

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254707
Inspection date	26 April 2007
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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

This childminder registered in 1994. She lives with her husband and adult son in a house on a residential estate in the southern suburbs of Nottingham. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years of age at any single time. There are currently eight children on roll, of whom four are under eight years. Minded children use the ground floor of the house. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. Two dogs are kept as family pets.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children's health and safety is potentially compromised because the childminder does not hold a current paediatric first aid qualification to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of current practice to enable her to deal with any accident or sudden illness appropriately.

Children are cared for in clean and well-maintained premises where they develop good hygiene practice within daily routines. For example, pre-school children know that they need to clean their hands before meals and after using the toilet to minimise risks from germs. Arrangements

for the care of the family's dogs help ensure children do not come into contact with feeding materials or animal faeces, so minimising risks of infection. The childminder seeks information from parents regarding children's individual health and care needs to enable her to take account of these. Record books are available to log details regarding parental instruction and actual administration of any medication, so helping to ensure appropriate treatment is given.

The childminder helps promote children's physical well-being by taking account of their individual stage of maturity and care needs. For example, babies enjoy simple movement games to encourage balance when sitting or to enable them to 'feel their feet'. Older children often exercise their large muscle skills by using equipment such as balls or hula hoops in the garden, playing with slides and pop up tents at local toddler groups, or by going for walks to local parks. A variety of activities enable children to develop their dexterity, for example, when babies grasp toys and pass them back to an adult or another child, or when older toddlers carefully manipulate and position furnishings within a large dolls house.

Effective arrangements are in place for the childminder and parents to share information on any dietary requirements and preferences, such as vegetarianism, so ensuring that health or cultural needs are recognised. Children are offered balanced and substantial snacks and main meals, such as fresh fruit or shepherds pie and vegetables, so contributing to a healthy diet. They sometimes participate in simple food preparation activities, such as making pastry or preparing sandwiches. Children are offered drinks throughout the day to help ensure they take sufficient fluids.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are confident and relaxed in the secure and well-maintained family home. They are well supervised as they use the ground floor of the house to play, eat and relax, ensuring they are constantly within the childminder's sight or hearing. Children safely and independently access a varied selection of good-quality toys and play materials suited to their stage of maturity. For example, pre-school children enjoy using attractive pretend play resources such as a dolls house or garage and road layout, whilst a non-mobile baby enjoys reaching for and exploring safe and colourful baby toys. A wide range of additional play materials are accessibly and visibly stored on shelving a sturdy and well-organised outhouse. This enables the childminder to easily provide a changing selection of play materials on a daily basis, and involve children in making purposeful choices of what they wish to use. A fully enclosed rear garden provides readily accessible and secure outside space for children to enjoy active play in the fresh air, or to play quietly at a shaded patio table. A wide variety of good quality outdoor play equipment, such as push-along and wheeled toys, or low slides, are readily accessible for use. Consequently, children can safely participate in an interesting range of physical play activities suited to their stage of maturity.

Effective arrangements are generally in place to promote children's safety. Children develop awareness of safety within daily routines. For example, the childminder encourages them to think about ways to stay safe when out walking, such as holding on to the buggy handles and looking both ways before crossing the road. Clear evacuation procedures are in place, smoke detectors are tested weekly, and a fire blanket is in place so minimising risks from fire. Stair gates are used to ensure children do not gain access to the first floor of the house, and external doors and windows are kept secured to ensure they are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. Potentially hazardous materials, such as medicines and household chemicals are stored in high cupboards out of children's reach, and kitchen equipment such as the kettle, is

sited to the rear of the kitchen worktop, inaccessible to children. Written safety procedures are in place to underpin the regular review of identified risks to children. However, the temporary storage of a ladder, secured against an external wall in an upright position, currently poses a potential hazard to children in the garden.

