

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 226761
Inspection date 24 August 2007
Inspector Hazel Christine White

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 1989. She lives with her three children, one of whom is an adult and two aged 16 and nine years old. They live in the Goodwood area of Leicestershire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends a local parent and toddler group.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and a family sessional support worker for the local authority. She has a Level 3 childcare qualification. The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time and is currently caring for two children under the age of two years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn how to keep themselves healthy. They regularly wash their hands and are beginning to understand that they do this to prevent

the spread of germs. Tissues and wipes are readily available and children's personal care is well met. Children's best interests are served should they become ill or have an accident because the childminder has received first aid training. The first aid box is properly stocked and readily available. Accident and medication records are in place and adequately maintained. Children rest and sleep according to their needs because their home routines are followed as discussed with their parents. Some children sleep in a pushchair and others in a travel cot. They have separate bedding which is regularly washed.

Children are well nourished because they are provided with nutritious meals, for example, shepherd's pie and vegetables, chilli and rice and spaghetti bolognese. They are encouraged to eat fresh fruit each day and have milk based puddings such as yogurts and rice. Children are introduced to new foods to widen their tastes and were observed thoroughly enjoying having passion fruit at snack time. Their individual dietary needs are taken into account because of discussions with parents and children on special diets can be catered for. Children are unlikely to suffer stomach upset due to unsafe food because of the childminder's good food hygiene practices. She has a current food hygiene certificate and storage and re-heating procedures are good.

Children enjoy a good variety of opportunities to be physically active and to develop their skills and co-ordination. They are keen to use the soft play equipment when they attend groups and enjoy running in the park. The garden is used regularly and provides children with opportunities for sliding, riding on bikes and playing ball games. Therefore, children are gaining increasing control over their bodies. They are learning that being active promotes good health and the impact on their body helps to keep their hearts healthy and is good for the circulation.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment because effective steps have been taken to reduce potential risks to their safety. Daily visual safety checks are carried out to ensure that hazards to children are identified and minimised. Good safety procedures and precautions are in place. For example, a safety gate prevents children accessing the stairs and hazardous materials are placed out of children's reach. The garden is checked to ensure that the gate is locked and equipment has not filled with water overnight. Children's safety is protected on outings because they are only taken to places that are known to be suitable for youngsters. Children are well-supervised and areas checked for potential hazards.

Toys and equipment are in an excellent condition and most are stored at a low level which enables children to safely make independent choices. Children learn to keep themselves safe by following rules and safe practices. They know that they must be careful when babies are present because they could accidentally tread on their fingers. They are gently reminded of house rules and are beginning to understand why they are necessary. Children are protected from the dangers of fire because the emergency evacuation plan is practised on occasions and a fire officer visited the home in November 2006 to complete a fire safety check.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded because the childminder has a secure working knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures. She is well aware of her role and responsibilities in ensuring that children are protected from abuse. Training courses have enhanced her everyday practice and extended her knowledge and understanding of related issues. Children are only released into the care of known adults and they are never left unsupervised.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from the childminder's excellent knowledge and understanding of child development. Their personalities, likes and dislikes are very well known. Consequently children make extremely good progress in their learning because play is age and stage appropriate and tailored to meet their individual needs. Activities are thoroughly well planned to stimulate and interest the children. Topics are linked to all areas of learning. For example, the 'families and people' theme enables children to make models of their family from play dough and use their imagination when playing with people finger puppets. Children listen to the 'Gingerbread Man' story and then they make ginger bread. Their progress is monitored through ongoing observations, that aid the childminder in planning the next step of children's learning.

Children are able to make independent decisions about their own play activities and have easy access to a broad and varied range of resources. These activities include construction, puzzles, books, sound toys, role play, imaginative play, multicultural toys, creative play. Children enjoy baking, they ice cakes and make cheese straws and scones. Cooking activities are used to enhance the children's knowledge of weight, measure and volume.

Children have first-hand experiences of gaining a knowledge of their local community. They enjoy regular trips to the park, look at books in the library and enjoy socialising with other children at various groups. Children participate in charity events and visit places of interest such as the 'Sea Life Centre'. They learn about the importance of recycling as they use empty packets, boxes and plastic bottles in their role play and then take them to the recycling bank. Children are able to reflect and recall these experiences through pictures and photographs which are displayed on the wall and on a pin board. This fosters children's self-esteem positively.

Children enjoy excellent relationships with the childminder, her family and each other and relish the time they have in her home. Their self-esteem is inspiringly fostered through outstanding levels of support and encouragement. Children are actively praised for their achievements. Their language development is excellently promoted, through general conversations and through the childminder's effective use of questions, which stimulate children's thinking and encourages their listening skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and settled in this very vibrant environment. Children are encouraged to make decisions about their own play and actively engage in an outstanding range of activities which are both adult-led and child-initiated. Children are valued as individuals and their needs are skilfully supported by the childminder, for example, they follow their normal daily routines as discussed with the parents on admission. They choose from an excellent range of resources which reflect positive images of diversity. These include multicultural dolls, jigsaws, books, puppets and role play. Children celebrate a wide range of different festivals throughout the year. For example, Diwali, Eid, Christmas and the Chinese New Year. They do this by taking part in a creative activity such as making cards or drawings. Children listen to stories about the occasion and have food tasting sessions.

The childminder has vast experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She is confident to judge how well individual children's needs can be met within existing routines. All children are included in planned activities and have free access to an

excellent assortment of toys. Children's individual needs are discussed with parents in detail. Any special requirements are recorded and consistent communication and information exchange takes place. The childminder works alongside other professionals and in partnership with parents to enable children to reach their full potential. She has attended various courses and has received specific training to care for children with complex medical conditions.

Good behaviour is valued and children are well behaved, confident and sociable. They are actively encouraged to share, take turns and play together, as the childminder has effective strategies in place to create a positive caring environment. Challenging behaviour is dealt with in a sensitive manner that is appropriate for children's level of understanding and maturity. Children consistently receive praise and encouragement for their effort and achievements, which helps them develop a good understanding of right and wrong. Children are valued and encouraged at all times by the very caring, experienced and knowledgeable childminder. They learn good manners and are polite and courteous.

Children's progress is communicated both written and verbally to parents and carers. They can see play plans for their children and receive a daily diary with written observations of their child's personal routines, play and activities. During initial interviews parents have in-depth discussions about every aspect of the service their children will receive. The childminder supports parents through difficult situations in her role as a family sessional support worker.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and at home in the relaxed and friendly environment. Rooms are welcoming. Space is well organised for children to relax and play in comfort and safety. Resources are organised effectively to support children's learning and encourage their independence and freedom of choice. Activities are varied and familiar daily routines provide children with security and consistency.

The childminder's practice effectively meets the needs of individual children. Policies and procedures satisfactorily promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. She has all the required information and consent from parents. Records and documentation are securely and confidentially stored. However, they are not sufficiently organised and regularly updated. As a result the childminder is less familiar with the most current information. The childminder has a childcare qualification and is interested in training to keep her knowledge and skills updated. She has attended various courses to enhance her practice. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. All children now have this written permission from their parents. Therefore, positive steps have been taken to promote children's health and safety.

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):

- organise policies and procedures to ensure that the most current are easily accessible.

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