



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313265
Inspection date	22 May 2006
Inspector	Margaret Bryant
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1997. She lives with her partner, two adult children and a son aged 13 years. She lives in the West of the City of Hull, some three miles from the city centre. She has another childminder who at times works alongside her. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. She is registered to care for five children at any one time when working alone. When working with another childminder she may care for a maximum of ten children. Currently there are 24 children on roll, 16 of whom are under eight years. The childminder is an accredited member of the Hull Childminding Network and currently provides funded early education for two children.

The childminder takes children on outings to the park, toddler groups, soft play centres and museums. The family have two guinea pigs; chickens; four dogs; one cat and fish.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She is the Vice Chairperson of the local support group for childminders and a member of the National Childminding Association. She has the BTEC National certificate in caring.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a home where adequate measures are in place to prevent them from the risk of infection. For example, there is a separate sink for children's hand washing with individual paper towels for them to dry their hands and dispose of them into a lidded bin. Children go independently and confidently to wash their hands, without prompting, after messy play such as painting and before they eat any food. They also wash their hands properly after visiting the toilet though are unclear as to why this is important. Children who are not able to go to the toilet independently begin to learn about hand washing through having their hands wiped by the childminder. Nappy changing is done with respect for children's privacy and dignity as well as regard for cross infection through the childminder wearing gloves. Nappy disposal is done immediately afterwards into the outside dustbin

Toys and play materials in use by children are in a clean condition with work preparation surfaces cleaned before and after the preparation of snacks with anti bacterial spray. However, standards of hygiene in the home are only adequate and not all equipment in use by children is clean. Children have access to a wide range of pets at the childminder's home. They learn to care for them and learn about hygiene, for example, they learn they should always wash their hands after handling them. Children's health and well being is also protected by a childminder who through the completion of first aid training, feels confident to deal with any emergency situations.

The lack of outdoor play does not hinder children's progress with regard to physical development. This is because they enjoy regular outings to the soft play centres and the park. The childminder takes bats, balls and Frisbees to the park to help children learn the skills of catching, kicking and throwing. They also enjoy the freedom of being able to run around in the open spaces. Children move around the available space within the childminder's home and also learn to relax, sitting together on the settee listening quietly to stories. They learn about why it is important for their bodies to have exercise, to make them grow. Babies and toddlers physical development and confidence is boosted, through helping them to have the confidence to stand up and walk, with strategically placed equipment to help them do this. They also enjoy the soft play centres they go to weekly, where in the ball pools they are helped to develop their skills of kicking, pushing, all of which helps their leg muscles and arms to develop. The childminder also responds to young children's necessary need for rest and sleep, in accordance with parents wishes.

The childminder does not cook or prepare any meals for children. Food for babies is brought in by parents on a daily basis with older children taken daily to the shops to choose what they want. It is then brought back and put onto plates for them to enjoy. The childminder takes into account children's individual dietary needs and ensures that the food they buy is healthy. Children help themselves to a variety of fruit which is served for their snacks also. Drinks are

given at snack times but fresh drinking water is not readily available at all times for children to help themselves whenever they wish.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in premises which are warm and welcoming with many displays on the wall, including photographic displays of children pursuing and enjoying a varied range of activities. The home is generally safe with fire guards and stair gates in place, however, there are several trailing and unsecured cables. Also the home is cluttered at times with too many activities out at once. There are good measures in place, however, to monitor the arrival of any visitors to the home, through the availability of CCTV on the front door. Monitors inside allow the childminder to see who is at the door and when she is satisfied with the identity of the caller, she then answers the door to them. Children know the importance of keeping safe when outdoors, such as holding the childminder's hand. They also know that when embarking from the childminder's car, they must wait on the footpath for the childminder and not run off. Younger, less mobile children are securely strapped into pushchairs to ensure their utmost safety.

