



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	208780
Inspection date	03 January 2007
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 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 1999. She lives with her husband and four children, aged 14, ten, eight and six, in Lincoln city. All areas of the property are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. Amenities such as shops, schools, parks and pre-schools are within walking distance and the childminder also uses her car. The family keeps three cats and two rabbits as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and currently looks after five during school term times only. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a home where close attention is paid to health and hygiene issues. Parents are clearly advised that children should be kept at home if they are unwell to limit the opportunity for others to be infected. Children know they must wash their hands after using the toilet and individual flannels and towels are provided for each of them. Good nappy changing procedures are in place which further limit opportunities for cross-infection. The home is well-ventilated every day because the childminder opens several windows for a period so that fresh air can permeate through the house. The childminder has current first aid training so is able to deal with any accidents that may occur. However, she has not got written parental consent to seek emergency medical treatment for every child which may potentially have a negative impact on their optimum welfare. Children get plenty of fresh air and exercise through daily walks to and from school and nursery and regular opportunities to play in the garden or park. They are able to use a variety of large fixed outdoor play equipment such as a trampoline which helps them develop strong bodies. Babies sleep comfortably, either indoors or outdoors, with the consent of their parents. There is plenty of space indoors for babies to learn to crawl and walk and they are supported and encouraged to do this by the childminder.

Parents provide packed meals and snacks for their children so their individual tastes and dietary needs are well catered for. The childminder stores food appropriately. If children need extra drinks or snacks they are always available. Children are encouraged to drink water but some prefer diluted squash. The childminder has a solid understanding of the contents of a healthy diet and ensures, for example, that children enjoy a piece of fruit when they get back from school.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and suitable home environment. Access to the home is restricted by a latch always being in place on the main entrance and high bolts on gates ensure that children are kept safe and secure in the garden. All the necessary safety equipment such as stairgates and smoke alarms are in place and maintained in good working order. Regular discussion about emergency evacuation takes place with older children and the childminder is clear about how children can get out of the house quickly and safely in the event of a fire. All the necessary safety equipment for babies is in place such as high chairs. The large range of toys and play equipment is checked regularly for its ongoing suitability and condition. The childminder has recently got rid of a swing boat because it was no longer appropriate for children to use.

Children are further safeguarded because the childminder has a solid understanding of her child protection responsibilities and is aware of the latest local procedures. Parents are made aware about this when they first start to use the service.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled with the childminder. Younger children are very much at home in her care and have warm and loving relationships with her. They know where things are kept and help themselves from, for example, net containers that have Teletubby and Tweenie soft toys, showing them to the childminder and saying their different names after her and so learning to become independent, develop their confidence and practise their speech. Children who have just started to crawl can reach toys that are suitable for them and placed where they can easily get to them. The childminder uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework to reflect on her practice with the youngest children and to get ideas. Children's intellectual, emotional and social development is supported well by the childminder. They enjoy lots of craft activities, books, singing and dancing. The childminder involves herself in children's role play, for example, demonstrating to a young child how to feed and dress a doll. Older children have a good range of play resources to choose from, such as board games, and they interact well with the younger children, for example, when they have days out or go on picnics. Younger children respond excitedly at the mention of the older ones names, clearly looking forward to seeing and playing with them later on in the day. The childminder plans the day carefully around the younger children's care needs and school runs so that the children feel secure and confident as a result of regular routines.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are made welcome at the childminder's and she quickly gets to know them all as individuals through collecting useful information about them from parents, such as their likes and dislikes and any cultural needs they may have. A range of toys and resources that help children learn to respect all members of society and the wider world are available to them as part of their everyday play. Children behave well because they are suitably occupied and the childminder focuses on positive behaviour by giving them lots of praise. She also picks up ideas that parents use at home or teachers use in school to encourage children to behave well.

Close and effective working relationships with parents ensures good continuity of care for children. Information is shared on a daily basis both verbally and through a 'house diary' which parents are free to look at, at any time. Individual diaries are kept for babies and toddlers so that parents have detailed information about, for example, feeds and sleeps, and they can also use these themselves to pass on messages. Each child has a folder where, for example, pieces of their work and photos are kept and then passed on to parents when children stop attending. Parents comment positively on the experiences their children have with the childminder and her family and are very appreciative of the flexibility of the service she offers.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the child care has a positive impact on the children's welfare. The childminder organises her home well to meet the children's needs. For example, the main room used is the

conservatory which leads directly onto the garden. This means that children can move freely indoors and out in the good weather and that babies and toddlers can sleep safely outdoors under the watchful eye of the childminder. Most toys and play resources are stored along one wall on shelves and in baskets and containers so that children are able to access them safely according to their age and ability. The childminder makes every effort to keep up-to-date with current practices by attending various training events regularly. She makes good use of the internet to get ideas for different activities.

All the necessary records are maintained well and stored appropriately. Annual reviews with parents are carried out to ensure that the service offered continues to meet their needs and children's details are kept current. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to make sure that parents were given the latest contact details for Ofsted in the event that they wished to comment on the provision. This was done resulting in a better framework for children's care. However, since then the details have changed again so a further recommendation has been made.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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:

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):

- ensure written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is in place for every child
- ensure parents are aware of the correct contact details for Ofsted.

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