



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY269808
Inspection date	18 January 2007
Inspector	Rosemary Beyer

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 lives with her family in a three bedroom detached house in a quiet cul-de-sac in Holme-upon-Spalding-Moor. She was registered in October 2003 and is currently caring for four children. The childminder is a qualified nursery nurse and a member of the National Childminding Association.

Children use the whole of the ground floor of the house and the secure rear garden, with patio and grassed areas. A bedroom upstairs is used for daytime sleeping and also when overnight care is provided. The family has two cats and a rabbit, which spend their time outside.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for on clean and well-maintained premises where effective hygiene practice prevents the spread of infection. The childminder has good nappy changing procedures in place and uses antibacterial cleaner for general cleaning and also hand-wash for the children. She encourages the children to wash their hands after personal care and before food from an early age to help them learn to protect themselves. Children's bathing and physical care are discussed by the childminder and parents when overnight care is to be provided.

A written sick child policy is in place and made available to parents, who know children cannot be accepted if they are unwell. Contact details for parents are available if children are taken ill and these are taken on outings in case there are problems. Parents give written permission for the administration of medication, which is recorded and acknowledged appropriately. They also give the childminder written permission to seek medical help or advice in an emergency. She has a current first aid certificate and is in the process of applying for a course to ensure it does not expire. A well-stocked first aid box is available for use in the home and is taken on outings or trips.

Children have fresh air each day when walking to and from school or nursery. They also go for walks in the local area, visiting the playground and the goats at the nursery nearby. When the weather is fine they use a wide range of outside equipment in the secure rear garden, where there are both patio and grassed areas. Children enjoy visits to country houses where they play in the woods, investigate wildlife and play on the activity equipment. They enjoy discussing the visits and activities when looking through the photographs the childminder has taken.

Parents provide packed lunches for their children each day. These are stored appropriately in line with the knowledge the childminder gained from the basic food hygiene training. She encourages the children to eat healthily and asks parents not to send sweets. The children are developing an awareness of the importance of a healthy diet, having opportunities to try different fruits and vegetables during their snack time. They are also happy to try smoothies made with the newly acquired juicer. When children are cared for overnight the childminder discusses their dinner and breakfast requirements with parents before they are left, to ensure their needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for on premises which are secure and where good safety procedures are in place. High security devices are in place on front and back doors, and the garden is securely fenced and gated. The childminder has safety equipment to prevent access to the stairs, the fireplace and dangerous materials, such as medication or cleaning fluids. Toys and equipment are checked and cleaned as used, any broken items being removed for repair or disposal. The children learn to use resources safely and with consideration of younger children present. They know they must not allow babies to have access to small pieces of games or puzzles.

Fire equipment and a written fire evacuation procedure are in place to protect the children, including evacuation from upstairs when children are staying overnight. They practise the fire drill to ensure they know what to do in an emergency. Smoke alarms are checked fortnightly.

The children also learn to protect themselves by good road safety practice. They walk when near the road, holding the childminder's hand or the buggy, and know they must not run off. They discuss the need to look and listen for cars when collecting older children from school. A written lost child procedure is in place, which is made available to parents, complete with Ofsted contact details. There is also a procedure for uncollected children. These are both included with the child protection policy in the file for parents. The child protection procedure has been updated to include the changes to the referral procedure and the new Local Safeguarding Children Boards. The childminder knows and includes in the policy the fact that investigations of allegations or concerns must be undertaken by outside agencies.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder has an informal plan of activities the children can enjoy. Sometimes they are themed, for example when celebrating festivals. The children are able to choose from a wide range of resources which are suitable for all the children she minds, taking account of their age and stage of development. The childminder has information about the 'Birth to three matters' framework but has only just started to implement it and has been unable to access training to guide the implementation. Some of the children cared for attend the local school nursery for their funded education places.

While the children are playing the childminder provides activities which successfully support their number and language development, and provide challenge. The children are confident speakers and are developing a varied vocabulary through conversation and discussion. They are encouraged to count and develop their mathematical knowledge during number games and craft activities. During baking sessions they learn about weight and how things change when they are mixed together and put in the oven. Considerable debate resulted about the size of pumpkin lanterns and biscuits created at Halloween and the faces on them, when looking at the photographs.

Outside activities include visits to country houses as well as places in the locality. The children happily chat about the visit to see the snowdrops and the large sculptures they saw, including an enormous spider in the trees when exploring an estate. They enjoy looking at photographs of the goats and ducks, and also of when they were playing in the snow.

The children also like stories, having access to a wide range of books, music and dance and also role play, with a good range of dressing-up clothes available. A child made a treasure map and a paper sword to support his interest in pirates after having seen a recent film. He discussed how the map could be produced then rolled it as he thought it should be, successfully making a ribbon of paper to keep it together.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a positive, encouraging environment where they are able to develop their own personality and interests, becoming confident and independent. Simple written house rules are in place to encourage children to be polite and considerate. They behave very well and have good manners, both when speaking to the childminder or when speaking to other children. They take turns and share toys and resources, providing support for each other and making suggestions if appropriate. The older child suggested how the younger could use the scissors during craft activities.

The childminder is very conscious of the need to provide an environment where all children are treated with respect whatever the differences between them. As there are few opportunities to learn about other customs and cultures within the locality, she takes active steps to help widen their awareness. She ensures books and resources reflect the multicultural society in which we live, and that children learn about other people through celebrating festivals, activities about other countries and also baking and craftwork.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are welcome in the setting, although no children have so far been cared for. The childminder does have experience of caring for children with different needs from when she worked in nurseries. Discussion with parents to decide whether the needs of the child could be met would be the same as for any child.

The childminder has good relationships with the parents. When they express an interest in the setting the childminder welcomes them to visit. She has a file showing the policies and procedures she uses and also information about her family and the activities she provides for the children. The photographs provide a good record of the children's time in her care and a good talking point for parents and children, who are keen to tell them about what they have enjoyed. She provides daily verbal feedback for older children and a written record for younger ones. Parents receive a copy of the policies and procedures she uses to manage her business, and the contracts completed ensure their needs are clear and can be met. They give written permissions for outings, medication, observations, photographs and sun cream.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder uses the self-evaluation form each month to monitor her practice. She includes specific improvements to be made, then assesses how successfully she has implemented them, such as improving the children's consumption of fruit by providing more opportunities to try different things, and attending a training course to update her knowledge of child protection. She also includes any special achievements she feels they have made during the previous month; for example, getting the children involved in the local community by attending a charity 'toddle'. The childminder is a qualified nursery nurse and is keen to improve her practice further and widen her knowledge through training, ensuring she keeps up to date with changes in legislation and current thinking.

The childminder displays her certificate and keeps to the conditions of registration. Ofsted is notified of any changes or significant events, and a special condition is currently in place to provide continuity of care for children when she had another baby. She knows this applies to named children only.

Parents receive a copy of the complaints procedure and a record is kept, which they can have access to on request. They also have copy of the policies and procedures which govern the safe and efficient management of the setting. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has made the policies and procedures she has in place to govern her practice available to parents as requested.

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:

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 the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support the development of younger children.

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