All toys and resources are in a satisfactory condition with a good variety of these easily accessible for children. Storage of resources is mainly in accessible drawer units, boxes and on shelves. The childminder is careful, however, to ensure that storage of materials inappropriate for younger children and babies to use, are inaccessible. Children learn about the dangers of fire through the stories the childminder reads to them, however, they do not take part in fire drills. There is appropriate equipment in place to alert the childminder to danger with working smoke alarms, there is a fire blanket and guards are fitted around the gas fires.

The childminder is aware of her responsibilities to keep children safe from harm and shows knowledge of the local safeguarding children procedures, being aware that safety of children is her main priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children excitedly and happily enter the childminder's home, taking off their shoes and coats, before excitedly entering the play room. All children easily settle and engage in the activities available for them. There are opportunities for them to be involved in all types of play supported by a childminder who is kind, caring, listens to the children and values what they have to say. Young children equally enjoy hand painting and playing with the dough, alongside older children, however, at times there is a lack of stimulation and direction in their play. Children's efforts in creative activities are appreciated by the childminder with some of their work in frames on the wall for all to see. This helps them to feel good about themselves. Children enjoy the experience of the many outings they pursue with the childminder to the parks, the pet shops, toddler groups and museums. They talk and reflect together about these outings which help to increase their knowledge of the world around them and of days gone by. They remember seeing and

experiencing the horse drawn carriage through which they learn about what life and transport was like in days gone by.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. This is because the childminder demonstrates an understanding of the Foundation Stage, which underpins the curriculum for early years education. However, there is no clear planning in terms of ensuring children's individual progression through the stepping stones and towards the early learning goals. Planning does not clearly build on what children know and can do and individual children's achievements are not used to help plan appropriately for their next stage of learning. Parents are also not sufficiently helped to have clear information and an understanding of what their children have achieved and where they need to develop further. The childminder ensures children are provided with a varied curriculum for learning though opportunities are missed to enhance and develop learning in some areas.

Children show interest in early counting skills, for example, they enjoy counting the balloons in the story as well as counting the frogs on the computer game. They also count independently though are not sufficiently encouraged to apply their counting skills through everyday play activities. Children are introduced to calculation through software on the computer and begin to learn about numbers being more than or less than. They have tills available to them which also helps them with calculating, learning about money and numbers when giving change. Children develop their knowledge of shapes, space and measure through construction activities and build sandcastles together learning about size, such as big and little.

Children show curiosity in their play and show high levels of concentration when painting with their hands as well as when making sandcastles, mixing together the water and sand to obtain the right consistency. They are very happy, very confident and secure in their surroundings and friendships are in place between children, who generally get along well together. They also show care and concern for other living creatures and the environment in which they live, helping to clean out the guinea pigs and learn about the life cycle of the chicken. Children receive praise and encouragement in their play and excitedly receive stickers for work well done. They enjoy singing, listening to music and have a wide range of musical instruments available for them to enjoy, some of which are native to other countries.

Children really enjoy imaginative play and use the resources available to create props to support their play. For example, they dress up in high heeled shoes, wearing hats, and with handbags they imagine they are going shopping asking their friends what they want getting. They happily communicate with each other and have good fun. Children also enjoy playing with the play dough and the sand, feeling this trickle through their fingers and feeling the texture change when water is added to it. Children excitedly recall the outings on which they go, including to the sea life centre where there is an array of creatures to learn about. They also talk about where people and animals live knowing that people live in houses, animals live in cages and in the jungle and some mammals live in the sea. Children are very confident in their communication with the childminder and others.

Children listen to and enjoy the familiar stories the childminder reads to them. They show enthusiasm and concentration, answering the questions the childminder asks them and excitedly anticipate what comes next. The childminder helps children to understand that print has meaning by pointing to the words as she reads the text. However, opportunities are missed for children to write and make marks on paper. There is also a lack of access and availability of one handed tools for children to engage in hand eye coordination. The visits with children to the soft play activity centres help their physical development through enabling children to negotiate walkways, squeeze through spaces and balance on the equipment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an environment which is free from discrimination, where they are valued as individuals and all treated with equal concern by the childminder. This helps them to feel included and important. The childminder is patient in her dealings with children and caring in her approach to them which results in them showing her affection in appreciation. She cares for children according to parents individual wishes and any specific information is recorded for her attention. She introduces children to other countries through letting them sample the different foods. They are helped to recognise and value each other's similarities and differences and have respect for each other. Children's work and photographs show them enjoying the many festivals from around the world in which they are involved in. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural needs are fostered through helping them to feel important and understand about diversity in the world around them.

