



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	506855
Inspection date	18 December 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 outstanding. 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 1998. She is registered to care for a maximum of five children under the age of eight years. She currently cares for five children. Of these, three children are under the age of two years, one is under the age of five years and one is over the age of five years.

The childminder lives in a house on a residential estate on the outskirts of Grantham town centre.

She lives with her husband and their two sons. All ground floor rooms are used for childminding purposes and toilet facilities are provided on this level. Older children are permitted to play upstairs. There is an enclosed rear garden which is used for outdoor play.

The childminder holds a Nursery Nursing qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is also an active member of the local childminding group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because their physical, nutritional and health needs are very well met as a result of effective procedures and practices employed by the childminder. Children enjoy an excellent range of activities and experiences indoors, outdoors and away from the childminding setting which actively contribute to their very good health and well-being. For example, children use the garden for outdoor activities and are taken on regular trips to the local park. Consequently, children are developing competent physical skills and are able to develop and build upon their existing skills and range of physical abilities. Children's hand and eye co-ordination and finger control are well promoted as they confidently use a range of resources such as construction toys, play dough and paint brushes. Large physical activities are very well provided for and as a result children's whole body movements are developing well. Children practise their co-ordination skills as they successfully use bats and balls, trampolines and sit-on rides.

Children are cared for within a very well maintained and hygienic environment. The childminder employs very effective and thorough hygiene routines and procedures, which ensure children are kept healthy at all times. Highly effective procedures are in place in relation to the personal hygiene and hand washing of the childminder and minded children. Children are helped to understand the purpose and need to keep themselves healthy and are actively encouraged to wash their hands before meals, after using the toilet and after certain activities, such as playing outside. Older children independently carry out these tasks with little need to be reminded and younger children are very well supported by the childminder. A comprehensive written sickness policy which is shared with parents and carers ensures all children are cared for within a very safe environment which is free from infection. Younger children are able to sleep undisturbed on the first floor whilst others continue to play downstairs.

Children enjoy a range of very healthy and nutritious snacks and meals throughout the day. Through further training the childminder has developed a very secure awareness of how to promote healthy eating with children and how to prepare, store and cook food hygienically. Children access drinks on a regular basis throughout the day and older children can help themselves to drinks in the kitchen. The childminder liaises closely with parents and carers regarding meal provision, allergies, preferences or needs on religious grounds. Children are very well nourished and enjoy a cooked meal after school which includes a wide variety of fresh vegetables, some of which are grown by the children in the garden. The childminder supports children's awareness of the importance of eating a healthy diet by talking to them about different foods and displaying posters within the home which reinforce the benefits of eating five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Children thoroughly enjoy meal times which are well conducted, safe and offer the children healthy choices.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an environment where their safety is given a high priority as the childminder completes regular risk assessments, identifying possible risks or hazards and taking

prompt and effective action. This ensures children are cared for in a very safe, secure and supportive environment. The outdoor play space has been designed to be child friendly and very safe. The use of suitable safety equipment, such as child locks, safety gates and socket covers to prevent accidents ensures children's safety and well-being is effectively promoted. The childminder conducts daily checks of both indoor and outdoor play space prior to the children's arrival, this significantly enhances their safety. High priority is given to close supervision at all times and particularly when using the garden. Regular discussion and evacuation practice of the premises gives children a clear understanding of the importance of staying safe in an emergency. In addition, children learn about road safety issues when going on outings in the local area.

Children confidently select toys from the range set out for them, from low level toy boxes and drawers and from those offered to them by the childminder. Children access an extensive range of toys and equipment which are age appropriate, safe and hygienic. The regular checking of furniture, toys and equipment ensures that the children are kept very safe at all times.

Children are very well protected because the childminder has an excellent understanding of child protection policies and procedures; this actively contributes to children's safety and well-being. Access to information, training in this area and a written policy which she shares with parents and carers ensures children's welfare is given a high priority. Parents and carers are made aware that the childminder's ultimate responsibility is the safety and welfare of the children she cares for.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of both the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum which enables her to provide a superb range of activities for all the children who attend. Play experiences and practical activities are very well matched to children's individual needs, interests and stages of development and consequently children are supported effectively to make very good progress in all areas. The childminder knows individual children very well and keeps excellent records to monitor and assess children's progress and achievements. She uses these records to identify the next steps in children's learning which ensures that children are provided with appropriate challenge. Activities are highly stimulating, fun and fully engage children's interests. Children are highly motivated and inquisitive and they enjoy exploring the learning environment and accessing different toys and materials. For example, very young children are fascinated by a collection of natural materials, such as sponges, cones and wood, and they use all their senses to make sense of the world around them. Children have excellent opportunities to learn about the natural world through planned activities. For example, they have studied caterpillars and watched them change into butterflies and they tend vegetable plants in the garden to develop their awareness of how to care for living things.

