

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	209221
Inspection date	16 January 2008
Inspector	Katherine Powell
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 1996. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight years. She currently cares for five children under the age of eight years and two children over the age of eight years.

Members of the household include the childminder, her husband and their three children. The childminder lives in a rural village on the outskirts of Market Deeping. The house is situated on a residential housing development and local amenities are within walking distance. All ground floor rooms are used for childminding purposes. These include the lounge, kitchen, dining area, toilet and playroom. There is a fully enclosed back garden which is used for outdoor play.

The childminder holds a recognised child care qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She takes children to a local baby and toddler group which she helps to organise.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean home where they learn about the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines. For example, children consistently wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Children's dietary requirements, including their likes and dislikes, are met through close communication with parents. Children enjoy a range of healthy snacks, such as fresh fruit, and have access to regular drinks.

Children enjoy participating in a wide range of activities which contribute to their health, for example, they are taken on regular walks around the local area and enjoy using a good range of play equipment in the garden which helps to promote their physical skills. Children also visit the local park where they can access large apparatus such as swings and a climbing frame. Children have space to explore their environment and younger children delight in being active in the playroom. They are encouraged to move around the room and practise their whole body movements. They are developing good hand to eye co-ordination and enjoy pressing buttons to make toys work. Children are able to rest and relax according to their individual needs as there is comfortable seating in the lounge and a travel cot is available.

The childminder maintains appropriate records and has effective systems in place to ensure children's health is promoted. For example, she has clear information regarding sick children, written permission is sought from parents to seek emergency medical treatment and medication records contain appropriate detail. The childminder has completed a first aid course and a first aid box is provided. This ensures that any accidents can be dealt with effectively.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained, child-friendly and safe environment. The childminder regularly assesses her home to ensure the risk of accidents is minimised. For example, electrical sockets are covered and hazardous substances are kept out of reach of children. The garden is fully enclosed and secure enabling children to play outside safely. Children benefit from being able to move around freely and independently within the home, accessing different areas for a variety of play activities. For example, the garden is used for outdoor activities, the playroom and kitchen are used for active play and the lounge is available for quiet play and sleep. Toys and equipment are of a high quality and are maintained in a clean and safe condition. Low-level shelving enables children to reach toys and games safely and easily and the childminder is mindful of ensuring that young children are unable to access games with small pieces.

Children are well supervised at all times, both indoors and outdoors, to ensure their safety. Effective procedures are in place when taking children on outings and children learn about road safety when walking around the village. The childminder has appropriate fire safety equipment in place, such as a fire blanket in the kitchen and smoke detectors. Children benefit from taking part in fire drills which enables them to learn how to evacuate the premises calmly in an emergency. The childminder has a generally good awareness of child protection procedures as she has attended appropriate training. This enables her to promote and safeguard children's welfare. However, current government guidance on child protection is not readily available to ensure correct procedures are followed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy participating in a broad and stimulating range of activities which engage their interest and meet their individual development needs. Children have good opportunities to develop their social skills as they play alongside the childminder and other children and through attendance at a local toddler group. Children are able to initiate their own activities and freely select from a good range of toys and play equipment. They receive good support during play activities and the childminder promotes children's speech and language skills through effective interaction. Young children are fully encouraged to be independent as they make choices about their play and learning and express their own needs.

Children respond well to the childminder and they feel confident and secure in her care. The childminder fully involves herself in children's play and activities. She knows individual children well, so is able to provide a suitable range of experiences to meet their needs. For example, children enjoy using a range of resources and materials to express their ideas creatively and older children have access to appropriate computer games in the playroom. Children have access to a stimulating range of toys and props to support their imaginative play. They delight in making 'cups of tea' for the childminder and putting food on plates in the play kitchen. The childminder has a good awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and uses this to support children's development and skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled and are valued as respected as individuals. A good range of play resources is provided, such as jigsaws, dolls, small world toys and books, which reflect positive images and help to promote children's awareness of diversity within society. Children benefit from participating in planned activities which help to develop their understanding of different cultures and beliefs. For example, children made tea light holders to celebrate Diwali and have looked at artefacts from China when discussing Chinese New Year. Children are able to learn about the local community by going on regular walks and outings. The childminder ensures that she gathers relevant information from parents to enable her to provide appropriate care and to fully meet the child's individual needs.

The childminder has a good awareness of effective behaviour management strategies which are appropriate to the differing ages and stages of development of the child. She is calm and sensitive towards the children and uses positive reinforcement to promote good behaviour and develop a child's self-esteem. Children learn to play co-operatively and to share toys and play equipment.

The childminder fosters positive relationships with parents. Information is regularly exchanged to ensure all children are cared for according to their usual routines. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and development and verbal information is exchanged on a daily basis. The childminder has developed useful written information for parents to ensure they are fully informed about her childminding service and practices. Parents are provided with clear information regarding the childminder's complaints procedure and are advised how they can contact Ofsted. Although the childminder has not received any complaints from parents she has not implemented a system for recording complaints, in the event this occurs.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's individual needs are well met through the effective organisation of space and resources. The childminder utilises her time effectively to provide children with opportunities to engage in activities both within and outside the home. Children have time to rest and sleep according to their needs. The childminder has undertaken some additional training to ensure she has a good knowledge and awareness of childcare issues, such as child protection and fire safety.

Children's care, welfare and learning are well promoted through the written policies and procedures in place. Records are held securely to enable children and families to benefit from confidentiality. The childminder ensures continuity of care is maintained through close liaison with parents. Effective procedures for gathering and sharing information with parents enables children to settle quickly into the setting. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one recommendation was raised with regard to providing all parents with a written agreement.

The childminder has taken positive action to address this issue and written contracts are in place for all parents. This has helped to further improve the partnership with parents and carers and ensure children's individual needs are met.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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:

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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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop awareness of the Government booklet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused - summary' (or any national guidance which replaces this publication)
- implement a system to record any complaints received from parents.

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