

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313359
Inspection date	19 October 2007
Inspector	Josie Lever
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1997. She lives with her husband who is her co-childminder and three children aged 18, 12 and five months in Kingston-upon-Hull. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, which is increased to a maximum of 10 at any one time when working together with another childminder. Overnight care is provided for two children under eight years. The childminder is currently minding 12 children, seven of whom are under five years. Most children attend on a part-time basis with the exception of one who attends full-time.

The childminder walks to local schools and nurseries to take and collect children. She helps run a weekly parent and toddler group and takes children to the local park, shops and many other local places of interest.

The childminder supports children who have English as an additional language.

She is an accredited member of the Hull Childminding Network although currently she does not have any children in receipt of funded early education. She holds a level 3 Certificate in Childminding Practice.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a home that is clean and where positive steps are taken to promote their health. For example, toys and equipment are cleaned with regularity and the childminder has a written illness policy which she shares with parents. Consequently, children who are ill are excluded until they are no longer infectious. However, the inappropriate storage of children's milk bottles does not prevent cross infection. Children develop a suitable understanding about personal hygiene, for example, they know they need to wash their hands before eating food and after visiting the toilet. However, on occasions the lack of consistency between the childminder and her co-minder does mean that this is not always encouraged in practice, particularly before eating snacks.

Children benefit from a varied diet which includes a range of healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. For example, chicken, noodles, vegetables and fresh fruit. They are provided with drinking water, milk and low sugared juices with regularity throughout the day which is increased in warmer weather or after exercise. The childminder holds a First Aid certificate which helps her to feel confident to deal with any emergency situations and protects children in her care should they have an accident. She has a good understanding about the individual health needs of the children in her care. She has attended further specialist training in order to meet these needs, which she does effectively and takes her responsibilities seriously in this area. Accident records are maintained in line with requirements, however, the recording of medication administered does not fully comply with requirements and is a breach of regulations.

Children benefit greatly by accessing many good opportunities to be physically active. For example, they walk to and from local playgroups, play in the garden using a range of wheeled toys or visit the park. They are able to develop their gross motor skills at several local indoor soft play centres which they attend with regularity. They enjoy the challenge of using different sized slides and climbing equipment within a safe environment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The home is warm and welcoming to children and a child-friendly environment is created by the accessible range of toys and resources available for children's self-selection. The home is

well-maintained and children use the space well moving freely between the playroom conservatory, the rear lounge and from indoor to outdoor with supervision. This enables them to have free choice and assert their independence. For example, they have ample space to be able to play at floor level as they choose to complete a large size jigsaw or join a train track. They can rest or sleep in the quietness of the lounge.

Toys and equipment remain suitable and stimulating because the childminder checks these daily for suitability and they are stored separately for safety according to age. Children have access to a varied and interesting range of toys and resources which ensures they remain interested and challenged. The childminder is keen to ensure children remain comfortable in her home and has fitted a ceiling fan in the conservatory area. Her plans to fit window coverings in this area will reduce glare and further enhance children's enjoyment in using this area, particularly in warmer, brighter weather.

The childminder gives safety good attention and her home is a safe place for children to play. She has addressed safety risks well following her recent house move. For example, safety equipment is in place preventing access to the kitchen and staircase. She is vigilant to children's whereabouts at all times and they are well supervised in all areas. Children are developing their own understanding about safety in the home, for example, they are reminded about not running or throwing toys and participate in regular fire evacuation drills. They talk about road safety when out and about and know about procedures for walking safely and crossing roads. The childminder has a clear safety procedure for the use of the outdoor trampoline shared and agreed in writing by parents. The childminder has a suitable knowledge of child protection and shares her responsibility and written policy with parents in this area. Children are safeguarded because she has procedures in place to ensure that should visitors ever have the need to visit her home, children will never be left alone with them.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the care of the childminder and confidently move around self-assured in their play. They benefit because they are involved in a varied and interesting range of planned activities and spontaneous events which supports their learning and development. The daily routine allows them to take the lead, make choices in play and above all have fun. For example, younger children play imaginatively with cars and road tracks for sustained periods of time. Older children greet each other with great delight when they arrive and are excited when to see their friends. They laugh heartily together as they arrange their trains in a line. The childminder challenges children well through the good use of questioning. For example, when in the garden a freight train passes by; she encourages the children to count the trucks and enters into discussions about the length and size of the train. Children are able to make comparisons built on these experiences by recognising longer and shorter.

