



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	208731
Inspection date	20 September 2005
Inspector	Gill Ogden

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 satisfactory. 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 1990. She lives with her adult son and 2 children, aged 12 and 7, in Lincoln city. The whole of the ground floor and toilet facilities on the first floor are used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The childminder both walks and uses her car to get children to and from school and out and about in the community.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time, and is currently minding 12 children all on a part-time basis. Some of these are over 8 years old and only 5 are pre-school age.

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

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are looked after in a home where the standard of cleanliness is satisfactory. Children learn about the importance of maintaining good hygiene habits, such as hand washing after using the toilet, to minimise cross-infection. The childminder is clear with parents about not caring for children who are infectious in the best interests of all the children.

Children have enough food and drink during the day as a result of bringing their own packed meals or having meals and snacks provided for them by the childminder. They are encouraged to try healthy options such as fruit and yoghurt and those children who have an evening meal are occasionally treated to a takeaway. The childminder sets a good example to the children by drinking water herself as well as providing a range of other drinks for them. Children's special dietary needs are discussed with parents to ensure they are provided for appropriately.

Children get fresh air and exercise through sometimes walking to school and back, playing in the garden and visiting the park. Young children sleep whenever they need to in pushchairs and car seats in response to parents' requests.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides a comfortable and child-friendly environment where children can move around safely. She is aware of potential hazards both indoors and outside and has safety equipment, such as smoke alarms and stair gates, in place which minimise opportunities for accidents. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through, for example, practising road safety when they walk to school. All the necessary documentation is in place which allows children to be transported safely in the car. The toys and resources that children play with are suited to their needs and maintained in satisfactory condition.

Children are safeguarded as a result of the childminder's home and garden being secure and her knowing who is allowed to pick up children. The childminder has the necessary information regarding child protection procedures but is not fully up to date with current thinking in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled with the childminder because she knows them well and has a warm relationship with them. They have freedom to choose toys and play materials and so make decisions for themselves. Organised activities include going shopping, visiting the park or attending coffee mornings with other childminders. As a result of these activities and visitors coming to the home, children learn to socialise and get to know their local community. The childminder is keen that they should experience the kind of activities they would enjoy in their own homes so, for example, young children enjoy using their imaginations in pretend play, working out how puzzle pieces fit together and drawing and colouring. They happily play by themselves but also get on with each other and play together and with adults.

Although babies and toddlers are content and explore their surroundings and choose and play with toys, the childminder does not make use of national guidance to develop her practice with this age group.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder welcomes families and children from a variety of backgrounds and gets to know them well so that she can meet their individual needs. She is able to include children with additional needs and has a positive attitude towards their care. Children have access to some resources that help them learn about the wider world and encourage them to develop positive attitudes and respect towards all members of society.

Because the childminder gives children attention when they behave well she limits undesirable behaviour. She talks to young children about their behaviour in a way that they can understand and uses time-out if necessary.

There is a strong working relationship between parents and the childminder. She offers a flexible service, which includes late evening care and linking with other agencies, so that both parents' and children's needs are met. Parents enjoy spending time with her when they drop off and pick up their children, sharing information about their children's day and watching them play and socialise with others.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has many years experience in caring for children and has attended required training. She has limited space in her home but organises it satisfactorily and children know what toys and equipment are available and how to get them. She is a busy childminder and usually cares for her full quota of children so they become used to sharing her attention with others.

All the necessary records and documents are in place but the way some of them are organised, used and set out does not always provide the best framework for children's care. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of recommendations made at the last inspection the childminder is more aware of how to organise her play resources so that children can access them more easily and know what is available. She has also acquired the latest national guidance on child protection procedures so she now has all better information to support the framework for the safeguarding of children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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 satisfactory. 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 knowledge of best practice in child protection
- review the provision for children under 3, for example through the use of the 'Birth to three' framework
- review record keeping systems to improve the organisation of care.

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