The childminder has a clear understanding of what child abuse and neglect mean and of her responsibility to follow current local and national guidance in reporting any child protection concerns to the relevant authorities, so helping her to safeguard children's welfare. She takes active steps to ensure parents recognise these responsibilities by providing a clear written summary in her parental information pack.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed and happy in a caring and affectionate environment where they are confident in their relationships and show enjoyment and interest in their play. For example, a baby and toddler smile and laugh at each other as they pass toys backwards and forwards. The childminder prioritises spending time with children, helping to extend their play and learning. For example, she talks with them about favourite books, encouraging them to talk about the pictures, name colours, or count objects on the page. Children usually have a good balance to their days. Daily routines and activities take account of their attendance at other facilities, such as nursery, and their individual needs for rest and relaxation. They are flexibly planned to support children's overall development. For example toddlers and older children use their large movement skills when using wheeled toys or slides in the garden, whilst baby are encouraged to develop their balance and stability when enjoying simple activities like bouncing on the childminder's knee or rocking backwards and forwards to 'row, row the boat'. From an early age, children learn that their communication is valued because the childminder responds sensitively to babies' gestures and vocalisations, and spends time listening to older children, encouraging them to talk about their ideas and experiences. Children socialise with others when mixing at local toddler or library groups, and are encouraged to show growing awareness of each other's needs as the childminder encourages them to share toys and resources. Simple household activities, such as measuring out ingredients for pastry, help children develop their understanding of quantity and number. Children enjoy ready access to a good variety of toys and play materials to help them develop their imagination and creativity, such as garages and floor mats, dolls houses and creative materials. They begin to learn about the natural world, for example as the childminder draws their attention to a blackbird nesting in the garden hedge. The childminder is familiar with use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support younger children's welfare and development through building caring relationships and encouraging active experiences suited to children's individual needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem because they are looked after in a caring and affectionate environment where the childminder spends time talking and playing with them. They begin to develop caring relationships with others, for example as a toddler and baby spend time playing together. Pre-school children begin to understand how to act responsibly, for example as they demonstrate how to clean their hands after using the toilet, or help a baby manipulate a board book. The childminder is calm and consistent in helping them understand what behaviour is expected, for example when explaining to pre-school children why it is

important they hold on to the buggy handles and look for traffic before crossing roads. A good selection of books and playthings are readily accessible to children, so enabling them to exercise choice and independence in their daily activities.

Children's individuality is respected because the childminder takes account of information from parents regarding any specific health, care or dietary needs. Children are helped to recognise and respect diversity as they listen to Indian music, use dolls with different skin tones, or look at books reflecting different cultures and lifestyles. The childminder recognises the importance of working closely with parents and any other relevant professionals to support the care of children with any identified disabilities or learning needs. She has undertaken training on use of signing to help her communicate with children in different ways.

Good arrangements are generally in place to enable the childminder and parents work together to support children's needs. A useful folder about the childminding service, together with photographs of activities and routines, provides new parents with helpful information about arrangements for their children's care. Informal discussion on arrival or departure enables parents and the childminder to share relevant information about daily events. The childminder recognises the importance of ensuring that any queries or concerns can be discussed and resolved. However, she is not fully familiar with nationally identified procedures to be followed in the event of any formal complaint to ensure such a situation is managed in children's best interests.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The childminder's previous paediatric first aid qualification lapsed a year ago, and so does not ensure she has sufficient knowledge of current practice to be able to take appropriate action should a child have an accident. Overall children's needs are not met. However, attendance at other relevant courses, such as an introduction to sign language and provision for children's physical play, demonstrates the childminder's willingness develop her awareness of good practice in childcare through use of locally available training.

Children are very settled and contented in the welcoming environment. Clear and methodically organised information on the childminder's policies and typical daily routines, help support her practice and parents' understanding of arrangements for their children's care. Required records, such as registers and children's personal and contact details are in place to underpin the organisation of children's care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that children's daily times of attendance were recorded and that first aid supplies were updated and maintained. Registers now provide more accurate records of arrangements for children's care by including their hours of attendance. First aid supplies are now maintained, so as to be available for use in the event of any accident or incident.

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 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:

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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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- confirm arrangements are in place to complete and maintain an appropriate first aid qualification including first aid for infants and young children.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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