



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	225362
Inspection date	28 June 2005
Inspector	Alison Edwards

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?

This childminder has been registered since 1996. She lives with her husband in a two-storey semi-detached house on a residential road in the south of Loughborough in the Charnwood district of Leicestershire. Minded children have access to the whole of the house including first floor play areas. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. Four cats are kept as family pets.

The childminder is registered to provide care for 6 children under 8 years. There are currently 6 children under 8 on roll in addition to 5 children aged 8 and over. One minded child was present during the inspection. The childminder is a member of the

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, well-maintained and comfortable home where arrangements for the care of family pets are well-organised to prevent children's access to feeding materials, so minimising any health or infection risk to minded children. Sound hygiene practices in routines such as nappy changing also help to minimise any risk of cross-infection. Children begin to develop an understanding of good health practices through the childminder's simple explanation of routines such as using sun cream and sunhats before outdoor play. Children's continued health and well-being is promoted by the childminder's good understanding of appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of accident, illness or medication administration. They take part in varied indoor and outdoor activities to help promote their good health including use of pop-up tunnels in the garden and visits to local facilities such as parks and toddler groups where they can extend their large movement skills. Rest periods for younger children are flexible to take account of individual care patterns, for example using a travel cot where necessary, or incorporating nap times into school collection runs for older children.

Regular provision of nutritious snacks such as varied fresh fruit or bread sticks helps children develop healthy eating habits. These snacks are hygienically prepared as the childminder makes use of her recent food hygiene training, so helping to maintain children's health. The childminder works with parents to ensure main meals are suited to individual care preferences. Children are able to access their individual drinks independently throughout the day, helping to ensure they take sufficient fluids.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in secure and welcoming premises which are used effectively to enable them to participate in varied activities, for example through use of the lounge for relaxation and quiet play, dining kitchen for meals and messy play, and well-organised first floor playroom for a range of games and play activities. Children enjoy access to a range of outdoor activities in the fully-enclosed rear garden including sand play and use of wheeled toys.

The childminder offers good supervision to children taking account of their stage of maturity and current activity, for example maintaining constant visual supervision of a toddler moving between the house and garden. Effective safety precautions are in place to minimise potential hazards to children, for example use of slam protectors on doors and use of stair gates to prevent children gaining unsupervised access to specific areas. Recent attendance at local training on health and safety issues provides the childminder with current knowledge on ways to minimise risks to

children, for example by accessing supermarket data sheets to check health and safety issues related to specific items. Simple explanation and example helps children begin to understand how to act safely, for example when a toddler begins to negotiate stairs safely with the childminder's supervision and encouragement.

Children make use of a wide range of equipment and play materials which are in good condition and generally suitable to their interests and age range. A toddler, for example, enjoys beginning to steer a wheeled toy with some support from the childminder and begins to handle simple pretend play props like play food and dolls. Resources are generally well-organised to help children make simple choices in their play, with baby and toddler toys readily accessible in an open toy chest, and with a wide range of dressing up clothes, games and books readily accessible to children in designated hanging areas and shelving and low surfaces in the first floor play area.

The childminder has a working knowledge of what child abuse and neglect means, gained from published local Area Child Protection Committee procedures and recent attendance at relevant local training. She is aware of her responsibilities in the event of any child protection concerns, so enabling her to take appropriate action to safeguard children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and contented with the childminder and begin to develop confidence with visitors, for example offering toys to share. Daily routines take account of factors such as playgroup attendance and sleep patterns, so helping to meet children's individual care needs. Children are often occupied and interested in a range of indoor and outdoor activities enabling them to be physically active, for example clambering through a pop-up play tunnel or to relax, for example when sharing a picture book with the childminder. They can readily access resources such as a play kitchen, garages, books and dolls, as well as sometimes participating in mark-making activities such as chalking, drawing and painting, so enabling them to experience varied play opportunities. They regularly visit local amenities such as parks, toy libraries or childminder support groups, helping them to find out about their local community and socialise with other adults and children. They sometimes become involved in practical activities such as planting up window boxes or watering plants, so beginning to learn about how to care for their surroundings.

Children are able to express their preferences for activities or resources, for example when the childminder talks with older children on arrival about what they would like to do, or gets out a wheeled toy which a younger child points to. However activities and first-hand experiences are not yet consistently well-planned to ensure they provide challenging and purposeful opportunities for children to fully extend their natural curiosity, imagination, language and mathematical thinking, taking account of their individual stage of development and interests. The childminder is aware of early years' guidance such as the Birth to Three Matters Framework. However as yet she does not consistently have regard to this in the provision of activities to promote younger children's learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and at ease in the care of the experienced and established childminder. They are relaxed in their relationships with her, with a toddler for example confidently using gesture, facial expression and simple vocalisation to begin to communicate her wants. The childminder maintains awareness of children's activities, responding to their needs appropriately. She sometimes spends time directly with them, for example when looking at a picture book together. She begins to help younger children understand daily routines, for example by talking simply about why she is applying sun cream or the process of nappy-changing. Discussion with older children and prospective parents about typical daily routines and basic house rules helps children understand what is expected of them, for example putting their outdoor clothes away or sharing toys. The childminder has some awareness of positive ways to encourage children's good behaviour, such as consistency and explanation appropriate to the child's level of understanding.

Children have access to some resources and activities reflecting diversity, for example dressing-up clothes relating to different cultures and occupations, or pretend food preparation items from the local toy library such as Indian thali sets. They frequently visit nearby facilities such as parks or libraries, helping them become familiar with their local community.

The childminder liaises with parents regarding children's health, dietary and care needs to ensure these can be appropriately met. She recognises the need to work with parents to establish the care requirements for any child with any identified special needs.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are settled and at ease in the well-organised environment which helps them develop a confident understanding of daily routines, for example meal-time expectations, and increasing independence in their play, for example by knowing where to find a drinks beaker or a particular toy. Required records and documents such as parental contact details and medication information are methodically maintained and readily accessible to promote children's welfare and care. The childminder makes good use of available relevant training to help her to extend her understanding of current good practice, for example with regard to safety, and apply this information to support the needs of children in her care. She takes active steps to advise Ofsted of significant changes or events which may affect her childcare provision, so enabling her to offer children and families continuity of care within the terms of her registration conditions. Overall the needs of children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection the childminder has taken action to ensure she complies

with agreed adult:child ratios, so improving the organisation of children's care. She has attended relevant training and obtained local Area Child Protection Committee procedures to improve her understanding of her child protection responsibilities, so enabling her to better safeguard children's welfare. She now makes more use of resources reflecting different cultures and lifestyles, including toys and books from a local library and toy library, in order to better promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children. She is now able to identify a number of positive strategies, appropriate to children's level of understanding and maturity, to help encourage children's good behaviour.

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 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):

- develop purposeful and challenging activities to build on curiosity, language, and thinking, e.g. by use of Birth to 3 Matters Framework
- develop planning and provision of challenging and purposeful activities, play opportunities and first-hand experiences to encourage children to build on their natural curiosity, develop their language, imagination and mathematical thinking, for example by making more use of the Birth to Three Matters framework in provision for younger children

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