The childminder and her co-minder are gentle and caring in their approach and talk and listen to the children helping them to develop a strong sense of self-worth. Warm and secure relationships have been built and children are given good support and attention. Consequently, children feel secure and gain self-esteem. The childminder has attended training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and understands how to meet the play and learning needs of

children under three years. She retains individual children's files including written observations and photographs. She includes plans for the next steps in their learning, for example, further developing their understanding of colours and matching shapes. These are shared with parents.

Children have lots of opportunities outside of the home to mix socially with others. They visit the local toddler groups, one of which is ran by the childminder. They go on walks within the local community to the fire station, or East Park to look at the animal enclosures. They travel further-a-field on trips to Flamingo Land and the Magna Science Museum where they can experiment and learn using the hands on activities and interest tables.

Nursery education

At the time of the inspection there were no children on roll in receipt of funded nursery education. Through discussion the childminder explained how she would meet the needs of funded children. She described how the range of activities and learning experiences that she intends to provide would support their development and early education. For example, she would provide opportunities for children to increase their communication and language skills through reading books, telling stories, listening to story tapes and singing songs and rhymes. Additionally, children would be encouraged to mark make through the use of a varied range of creative mediums, such as painting, drawing and writing shopping lists. Children would learn to recognize their own name and first letter. The childminder would encourage children to use their imagination in a variety of role play situations, for example, the vet's surgery or on a teddy bear's picnic.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The childminder demonstrated a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and clearly described how she would be able to support children's learning through a wide range of play experiences, both in and outside. For example, children are able to learn about living things as they look for worms in the garden and pot plants. They visit the park to feed the ducks and talk about seasonal changes to the weather. They learn about their local environment as they visit the library to choose books or choose baking ingredients at the local shop. They increase their knowledge about the wider world as they learn about other cultures, festivals and celebrations, for example, Italy and Africa. They are given opportunities to gain confidence and independence, for example, by pouring their own drinks or putting on and taking off their own shoes.

Children benefit because the childminder talks and extends their language at all times. For example, they are encouraged to respond to open ended questions, such as 'What do you think will happen if I put the fan on, what does it feel like?'. Children are able to solve simple number problems in every day situations. For example, to count the number of jigsaws pieces, the number of trains and as a consequence have good opportunities to develop an understanding about numbers, shapes and sequence. They sing songs, such as 'five currant buns' and sort items into groups, sets and colours.

The childminder explained how she would plan an interesting curriculum using a two year long term plan, broken down into monthly themes and topics which identified, intended learning outcomes. She follows this approach at present for other children not in receipt of funding. She ensures that all activities and experiences are cross referenced clearly to the stepping

stones so a rich learning environment is provided that is stimulating and challenging. The childminder explained that she talks to parents about what their children can do and uses these discussions as a starting point on which to build. The assessment of children's progress would be carried out by observation and evaluation and include how children's next steps in their learning would be planned. Details would be recorded and individual assessment folders shared with parents which would include photographs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued and included and have their individual needs met well because the childminder finds out about these in advance. For example, at an initial meeting she records with parents in an 'All about me' form any medical conditions, intolerances, special diets, cultural needs and daily routines their child has. Additionally, she records any likes and dislikes and uses this information as a starting point for new children by providing the things she knows they will enjoy and interest them. Consequently, the childminder knows the children very well and is able to fully support them as they settle into her home. She cares for a number of children from a variety of cultural backgrounds, some of whom speak English as an additional language. She has successfully developed systems for exchanging essential information and communicating in other languages with both children and parents and offers good support to both in this area. For example, when new children are settling in and may become upset, she can reassure them using their own language, pictures and gestures that everything is alright.

