

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY103461
Inspection date	05 September 2007
Inspector	Susan Hoult
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 has been registered since 2001. She lives with her husband and two adult children in a village south of Lincoln, Lincolnshire. Shops, parks, a library, a pre-school and schools are within walking distance. The ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family has a pet budgerigar.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and currently looks after five children.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends local group meetings.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean home, where appropriate hygiene practices and routines help to maintain their well-being. For example, the childminder uses anti-bacterial wipes to clean kitchen surfaces, has suitable nappy changing routines, provides paper towels for children to dry their hands and explains the reasons for good hygiene. She clears any seed or feathers that fall from the budgerigar's cage immediately. The childminder makes sure parents are aware that she does not care for children who are unwell as part of her approach to keeping children healthy. She clearly records any accidents so that parents are fully aware of any injury and the treatment given. Although parents sign the record, the childminder does not. Parents give written permission for the childminder to administer medicines, however, she does not record or sign when she gives it, nor does the parent countersign. This may potentially compromise children's health and well-being.

Children get plenty of fresh air and exercise through daily walks and playing outside in the garden with, for example, a rocker, balls, ride-on toys, a badminton set, a space hopper and a tent. They enjoy setting up and using obstacle courses and regularly visit the park. When the weather is not suitable for outdoor play, children enjoy dancing and using the 'noisy footprint track'. All these activities contribute to children's good health, developing their large physical skills and strengthening their bodies.

Children are well nourished and learn about healthy eating through activities and discussions. The childminder provides healthy snacks such as fresh fruit, rice cakes and cucumber. Parents provide meals that the childminder stores, prepares and serves appropriately. Drinks are freely available to children to ensure they do not become thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in safe, secure and well maintained home. The front door and garden gate are kept locked and a stair gate prevents access to the first floor. The childminder recognises the importance of a safe environment and is conscientious in ensuring that all the necessary safety equipment is in place such as smoke alarms, a carbon monoxide detector, socket covers and an easily accessible fire blanket. There is a good range of safe, clean toys and equipment which are stored so that they are easily accessible for children to make choices and are rotated to maintain interest. The childminder makes sure that young children cannot access toys that are hazardous to them by using the space available effectively.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe through, for example, practising fire drills and the childminder gently reminding children of safe practices, such as not throwing toys in case they hurt others. When children go out with the childminder, she always takes her mobile phone and information about the children in case an accident occurs. The childminder makes sure children understand safe routines when going on walks and outings and uses reins when young children are walking to ensure they cannot run into the road.

Children are protected and their welfare is safeguarded, because the childminder has a good understanding of signs and symptoms of abuse and child protection procedures. The childminder makes parents aware of her duty to protect children and seek advice where necessary. She has

documents in place to record any existing injuries and has a clear procedure to make sure she knows who may collect children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder creates a friendly, welcoming atmosphere where children relax and enjoy a good variety of play opportunities that stimulate their interests. Children are confident and sociable because the childminder is aware of their individual needs. For example, although she always has ideas for activities and prepares for them, the childminder encourages children to take the lead and follow their interests enabling them to learn and develop their skills whilst having fun. Children enjoy activities that help them develop their investigative, creative and imaginative skills. For instance, role play, dressing-up, painting using a variety of tools, play dough, making masks, and collages using items from the 'making' box and collecting flowers, leaves and other natural materials to make nature pictures. Children learn the techniques of using a hand mixer when making cakes and rubbing in and rolling out when making biscuits. They enjoy helping in the garden and eating the runner beans they have grown from seeds.

The childminder relates well to children, listening, being interested in what they say and do and responding positively to a baby's babbling. She extends children's thinking skills by asking questions and joining in their play whilst encouraging them to take the lead. A baby and a young child cuddle the childminder while spending time sitting on her knee. A child giggles happily as she is tickled before going on to identify her nose, eyes and ears and those of the childminder. A child plays with 'Mummy and 'Daddy' in the doll's house before becoming interested in playing with an animal train and an animal activity centre. Older children like being involved in household tasks such as tidying-up and helping peg out and sort clean laundry and dusting which helps them learn through everyday activities. The childminder refers to 'Birth to three matters' when caring for young children to help them gain the most from their time with her.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has clear policies and a positive attitude to equal opportunities, diversity and caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She makes all children welcome treating them as individuals and with equal concern. Children learn about our diverse society through a good variety of books, activities and discussion. They learn about their local community through, for example, walks in the village, visits to the shops, the library, parks and meeting other children at childminder meetings. This also contributes to children's understanding of their environment and helps develop their social skills.

The childminder has an effective behaviour management policy which she implements consistently. She sets realistic boundaries and takes into account the age and stage of development of the children attending. This results in children beginning to distinguish between right and wrong and learning to respect themselves and others through sharing and taking turns.

The childminder recognises parents as the most important people in their children's life, respects their family's traditions and listens to them as experts of their own children, sharing information with them on a daily basis. This enhances children's well-being, development and progress. Parents sign up to the policies and procedures in the childminder's portfolio so they have a

good understanding of the service provided. A parent speaks highly of the childminder, saying that she feels the care offered is 'home from home' and that their child loves attending.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is experienced and enjoys working with children. She is a good role model creating a calm, homely, friendly atmosphere where children feel valued. The space in the home is organised effectively to enable children to enjoy a variety of activities simultaneously including space for active play, relaxation and sleep as needed.

The childminder develops policies and documents that provide a good framework for care of the children. Records are kept confidentially and are generally well maintained. Although she is a busy childminder and finds it difficult to make time for on-going training, she keeps up to date with current trends in childcare through contact with other childminders and reading professional childcare publications. The childminder is aware of the recently published Early Years Foundation Stage document and is currently obtaining information on related courses. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the recommendation made at the last inspection the childminder ensures that the system for recording accidents respects confidentiality and previous administration of medication is recorded helping to protect children's health.

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):

- review the recording of accidents and of medicines administered.

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