

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	208078
Inspection date	28 August 2007
Inspector	Jennifer Getty
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 was registered in 1995. She lives with her husband and three teenage children in a village near Chesterfield. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a dog and a gerbil.

The childminder walks to the local schools and playgroups to take and collect children.

She attends the local carer and toddler group and takes children to the local library, shops and park.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding 13 children all of whom attend on a part-time basis. She regularly minds with a co-childminder and together they may care for a maximum of eight children. Both childminders have joint responsibility for the childminding practice.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn to keep themselves healthy through the childminder's effective hygiene procedures. Children are learning to take responsibility for their own health needs, washing their hands before and after eating, and after craft work. They understand the need for basic hygiene as the childminder explains about not spreading germs. The childminder takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection because children use individual towels and there is an appropriate policy in place in case a child is ill. Children are protected if they become ill or have an accident because the childminder has a fully stocked first aid box and shares the accident records with parents. The appropriate permissions are obtained for the administering of medication and details are fully recorded. The relevant consent for emergency medical treatment is also requested, consequently children's health and safety is maintained.

Children enjoy regular opportunities for fresh air and physical exercise as they walk to the local school every day. There are frequent trips to the local park when the weather permits. Activities are organised so that there are also opportunities for movement indoors, for example, dancing and playing games involving moving to music. Babies have space to crawl and walk around and they play games such as doing bunny hops and moving like a snake. There are good facilities for children if they need to rest ensuring their individual needs are met.

Children are well nourished. The childminder provides a range of healthy meal options including fruit, pasta, soup and sandwiches. Children are able to choose from juice or water to drink. They are encouraged to try new foods but are able to express their likes and dislikes which helps them to feel at ease in the childminder's home. Snack is a social time as children engage in conversation with each other and the childminder.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment, helping them to feel secure and comfortable. Children have easy access to toys and resources enabling them to develop good independence and decision-making skills. There is a good range of toys and resources which are suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children, for example, there are dressing-up clothes, craft materials, jigsaws, cars, rattles and a wide range of books. Toys are checked for suitability and damage before use, promoting children's safety.

The childminder demonstrates a good awareness of risk and assesses the entire house and premises before children arrive to ensure hazards have been minimised. The front door is kept locked and children are supervised in the home, however, the key remains in the lock and is accessible to children, potentially compromising their safety. The risk assessment procedures are displayed for parents to see in the entrance hall, keeping parents informed and promoting children's well-being. Children are collected safely from adults known to the childminder and there is a suitable password system in place in other cases. In the event of a fire children are well protected because the childminder has an effective emergency escape plan in place which is practised and recorded regularly. There are clear permissions recorded for transporting children in a vehicle, including that of the co-childminder. Children are protected from harm and neglect because the childminder demonstrates a good awareness of the signs of abuse and the appropriate procedures to be followed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident in the childminder's home. They are developing good levels of self-esteem and independence as the childminder provides activities appropriate to their stages in development. They form strong and positive relationships with the childminder and each other. There are good settling-in procedures and children are able to bring their own toys helping the smooth transition between home and the childminder's house.

Children enjoy a vast range of planned and spontaneous activities that promote their learning and development. Consequently, they spend their time purposefully in activities which interest and motivate them. Planned activities often have a learning goal to help children make good progress and develop new skills. For example, hospital role play helps children develop social and communication skills, and form an understanding about being compassionate. Children also enjoy activities such as decorating cups with faces and growing cress for hair. They develop a sense of achievement and pride as they contribute to the village well-dressing and see their names displayed next to it. Older children negotiate well with each other as they play with the picture alphabet cards, planning the game and who goes first. They then relate what they know about their local environment such as the house and the doctors surgery, to decide what they would find inside and outside. Activities with plasticine, natural materials collected from walks, custard, and soap flakes mixed with water and coloured dye encourage children to explore different textures and materials as well as developing their creative skills.

