

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	403458
Inspection date	01 February 2008
Inspector	Angela Hufton
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder registered in 1991. She lives with her husband in a semi-detached house on the outskirts of Mansfield. There are shops, schools and toddler groups within walking distance. Minded children have access to the ground floor, with sleeping facilities in this area, and the bathroom and back bedroom on the first floor. There is also a safely enclosed back yard for outdoor play. The family has dogs that are kept outside in their own contained area. the childminder is registered to care for six children under eight when working alone and nine children under eight when working with an assistant. She currently has 12 children on roll, all attending on a part-time basis and including children over eight. She supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have regular opportunities to be physically active and to enjoy the fresh air, including taking part in sponsored 'toddles' to raise money for charity. They regularly visit local parks,

go for walks or help to dig for worms on the allotment. A young child able to clearly explain what the worms are for and 'birds like eating worms'. Children are beginning to learn to keep themselves healthy, through discussions and some everyday routines such as washing their hands after they have been to the toilet. However, this is not sufficiently reinforced through all activities. For example, children do not always wash their hands before eating. Children receive appropriate care if they become ill or have an accident whilst in the childminder's care. The childminder maintains an appropriate first aid qualification to enable her to deal with accidents. Whilst all accidents and medication are recorded, these are not sufficiently detailed or well-organised, for example, they are not all dated or contain clear details as to the exact injury. This does not ensure children's ongoing health needs are fully promoted.

Children benefit from eating nutritious snacks and meals. For example, they enjoy pasta with tuna in a tomato and garlic sauce, together with sweetcorn, peas and broccoli, followed by Greek yoghurt with home-made raspberry jam. Children's understanding of healthy eating is further enhanced through going to the allotment and helping grow various vegetables, including runner beans, courgettes and pumpkins. The children learn that eggs come from chickens as they see the childminder collect these.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where they have independent access to resources. The childminder has converted her rear sitting room into a dedicated play room. This provides children with a bright and stimulating environment where they are able to safely take part in a range of activities, sitting with the childminder and her assistant using child-sized tables and chairs. Children are beginning to learn to keep themselves safe as they understand why they need to tidy toys away so they do not trip and fall or as the childminder gently reminds them to sit carefully on chairs. Their welfare in the event of a fire is promoted because the childminder has clear evacuation procedures, which are practised with the children on a regular basis to ensure they are familiar. Children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised as the home is kept secure at all times.

Children's safety and welfare when being transported in a vehicle is mostly well promoted with clear documentation in place to confirm vehicles are roadworthy and have appropriate insurance. However, written consent is not sought from all parents to ensure they have given clear permission for their children to be transported in a vehicle or taken on routine outings. Most hazards within the home have been identified and suitable steps taken to minimise the risk to children. A box of firewood in the lounge has not been successfully identified as a hazard leaving children potentially at risk. Children's welfare relating to child protection is safeguarded because the childminder has a good understanding of her role and responsibilities. She has undertaken additional training in this area and has literature available to support her practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and relaxed in the childminder's home. The childminder and her assistant evidently enjoy being with children and this is visible through the close relationships that minded children have developed with them. Children say that they enjoy taking part in the various activities and have particularly enjoyed the puppy project, where they have taken part in weighing and measuring the puppies and watching their growth. They have fun dancing to

music and doing action rhymes, favourites being 'This old man'. Children's progress and development is supported by the childminder's knowledge and understanding of how children learn. For example, children enjoyed making a rainbow collage with various colours through which the childminder identified colours that children know. She uses this information effectively to plan for children's next steps and how to help them learn about other colours.

Children benefit from a stimulating range of activities which are appropriate to their stage of development. Activities include playing with and feeding dolls, with the added enjoyment of doing this in a den under the table. Children experience regular outings into the community, including to various toddler groups or to a local farm park where they have opportunities to feed goats or stroke mice. Very young children have opportunities to experience sensory play such as experimenting with paint on a play day at a nearby park. Children attending after school are encouraged to extend their learning through reading books, with the childminder effectively supporting them to learn new words. All children have great fun dressing up in a variety of costumes, supporting the development of their imagination.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from having care that meets their requirements, because the childminder seeks all relevant information from parents. The childminder is experienced and has a good understanding of caring for children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example, she recognises the importance of seeking detailed information from parents and working with other professionals in order to meet each child's individual needs. Children are beginning to learn about the wider world through taking part in a range of activities including Hanukkah and other festivals. They have access to a range of other resources including dolls of different ethnicity to support their understanding of the similarities and differences between others. Boys and girls have equal access to all resources.

Good continuity of care for children is maintained as the childminder has developed very effective relationships with their parents. Information about their child's day and activities is exchanged verbally at the end of each day. In addition documentation such as written agreements and policies are mostly maintained to support this, although these are not consistently updated to ensure all required information is current and easily accessible. Children's behaviour is good. A behaviour policy and house rules are in place to support children's understanding. These are currently phrased as negative statements and do not help children learn what the behaviour is that it is expected. However, the childminder and her assistant give the children lots of praise and encouragement, such as when children help to tidy up, boosting their self-esteem. To help the children learn right from wrong the childminder uses age-appropriate strategies to manage behaviour. For example, she uses distraction techniques with younger children, and gives older children explanations as to why their behaviour is not appropriate.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are looked after by a caring childminder who enjoys spending time with them. As a result, she creates a welcoming environment where children have fun and feel confident. The childminder organises her home to ensure that children have sufficient space to play, rest and

relax with quiet areas provided for young children to sleep. The childminder works very well in partnership with an assistant.

The childminder has record systems in place and these are generally maintained in a satisfactory order to promote most aspects of children's care. The childminder is committed to developing her knowledge by attending additional training, such as how to encourage young children to be physically active. The knowledge that she gains from these courses helps to support children's care and welfare. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to three recommendations to improve her practice. These were to ensure that the premises are maintained at an adequate temperature; to improve safety by ensuring that children could not open the bathroom window and request written permission from all parents are seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. The childminder has addressed all of these issues ensuring that children are cared for in a home that is suitably warm, where they are kept safe because they cannot access the bathroom window and that their needs can be addressed immediately in the event of an emergency.

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 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 satisfactory. 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):

- take positive steps to promote children's good health through following good hygiene practices and ensuring all medication and accident records contain full levels of detail
- take positive steps to promote safety through ensuring all potential hazards are clearly identified and steps taken to minimise the risk to children
- improve policies, procedures and record keeping to promote the welfare and safe-care of the children with particular regard to permissions for transporting in a vehicle and outings, clear contracts and record forms and a policy that promotes positive behaviour.

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