developmental needs. Children have good opportunities to develop their social skills as they play alongside other children and when sitting together at the table at meal times. They also have opportunities to socialise with other children at local pre-school groups. Children are able to initiate their own activities and freely select from a good range of toys and play equipment. They receive good support during play activities and the childminder promotes children's speech and language skills through effective interaction. Children enjoy selecting books to share with the childminder and are fostering an interest in reading.

Children participate in a range of activities which help to promote their learning in different areas. For example, the garden is regularly used to enable children to practise their physical skills and a wide range of materials and play equipment are provided to encourage children's creativity and use of imagination. The childminder makes good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan a suitable range of activities which promote the learning outcomes for young children in all areas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled and are valued and respected as individuals. Consequently, children feel confident and settled in the childminder's care. Children are able to learn about the local community by going on regular walks and outings. In addition, they are developing their awareness of diversity within society through access to play equipment which reflects positive images and through some planned activities. For example, children have visited a local restaurant during a topic on Diwali to taste some Indian food. Children have equal access to activities and their individual needs are well met. The childminder is aware of the information she would need to gather to ensure appropriate care could be provided for children with special needs.

Children have developed good relationships with the childminder and good standards of behaviour are maintained. They learn to share play equipment and take turns and benefit from being given consistent boundaries. Children's self-esteem is well promoted through regular praise and encouragement.

The childminder fosters positive relationships with parents. Parents are provided with some useful information about the childminder's service in her portfolio. The childminder maintains good written records for each child and information regarding children's care, routines and progress is exchanged verbally with parents on a daily basis. As a result, children's individual needs are well met and they are cared for within their usual routines.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from good levels of support and supervision, which enables them to feel safe and secure in the setting. Consequently, children are confident to make their own choices, selecting toys and initiating play. Space is organised well to ensure children are able to move freely between different play areas, including the garden.

Documentation is well-organised and held securely, ensuring confidentiality for children and parents. All required documentation is in place and is shared with parents. Children benefit from information being shared on a daily basis between the childminder and parents, ensuring their individual needs are met.

The childminder has developed her awareness of childcare issues through completing a recognised qualification and attending a range of professional courses, such as reading to young children and planning physical activities. The childminder uses this knowledge well to provide good quality care. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one recommendation was raised with regard to obtaining written permission from parents to transport children in a vehicle. The childminder has sought written permission from all parents and this has helped to further improve safety procedures.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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):

- obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical treatment
- develop awareness of the Government booklet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused - summary'.

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: www.ofsted.gov.uk