

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	257445
Inspection date	24 July 2007
Inspector	Sara Louth
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 1987. She lives with her husband in the market town of Louth. The whole 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 six children under eight years and she currently cares for one child full-time and two children on a part-time basis. She takes the children to a local music group and for walks along the canal.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm, welcoming home. They learn the importance of good hygiene to protect their health. For example, children always wash their hands after using the potty/toilet and before eating. The childminder washes her own hands before preparing food

and after changing nappies to prevent the spread of cross infection. She also ensures children have their own individual flannels which are changed daily. Parents are aware the childminder does not care for unwell children to protect other children's health. Children's safety is maintained since the childminder has a current first aid certificate and is able to deal appropriately with accidents.

Children enjoy fresh air and exercise most days going for walks along the canal. The childminder believes it is important to promote their physical health and they play on the grass, run around freely and have fun playing 'Pooh sticks'. In poor weather the childminder sets up obstacle courses inside the house so the children are still able to have exercise and develop their whole body strength. Children are able to rest comfortably when they wish because the childminder considers children's rest needs when planning activities.

Children learn about healthy eating because the childminder provides healthy snacks such as raisins and bananas. The older ones are encouraged to peel and cut the fruit themselves encouraging independence and promoting their small manipulative skills. Children's likes are met since parents provide meals for the childminder to prepare and serve. Drinks are available for children to help themselves at all times. The childminder ensures she is aware of any special dietary needs children may have.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have space to enjoy different activities at the same time and the setting is made welcoming and friendly to parents and children with displays of children's work on the walls. A wide range of suitable toys is available to the children maintained in clean, good condition. Babies and toddlers do not have access to toys/articles that may cause them harm since all equipment is stored in cupboards. The childminder closely supervises children at all times to ensure their welfare.

Children are cared for in a secure, suitable home environment and the childminder is very aware of providing a safe setting for them. All safety equipment is in place and working to ensure hazards are minimised. The childminder carries out daily ongoing risk assessments and regular safety checks. For example, safety gates prevent unsupervised access upstairs, smoke detectors are checked regularly, the fire blanket and first aid kit are easily accessible in the kitchen and there are safety catches on cupboards and drawers. Children are kept safe on outings as they learn the safe way to cross roads and the childminder makes sure young children are in a buggy or wearing a wrist strap.

Children are protected and their welfare safeguarded because the childminder is confident about recognising possible signs and symptoms of abuse and has good knowledge of child protection procedures. She has attended training and ensures parents are aware of her responsibilities through sharing her child protection policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder and are happy and settled. She finds out what they are interested in and then provides activities and toys that are stimulating and support their development and progress intellectually, emotionally and socially such as salt dough, painting and dressing up. Children paint dough figures they have made showing good

concentration. Their language and imaginative skills are developed through the childminder talking with them about the colours they are using, the parts of the body being painted and admiring the 'rainbow' hair on one model. Younger children join in with adult led activities if they wish to at their own level or can choose to initiate their own play with toys. All children are encouraged to make their own choices and start to become independent.

The childminder refers to the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan and has a theme a month. She writes ideas in a diary and is currently providing activities related to the seaside. Children have made a cereal box into a beach and made crabs and fish to put in the water. Their self-esteem is promoted because their work is valued by the childminder.

Children enjoy dressing up and dancing to music in the lounge. Afterwards they share story books with the childminder who involves all the children and encourages them to join in. Children's individual needs are met and their welfare promoted through the childminder planning each day to a general routine that also gives children a sense of security. Once a week they go to 'Music Makers' where they sing and play instruments as part of a group. This helps to develop their social skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed by the childminder who respects and values their individuality. She ensures children have equal access to all activities and takes their needs into account. Children learn about our diverse society through activities such as making lanterns at Chinese New Year and growing miniature daffodils for Mother's Day. The childminder has a positive attitude towards caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is willing to work closely with parents and carers to ensure she is fully able to meet their needs.

Children behave well and are developing good manners since the childminder is a positive role model. She keeps children occupied and praises them often. They respond well to methods used to manage behaviour. When the children become over-excited running around the lounge the childminder asks them not to get too giddy and provides an activity in the kitchen to calm them down.

Children benefit from the close relationship established between their parents/carers and the childminder and settle in quickly. She ensures parents/carers know what to expect from her service and shares a portfolio with them. Letters and questionnaires filled in by parents and carers are all very positive. They say how their children love the care they receive and recommend the childminder's service. The childminder talks to parents/carers on a daily basis and also uses diaries to record additional information. She understands the need to keep a complaint record. However, she does not have the relevant contact details for parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder enjoys being with children and is experienced with caring for them. Children benefit from her understanding of child development and how children learn. She also demonstrates sound understanding of the needs of babies and toddlers. The childminder organises the space and resources in the home well to enable the children to have room for active play, relaxation and sleep as required.

Documentation is organised effectively, stored safely and available for inspection. This provides a good framework for the care of children. The childminder has attended all necessary training and has also been to an Oral Health Awareness Course, including Healthy Eating for Under Five's, and Music Sounds Inclusive.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop her knowledge of recent guidelines for planned activities for babies.

The childminder is familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and refers to it for ideas and activities to use with babies and older children. She has a copy of the National Children's Home 'Sing and Sign' video. This has sign language, similar to Makaton, incorporated into songs to encourage improved communication skills in babies. The childminder has good knowledge of recent guidelines for planned activities for babies. This ensures children have their development supported well in their earliest years.

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:

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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):

- ensure the complaints procedure states Ofsted as regulator and contains relevant contact details for parents and carers.

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