



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY263632
Inspection date	18 July 2006
Inspector	Susan Hoult
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 2003. She lives with her husband and five year old daughter in the Bracebridge area of Lincoln, Lincolnshire. There are schools, a nursery, a pre-school, shops and parks within walking distance. The whole house is available for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and currently looks after seven children on a part-time basis. The family has no pets.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and occasionally attends local group meetings.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming, clean home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Good arrangements are in place to prevent infection through cross-contamination. For example, towels are changed daily, anti-bacterial spray is used to clean kitchen surfaces and children learn about the importance of maintaining good hygiene habits, such as hand washing after using the toilet and before eating. Children's health is generally well promoted by the childminder. She ensures children wear hats and have sun cream applied when playing outside in warm weather and is clear with parents that she does not care for children who are infectious in the best interests of all the children. The childminder has a first aid certificate and is therefore able to take appropriate action in case of an accident. However, although verbal permission is gained, there is no written parental consent for the childminder to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Therefore, children's health needs may be compromised.

Children learn about healthy living through discussions and activities. The childminder caters for children's individual dietary needs, likes and dislikes by liaising closely with their parents. Nutritious meals using fresh ingredients are provided and any food brought from home is stored and served appropriately. Children are encouraged to choose healthy options such as fresh and dried fruit, raw vegetables and occasionally plain biscuits for snacks. A child enjoys an apple mid-morning and then requests cucumber and beetroot sandwiches for lunch. Drinks are freely available to children to ensure they do not become thirsty.

Children have plenty of fresh air and exercise on a daily basis. They enjoy regular walks, visits to the park, the local playing field and a soft play area as well as physical play in the garden. They use a variety of equipment such as a scooter, a bike, a large netted trampoline, bats and balls and in the summer a paddling pool. These provide good opportunities for play and develop children's large muscle skills and body control. Children rest and sleep according to their needs and their parents wishes. The childminder considers this when planning activities so that children can gain the most from them. Children's emotional well-being is enhanced through the very warm relationships they have with the childminder.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel secure in the well-maintained environment where children have space to enjoy different activities at the same time. The childminder is vigilant and minimises hazards to ensure children's safety and protect them from harm. Children are always in sight or hearing of the childminder. This means they are able to move around independently which increases their confidence. Sleeping babies and children are checked regularly to ensure their safety. The childminder ensures children understand safe practices when going on walks and outings by reminding them of what is expected and reinforcing road safety. Children wear reflective tabards and wrist bands with the childminder's telephone number on to further enhance their safety.

Children learn to keep themselves and others safe through the childminder effectively and sensitively reinforcing safe practices and helping them understand what the consequences of their actions may be, such as sensitively reminding children not to run in the house in case they slip and hurt themselves. Children are able to freely select from the good range of well-maintained, good quality toys, books and play materials suitable for their ages and stages of development in the dining room and the playroom.

Children are well protected and their welfare safeguarded because the childminder has a sound knowledge and understanding of possible signs and symptoms of abuse and who to report any concerns to. She knows who is allowed to pick up children and parents are clear about the action she would take in an emergency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and settled in the childminder's comfortable home. The childminder is enthusiastic and has a good understanding of child development and how children learn through play which enables her to offer purposeful activities and play opportunities for children. She uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework when she plans activities for babies and young children. She makes reference to other publications to ensure she gives older children a broad range of activities that hold their interest whilst they develop existing skills and learn new ones. Children initiate much of their play as resources are easily accessible; this promotes their awareness of positive choices and increases their confidence and learning. Children develop their imaginative, investigative and creative skills through activities such as pretend play, painting, baking, leaf printing, play dough, nature walks, collecting insects in bug boxes and learning about their habits and cutting and sticking using a variety of man-made and natural resources. They also enjoy outings to local shops, the library, an activity park for young children, a farm park and Skegness where they learn about their local community and places further afield.

The childminder effectively includes all children in play and prompts their thinking and language skills well by asking appropriate questions. She has a flexible approach which allows children to develop at their own pace. Children relate well to the childminder and are interested in the toys and activities provided. A child concentrates well whilst preparing a 'cookie' mix. The child follows the pictorial and text recipe with the childminder and happily mixes the ingredients together. She chooses the cutters she wants to use whilst the mixture sets in the refrigerator. The child and childminder laugh together as they chat and discuss shapes, colours and positions whilst threading buttons and cotton reels before spending time playing in the garden.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Equal opportunities are considered well throughout all the childminder provides. Children feel a sense of belonging as the childminder understands their differing needs and respects them as individuals. They learn about our diverse society through a variety of toys, books and activities. For instance they learn about St David's Day and celebrate by baking a cake in the shape of a

daffodil. The childminder has no experience of caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities but would be happy to do so as long as she felt she could meet their needs as well as those of other children in her care.

Children learn what is expected of them and they behave well, which promotes their welfare and development. The childminder discusses behaviour management strategies with parents to ensure consistency and has a written policy in place which she shares with parents. Children are well mannered, confident and know what is expected of them through clear boundaries being set. The childminder sensitively ensures that children learn, and understand, the need to share and how to be kind to each other. The childminder effectively uses eye contact, distraction, praise, encouragement and explanation which develop children's social skills, self-esteem and confidence. A child is proud of the stickers they receive for good behaviour and being kind.

The childminder has a good understanding of the importance of working with parents and of how this benefits children. She maintains a professional but friendly relationship with parents and ensures they know well in advance of when she takes her holidays so that they can make suitable alternative arrangements. A gradual introduction is offered to new children which helps them settle. Parents learn about what their children do each day through daily verbal exchanges of information. The parents' portfolio, gives them clear information about the childminder and the service she provides. Copies of the childminder's policies are given to new parents so that they can take them home and share them with others in the family.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of children and is a very good role model. She listens to them, is interested in what they say and do and is sensitive to their feelings which helps raise their self-esteem. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge of child development and how children learn. Their care is enhanced by the effective organisation of the space available in the house and the happy, homely, stimulating atmosphere created by the childminder. Children choose activities freely and have space for active play, relaxation and sleep as needed.

Well organised documentation provides a good framework for children's care. It is up to date, stored confidentially, and is available for inspection.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to increase her awareness of special needs. She has done this, therefore ensuring that if a child with special needs is identified or admitted to the provision their welfare and development can be appropriately promoted.

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):

- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

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