

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY222123
Inspection date	17 January 2008
Inspector	Susan Andrews
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 was registered in 2000. She lives with her husband and two children aged eight and 10 years, in a large Leicestershire village. Except for the childminder's bedroom, the whole of the premises is used for child care purposes and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding 11 children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

Schools, parks, shops and places of interest are within easy walking or driving distance. The family has a pet rabbit.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children actively take part in a wide range of inside and outdoor play opportunities to develop their physical skills. They enthusiastically participate in activities that encourage their

development and coordination by using crayons, creative art materials for collage, small toys, puzzles and books. They benefit from taking fresh air and exercise by playing in the enclosed garden. Children run, jump, climb and play freely in the garden and on trips to local places of interest, parks and recreation facilities and regularly walk to and from school.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean home where good hygiene practices are consistently maintained. Children are effectively protected from the risk of cross-infection. For example, the childminder uses disinfectant and antibacterial spray to cleanse the kitchen and nappy changing surfaces and provides individual or disposable towels and wipes. They are beginning to understand about their own personal care during toilet training. She sings a 'hand washing' song with the children, 'This is the way we wash our hands, to make them nice and clean' and talks to them about the importance of hand washing. They also learn about good hygiene practices through other daily routines. For example, the childminder is vigilant in ensuring children wash their hands after outdoor play, stroking the pet rabbit and before mealtimes. Children rest and sleep when they are tired and good arrangements are made by the childminder for children to engage in quiet activities.

A good range of policies and procedures are in place. For example, records pertaining to accidents and the administration of medication are carefully maintained to ensure children's health is promoted. The childminder has a current first aid qualification and an adequately equipped first aid box is readily available for indoors or on outings, the contents of which are checked on a regular basis and replaced when necessary. Therefore, the childminder is able to respond positively should a child have an accident or become unwell whilst in her care.

Children recognise when they are thirsty, are able to access their drinks of milkshakes, water or juice at all times, so that they stay well-hydrated. They are developing an awareness of healthy eating as part of activities and when talking about healthy food in their lunchbox. Their dietary needs and preferences are addressed and children are encouraged to sit together and eat in a comfortable social environment and choose from healthy meal and snack options. These include a variety of familiar fruits, raisins, raw vegetables, toast and soup, which helps to promote healthy growth and development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe and are well cared for in suitable and welcoming surroundings, where risks are identified and effectively minimised. Children can move freely and independently under the careful supervision of the childminder and are always within her sight or hearing. Children cannot leave the premises unsupervised as doors are kept locked with the key located appropriately in case of fire evacuation. Fire safety issues have been considered, a fire blanket is located in the kitchen and alarms are installed on each level of the childminder's home. However, evidence of fire evacuation practices being conducted is not documented. Security systems are in place to ensure only authorised persons may collect children, therefore, children's welfare is safeguarded.

Children play safely in areas of the home that are designated for childcare purposes. They use a wide range of toys and equipment that are checked regularly to meet appropriate safety regulations. They choose their activities independently and access equipment safely. Stairs are protected, electrical socket covers are in place and hazardous items, for example, cleaning materials and medicines are stored in locked cupboards. Consequently, children stay safe and free from harm.

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and appropriate reporting procedures in line with the 'Local Safeguarding Children Board' guidance. She has attended additional training to enhance her knowledge and understanding, recognises the signs and symptoms of abuse and is aware of her duty to protect children in her care. Therefore, children are protected and their welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, relaxed and settled in the care of the childminder. They have easy access to a wide range of activities and play opportunities that are varied, flexible, appropriate to their ages and stages of their development and where appropriate these are in line with the, 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Children are confident in their surroundings and move freely between different play activities that challenge and develop their imagination, creativity and curiosity. They play with toys that they choose independently and with the encouragement of the childminder, they extend their learning and develop their skills. For example, older children play musical instruments including the flute, guitar and recorders. Children frequently engage in a variety of meaningful social experiences, for example, going to the shops, parks and recreation areas.

Children relate well to adults and visitors, for example, sitting together, looking at books and showing adults their achievements as they complete puzzles. The children in the childminder's care are secure and content, receiving praise and affection as well as having time to play imaginatively and explore toys and activities that inspire them to solve problems and learn. For example, the childminder has a sensitive and positive approach, encouraging a child to solve a problem by saying, "Well done, see if by turning the magnet around, all the train carriages can join up". "There, you've done it, what a clever boy" thus enhancing children's sense of accomplishment and developing their self-esteem.

Children's language and communication skills are actively promoted through the use of stories, rhymes, lively conversation and social interaction. Consequently they enjoy the activities, have fun and learn to work cooperatively with each other.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to develop their sense of belonging to the local community. They meet additional children and adults when they spend time on outings to the shops, parks and local places of interest. However, children have access to only a limited amount of play resources, activities and celebrations which reflect diversity. Therefore, their understanding of other cultures, disability and the wider world is not fully explored. The childminder is committed to inclusion, treating all children and their parents with equal respect and concern.

Strategies are in place to manage children's behaviour effectively. Children behave well, are polite and they respond really well to simple and consistent house rules so that they know what is expected of them. For example, the childminder always says, 'please' and 'thank you' to the children and expects them to say same in return. Older children are encouraged to be mindful of the needs of the younger children. By understanding how their behaviour affects others, they are learning to play together harmoniously, taking turns, sharing their toys and treating each other kindly. The childminder acts as a good role model, children are valued and respected

as individuals and their achievements are encouraged and praised, so that their self-esteem and sense of identity is enhanced.

The childminder recognises and values the importance of providing parents with a good range of information about the childminding service. She listens and speaks regularly with them to ensure children's needs are identified and met. At the time a child is placed in the care of the childminder, parents are given detailed information about the childminding service. This includes comprehensive policy documentation and written contractual arrangements. The childminder understands the importance of taking positive steps to ensure information is updated on a regular basis through daily diaries, conversation and regular contractual reviews. Children benefit from this consistency of care, for example, maintaining similar routines, ensuring children's preferences and dietary needs are addressed. They feel secure and parents develop confidence and trust in the childminder and the service that is offered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a good knowledge of the National Standards and embraces training opportunities whenever possible. For example, she holds a current first aid qualification which includes training in first aid for infants and young children. She has extended her skills and knowledge regarding the, 'Birth to three matters' framework and child protection. Consequently, children's care and welfare is enhanced.

Children and their parents are well supported by the childminder's sensitive and organised approach to her childminding service. Written policy documentation and a wide range of information is shared with parents at the time their child is placed in her care and these are regularly updated to ensure that parents are aware of the practices and procedures that she has in place. Consequently, children receive continuity of care and their welfare is safeguarded.

Overall children's needs are met

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to devise a policy about the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious and to increase her knowledge of child protection procedures and practices.

The childminder has taken positive steps to address both issues. A written statement has been created, regarding the exclusion of sick children and the arrangements that are in place for the care of children who become unwell whilst with the childminder. This statement is made readily available to parents at the time a child is placed in her care. The childminder has obtained guidance documentation from the Internet and has attended a child protection course to extend and develop her skills and knowledge.

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

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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):

- revise and practise the emergency escape plan
- continue to promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children, by ensuring they have access to a range of activities and resources that develop positive images of culture, gender and disability.

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