Young children and babies are well supported by the childminder who listens and responds to their sounds and gestures. They thoroughly enjoy choosing books to look at and they smile and listen attentively as the childminder asks them to find the baby animals on the page. The childminder links the animals in the book to gestures and the children create the elephant's trunk with their arm, smiling broadly as they do so. The childminder uses existing knowledge and the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan activities to meet the needs of the children, such as playing with the friction cars to introduce forwards and backwards. Children's development is encouraged as the childminder is beginning to use observation to record the progress made by babies

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder ensures that children's individual needs are met by gathering the relevant information at the beginning of their care. Children are treated with equal concern, helping them to feel valued and secure. The childminder helps all children to feel accepted in society by talking about their home lives, consequently, children are developing a positive attitude and enjoying each other's differences. Equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice is promoted well within the childminder's home through books and activities which celebrate different cultures such as Harvest Festival, Sukkot and Ramadan. There is a wide range of books, read by children on a regular basis, which depict different cultures, beliefs, disabilities and feelings. Children learn about the society they live in through visits to the local farrier and by accessing a variety of resources, such as a doctor's medical case and dressing-up clothes for policemen and fire fighters. They also benefit from opportunities to buy and choose their own things from the local shop, helping them to develop good social and decision making skills as well as gaining independence. The childminder demonstrates a sound awareness of learning difficulties and disabilities and children from different ethnic backgrounds are welcomed.

Children behave well as they are purposefully engaged in activities, demonstrating a good understanding of responsible behaviour. Children of all ages play harmoniously together and negotiate with each other to ensure that everyone participates in the games. They share and take turns in all activities. They enjoy deciding what to make with plasticine and ensure that they all have something to make. They respond well to the childminder's praise and encouragement which helps to build their self-esteem. The childminder demonstrates a clear understanding of the needs of each age group and appropriate behaviour management strategies are in place which provide clear and consistent boundaries.

Children benefit from a positive partnership with parents which promotes their well-being. There is a daily exchange of information which helps children to receive consistency of care. The policies and procedures are shared with parents so that they are fully aware of the care provided for their children. The childminder displays relevant policies and procedures on the notice board in the entrance hall so that parents can access them on a daily basis. The complaints procedure is up to date and a book is available for parents to write in promoting children's safety and welfare. The childminder obtains the relevant permissions from parents so that children's safety is promoted when caring for them with another childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall children's needs are met. Children are cared for in a well-organised environment in which they feel at home and at ease. Consequently, they feel confident to initiate and extend their own learning and play. The space is organised so that children are able to choose from a variety of interesting activities such as craft, dressing up, games and reading. The childminder organises the time well to ensure that children of all ages receive the appropriate care and attention, helping children to feel valued. Resources are set out to enable children to gain independence when self-selecting toys, games and books.

Documentation is organised well to ensure that parents have access to policies and procedures. Their individual needs are met because the childminder gathers appropriate information about children's requirements. However, the individual information for siblings is not always clearly recorded, potentially compromising their well-being. All information is confidential and stored appropriately. Children's welfare is promoted because the childminder obtains all the relevant permissions from parents regarding the care of the children with particular reference to times when they are also in the care of a co-childminder. A daily register is maintained which accurately records children's times of arrival and departure. Children's good health is maintained because the childminder holds a relevant first aid qualification.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure all medication administered to children is recorded correctly; obtain written consent when minded children are being transported in another childminder's car and are in her sole care; review procedures for ensuring that all required parental consents are consistently maintained; take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection with particular regard to hand washing before and after meals.

Children's health and well-being is actively promoted because the childminder has an appropriate system in place for the recording of medicine. The dose, time of administration and medication is recorded in the morning and parents sign beforehand to give permission. The childminder signs the record when the medication has been administered. Children have a good

understanding of the need for good hygiene as they know to wash their hands before and after meals and the childminder explains about the spreading of germs.

Children's safety is maintained because the childminder collects all relevant permissions from parents at the beginning of care, for example, for the application of sun cream, taking children on outings and for the administration of medicine. Parents give consent for children to be transported in the vehicle of the childminder or the co-childminder as well as being left in the sole care of the co-childminder.

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):

- ensure children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised with reference to the accessibility of the keys to the front door
- develop systems to ensure children's details are individually maintained and recorded.

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