The play environment is exciting and inviting for children and they develop a strong sense of belonging as they see their art work displayed attractively around the play room. Children can freely access a fantastic range of creative resources and materials such as paint, chalk, play dough, card, scissors and pencils, and they are able to express their ideas imaginatively. Children's

musical skills are very well promoted as they experiment with different instruments, listen to a wide range of music and sing songs with the childminder. They also have opportunities to move rhythmically to music and express themselves through dance. Children thrive in the caring and supportive atmosphere that is fostered by the childminder. She is extremely attentive to children's needs and ensures they are very well supported at all times. She is highly skilled in communicating with children and promotes their speech and language skills through lively discussion and effective interaction. Children thoroughly enjoy daily story times and are keen to select books to share with the childminder. They have access to an extensive library of books which helps to promote their interest in reading.

Children benefit from a well balanced range of activities which enables them to engage in play opportunities both inside and outside the home and have time to be active and rest. Children respond very well to the childminder and they have formed close relationships with each other. They are developing very good social skills as they learn to negotiate and take turns and younger children have opportunities to interact with other children at local pre-school groups. They are fully encouraged to make choices and are developing high levels of independence. For example, children select activities and play equipment from low level drawers and shelves and enjoy initiating their own games. Older children are given special tasks such as washing and cutting up fruits for snack time which helps them to foster high levels of self esteem as the childminder values their contribution.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are warmly welcomed in to the setting and they are valued and respected as individuals. Consequently, children feel confident and settled in the childminder's care. Children have access to an excellent range of play resources, such as books, dolls and small world toys, which reflect positive images and help to develop children's awareness of diversity within society. Children also have regular opportunities to participate in activities related to different festivals and cultures. For example, children take part in food tasting and craft activities linked to festivals such as Diwali, Christmas and Chinese New Year. Children learn about the local and wider community through regular trips and outings. The childminder has an excellent awareness of inclusion and how to support children with additional needs which she has developed through further training. She would actively seek support from other professionals if needed to ensure children can fully participate in all the activities provided.

Children are very well behaved. They learn to share resources and take turns when playing. Children benefit from having consistent boundaries which enable them to negotiate with others and begin to take responsibility for their actions. The childminder supports children effectively during activities, gently guiding and reinforcing positive behaviour. Children's self-esteem is well promoted through regular praise and encouragement.

The childminder fosters highly effective relationships with parents which contributes significantly to children's well-being. The childminder actively seeks parents' views about their child's needs, interests and abilities before the child starts at the setting. As a result, the childminder is able to ensure continuity of care for each child and is able to plan and provide appropriate activities which engage the child's interest and build on their previous learning and experiences at home.

Parents receive excellent information, both written and verbal, about how their child is progressing and developing. For example, daily diaries are maintained for the younger children which record the play and learning experiences. This ensures that they are fully involved in their child's care and development and can support their child's learning at home. Parents have access to a detailed portfolio which enables them to gain a very good understanding of all aspects of the childminder's service.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are cared for within a very well planned and organised environment. Children access toys, equipment and activities which are well planned and prepared prior to the children arriving enabling children to feel welcome, confident and happy. Children confidently access and are involved in a wide range of interesting and age appropriate activities both within and away from the childminding setting. Children's other daily routines and patterns are considered by the childminder who carefully plans activities around these. The childminder has, and continues to undertake a wide range of further training to enhance her existing meticulous practice and enthusiastic knowledge enabling her to provide high quality childcare.

All legally required documentation and records relating to the minded children are retained ensuring that the childminder is able to care for children in a safe and confident manner. The childminder holds a current first aid qualification helping to ensure that children are cared for safely and that any incidents or accidents are dealt with in an efficient and prompt manner. Children's individual needs and requirements are well known and discussed with parents and carers prior to their child starting ensuring their individual needs are well addressed and provided for. Children's safety and enjoyment is given a high priority as the childminder obtains parental consent for several aspects of her care.

Observations relating to the child's day, development and general well-being are fed back to parents and carers informally as they collect their children at the end of their minded day and the childminder has developed excellent written information about her service which is shared fully with parents. Children benefit from the very good communication between the childminder, parents and carers. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were raised with regard to developing awareness of current procedures regarding child protection and making parents aware of the procedure to follow if they had a complaint.

The childminder has further developed her awareness of child protection procedures through reading current guidance, such as the Government booklet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused', and through attending further training. She has developed a written child protection policy which is shared fully with parents and clearly outlines her responsibility to protect children from significant harm. The childminder has implemented a written procedure for parents which clearly states what they should do if they have any concerns regarding her childminding service, including how to contact Ofsted. The childminder has taken positive

action to address both recommendations which has further improved procedures to keep children safe and the partnership with parents and carers.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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:

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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