

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260706
Inspection date	28 February 2008
Inspector	Jim Bostock
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was first registered in 2001 and works in the setting with two co-childminders in the village of Epworth, in North Lincolnshire. All areas of the premise are used for childminding, apart from the main bedroom, and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time, however, this can be increased when working with the co-childminders. At the time of inspection there were six children under 8 years of age attending for various sessions during the week. The childminder walks to local parks and is available to collect children from the local school. She has access to a car for local outings.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a good range of activities which contributes to their good health. Each day there are outdoor or indoor activities which help them develop control of their bodies, for example,

as they play in the very good outdoor play area and garden at the rear of the house. They also enjoy visits to the park to play on swings, slides and climbing frames, go on local walks, visit the library and join in with activities such as wax rubbings, collecting leaves and pebbles and feeding farm animals. These all help to improve children's physical skills and enjoy being active.

Children are well cared for in a warm and welcoming home where they are beginning to learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. The childminder maintains a good standard of hygiene throughout the home and follows good hygiene practices throughout the daily routine. The consistent adult support and guidance helps children gain an understanding of hygiene and a desire to become independent in their personal care, for example, as wash their hands and help themselves to paper towels. Written and verbal communication with parents and appropriate records ensure that children's individual health needs are met. However, the childminder does not have an up-to-date first aid certificate, which puts children's health and safety at risk. This is moderated to some extent as the childminder has had previous first aid training, is booked on a course in early March 2008 and is supported by two other childminders with current first aid qualifications who also work in the home.

Children are beginning to have a good understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet. They are able to make choices from a variety of healthy foods, for example, a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables, and help themselves to easily accessible drinks throughout the day. Children's individual dietary needs are well met through good partnerships with parents to discuss any allergies or special dietary requirements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a safe home where the risks are identified and minimised. This enables them to move around safely, freely and independently. For example, there are safety gates to prevent unsupervised access to the stairs, cupboard locks in the kitchen, socket covers in place and secure premises. However, the stair rail to the first floor has large gaps between the rails, and this is dangerous for children. It is noted that this has not been raised with the childminder prior to this inspection. The childminder helps children to gain an awareness of safety both indoors and outdoors, for example, by explaining and practising how to evacuate the premises safely in the event of a fire. She achieves an appropriate balance between freedom and setting safe limits. This allows children to learn a sense of danger and develop knowledge about how to protect themselves. There are very good arrangements for the arrival and collection of children to ensure their safety.

Children have a very good range of toys and playthings suitable for all ages. These are easily accessible, safe and well maintained.

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. She has attended child protection training to keep up-to-date with current legislation and ensures that all parents are made aware of her responsibility for reporting any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at the childminder's home. They are making good progress because the childminder is aware of their individual needs and provides a range of experiences

that contributes to their all round development. They enjoy activities, such as drawing and painting pictures, cutting and shaping play dough, reading books, and playing with trains and a dolls' house. Children particularly enjoy story time, where they choose the story and the childminder uses good questioning techniques to help children discuss what they have heard and extend their learning. They are growing in confidence and becoming more independent because the childminder provides all children with good levels of support and encouragement.

Children develop their vocabulary, learn colours and develop their understanding of the world from a variety of well planned activities linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They relate well to each other and have built close and caring relationships with the childminder, which increases their sense of trust and helps them to develop a sense of self. Daily outings to local amenities, such as activity play centres, help children to socialise and develop good relationships with their peers and other adults.

Parents receive written updates about what their children have been doing and their sleep and feed patterns to help them to be involved in their children's care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a positive attitude towards others and gain an understanding about the wider world. The childminder promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, resulting in all children feeling valued and free from discrimination. Children are able to access an good range of resources through their everyday play that increases their awareness of diversity, such as dolls, books, puzzles and small world figures. They have also taken part in Chinese New Year celebrations. They have good opportunities to learn about their local community as they visit local amenities and places of interest, such as local parks, shops and toddler groups.

The childminder has realistic expectations of children's behaviour. She has a sensitive approach and implements a range of good strategies to promote positive behaviour, which helps children understand right from wrong. Children respond positively to the childminder's praise and encouragement, for example, they help to tidy up, share toys and take turns. They show care and concern for one another and behave very well.

Children benefit from the good relationships between the childminder and parents. Good communication ensures parents are kept informed of most aspects of the childminding practice and the care, welfare and progress of their children. However, parents do not have access to an up-to-date complaints procedure.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The well organised environment and good daily routines ensure that children are happy and well settled. Good opportunities are made for free play, social interaction, resting, eating and going out. This means that children are gaining in confidence to initiate and extend their own play and learning. The required ratios are maintained and time is organised well, which results in children receiving appropriate support and their needs being met. The childminder's good knowledge, skills and positive attitude towards extended training enhance the care of children. However, as noted previously, she has not updated her first aid training as is required under the National Standards.

Most of the required policies, procedures, records and documentation are in place and shared with parents. There are good systems for recording which childminders are present and who has responsibility for the children, and the childminders work well together. All adults living or working on the premises undertake appropriate checks to ensure they are suitable to be with children.

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 develop multicultural resources, increase knowledge and understanding about learning difficulties and disabilities, and improve information for parents about concerns. She has achieved this by providing a good range of toys, playthings and activities that shows positive images of diversity; developing her knowledge about learning difficulties and disabilities; and having a written policy about complaints. However, the written policy is not fully up-to-date and forms the basis for a further recommendation.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children
- devise an action plan to ensure children are safe on the stairs with specific regard to the large gaps between the stair rails
- update the complaints policy in line with current guidance from Ofsted.

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