Children's awareness of other cultures is raised through the celebration of different festivals, such as Chinese New Year, Diwali and Easter. They talk about the differences in their own needs and cultures, for example, language and religious celebrations which helps them to appreciate diversity. They see pictures of positive images around the home and use a range of resources, for example, books and role play equipment which further supports their knowledge and understanding. Children enjoy positive respectful relationships with the childminder and develop confidence in her care. They develop good self-esteem as they are praised and encouraged, for example, as they acquire new skills, such as peddling and steering a bicycle without help. They are treated as individuals, with equal concern and all are included in play. For example, the childminder makes sure all children are given some individual time set aside throughout the day.

Children are well behaved and happily get along. They enjoy each others company, for example, playing alongside each other completing puzzles and jigsaws. They are aware of the simple house rules and consequently know how to behave. The childminder encourages younger children to share resources and gently intervenes to support children develop a better understanding of this by not snatching toys. Verbal praise and good support provided by the childminder ensures behaviour management is successful. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. The childminder works very closely with parents and has built some close professional and working relationships with them. Parents have access to good written information about the childminding practice and receive a useful leaflet on the Foundation Stage which clearly explains about how children's learning will be

supported. They are kept well informed as the childminder shares their progress file and scrap book of development. There is, however, limited information regarding how the childminder would provide ideas to parents about how they could contribute and help their child's learning experiences. Parents are asked to complete a short questionnaire after two weeks to evaluate how their child has settled and are able to make further suggestions. Parents of babies and younger children receive a daily written account of their child's day and achievements. On inspection parents provided positive feedback on the provision and are very happy with the support and encouragement they and their children receive. There is a written complaints procedure, known to parents, that complies with requirements.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder shows an excellent commitment to attending relevant training and uses the knowledge gained to further enhance children's learning and development. She works very closely with her co-minder and husband and they have developed a very good partnership. This ensures that the needs of the children are met effectively. The home is well-organised and resourced to meet the needs of the children cared for. The routine is flexible to allow children to take the lead and make choices. There is a range of written policies and procedures that contribute to children's safety and well-being and the management of the setting. These are shared with parents. Most records are maintained to a good standard and confidentially stored. However, documentation relating to administration of medication is not organised effectively to fully comply with regulations and is a breach of regulations.

The childminder has not yet provided funded nursery education for children since being accredited. She is enthusiastic to put her knowledge of the Foundation Stage into practice and is very positive about the prospect of working closely with other early years professionals. She was able to demonstrate how she is keeping up to date with current practice, for example, through close links with her local network co-ordinator and other practitioners, such as support teachers. This ensures that she is able to monitor the effectiveness of her educational provision. Evidence available, such as detailed plans and systems to record observations on children, evaluate and plan for the next steps in their learning, supports how the childminder would contribute successfully to children's progress towards the early learning goals. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that all actions were completed. This was following actions set in relation to completing Criminal Records Bureau Checks. This has been fully addressed as all household members over the age of 16 have enhanced disclosures and consequently children are safeguarded.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received two complaints relating to National Standard 2:Organisation and National Standard 12:Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers. A visit was made on both occasions by a childcare inspector to investigate the concerns. Actions

were agreed between the inspector and the provider to improve standards. Ofsted are satisfied that the provider remains qualified for registration.

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.

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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 consistency in hygienic practices and encourage children about good personal hygiene through daily routines
- improve documentation by keeping a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children, including medicinal products which the child is permitted to administer to themselves together with parents' consent. Ensure it is available for inspection at all times.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop systems to share information in ways in which parent's can be involved in their child's learning.

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