The childminder is proactive in supporting children with additional and special needs and ensures activities and play space is adapted accordingly. This helps all children to feel included. The childminder encourages all children to get along together and through example, helps them to play nicely together and share. They are all given praise and encouragement in their play and are excited when they receive stickers for their good work.

Partnership with parents is good. The childminder keeps them verbally informed about what their children have been doing and about any individual progress they have made. She provides them with some information about her operational policies and procedures, however, these are not readily available for parents and they do not have current information about Ofsted. There are opportunities for parents to speak to the childminder on a daily basis when they collect their children and the childminder makes them feel welcome and at ease to do this.

Parents of children receiving nursery education funding, however, do not receive sufficient information about the early learning goals and are not provided with opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. They also do not receive information about their children's progression towards the early learning goals. The childminder speaks verbally to parent's daily to let them know how their children are coming along and the progress they are making, however, none of this is in writing.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The premises are reasonably well organised with pre-school and older children having the freedom to move independently between the available areas, which helps them develop a sense of belonging. There is a good range of resources, most of which are easily accessible for their free use with the childminder making the best use of the available space. She is careful to ensure young children cannot access some of the resources for reasons of safety, yet at times the playroom floor has too many activities out on the floor.

The childminder shows a commitment to attending relevant training using the knowledge she gains to benefit children, through increasing their learning and enjoyment. She seeks relevant training, for example, the Birth to three framework and receives some support from the network coordinator. However, knowledge of the Foundation Stage in terms of linking children's development to the stepping stones is not always recorded and there is also no written reference about individual children's achievements in order to help her plan appropriately for their next stage of learning. Although the childminder reports verbally to parents about children's progression, there is insufficient information given to them in writing about the aims of the provision in terms of nursery education and their children's progress. In addition, although the childminder is aware of children's progression through her knowledge, there is no clear direction of points to improve to promote their learning and development. As a result the management and the monitoring of the early years education she provides is satisfactory only.

Documentation is available as required, however medication recording is not legible and the childminder is not consistently getting written permission from parents for the administration of this. Also accident recording does not respect confidentiality of information. Her certificate of registration is displayed which provides reassurance for parents of her continued suitability to care for children.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Care: At the time of the last inspection the childminder was asked to let Ofsted know about changes to members of the household. She acted upon this as is her responsibility to do so and this ensures the continued safety and well being of children.

Education: Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 Ofsted has received one complaint relating to Standard 7: Health.

Ofsted received concerns in relation to National Standard 7, Health and hygiene. As a result of this a visit took place followed by this inspection of the provision where they were inspected against all 14 National Standards.

Ofsted are satisfied the provider remains qualified for registration.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- ensure standards of hygiene are improved and maintained throughout all areas in use by children. Ensure also any possible risks to children's safety are identified and minimised
- improve documentation by ensuring accident recording respects confidentiality and medication recording is legible and always includes written consent from parents
- ensure children have drinks readily available to them at all times
- ensure information about operational policies and procedures are more readily accessible to parents, including information for parents about Ofsted
- ensure younger children are provided with appropriate equipment, activities and stimulation.

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):

- increase the opportunities for children to write spontaneously and use a variety of one handed tools
- provide more opportunities for children to use numbers and counting in meaningful ways through everyday activities and routines
- develop the information provided for parents in relation to the Foundation Stage curriculum and stepping stones to learning, regularly informing parents of children's progress
- increase knowledge of the Curriculum guidance to the Foundation Stage, to ensure that planning and assessment are clear and show the progression of individual children towards the early learning goals.

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