

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313338
Inspection date	31 January 2008
Inspector	Diane Lynn Turner
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 1994. She lives with her husband and adult son in a terraced house, which is situated close to the centre of Hull. All of the ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding, with toilet facilities situated on the first floor. There is an enclosed garden to the rear of the house for outdoor play.

Two cats are kept at the home.

The childminder has two level 3 qualifications in childcare and is a member of the National Childminding Association and the local childminding network. She is registered to care for six children at any one time. There are currently three children on roll, all of who are under five-years-old and attend on a part time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are kept healthy because they are cared for in a clean home where good attention is paid to following effective hygiene practices. For example, anti-bacterial products are used to clean surfaces, such as work tops and the baby changing mat, and the childminder has a written policy for the care of children who are ill. This clearly shows how the spread of infection is minimised. She effectively encourages the children to learn about the importance of following good practices in their personal care from an early age. For example, she ensures they use wipes to clean their hands before eating and after using the potty and talks to them about why they need to do so. They also learn about the importance of cleaning their teeth.

The childminder pays good attention to ensuring the children have lots of opportunities to develop their physical skills and enjoy the benefits of fresh air and physical exercise. For example, they walk to the various groups they attend, regularly visit the local park, and photographs show them having fun playing in the garden with various equipment. They are also provided with a wealth of activities to help them develop their fine motor skills, which they clearly enjoy taking part in. For example, they proudly show how they can use scissors and thread cotton reels.

The childminder has a basic food hygiene certificate. She fully understands about the safe preparation and storage of food and she has previous experience of meeting the needs of children with severe food allergies. She provides various activities to help the children learn about nutrition. For example, they help to prepare their snack, cutting up their banana and talking about why fruit is good for them. The childminder ensures the children have plenty to drink throughout the day, with their cups being offered at their level so they can access these as and when they become thirsty. Parents are currently providing all meals for their children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an environment where most risks are identified and minimised. For example, the premises are kept secure and effective use is made of safety equipment, such as socket covers and fire guards. A fire blanket is available in the kitchen, there is a written emergency evacuation plan and a smoke detector is in place on the ground floor in the hall way, which is checked regularly. However, there is not one in place on the first floor. The garden is secure, but this is not currently being used for outdoor play, as due to the recent weather it is very muddy, and the childminder has identified that some areas need tidying.

The childminder ensures children learn about keeping themselves safe. For example, she explains to them about tidying away toys after use to prevent trips and falls, talks to them about what to do in the event of a fire and she reminds them to use furniture safely. They also learn about the role of the fire brigade and road safety through activities at the groups they attend and observing a fire engine which was on show at the local park.

Children are well protected from possible abuse. The childminder has a sound knowledge of the possible indicators of abuse and the referral procedures should she need to report any concerns. Her written policy clearly outlines her responsibilities and she also has written procedures that would be followed in the event of a child being lost or a parent failing to collect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the care of the childminder. They clearly feel part of the family and benefit from the good range of activities she offers. They choose freely from a good range of toys and resources that are easily accessible to them, they confidently direct their own play and also play well together. For example, they make up imaginative games when they pretend to be dogs and act out domestic situations as they care for the dolls.

Interaction from the childminder is very good. She makes very good use of open ended questions to help the children think and she gives them time to formulate their answers. She helps them to develop their counting skills and colour recognition as they thread cotton reels, and to recognise letters as they play matching games when she encourages them to trace the shape of the letter with their finger. When she feels they have the necessary skills she introduces the use of activity books to help them develop their pencil control and to learn to write their name.

Very good use is also made of learning opportunities outside the home. For example, the childminder encourages the children to learn about the weather by drawing their attention to the trees blowing in the wind. They also visit the library and the local park to feed the ducks, and develop their social skills as they attend various groups. For example, photographs show them joining in with music and singing activities and listening to stories as part of a group. The children have ready access to these photographs and become fully immersed as they look at the various albums, recalling the activities with great pleasure.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are highly valued as individuals. They are encouraged to be sensitive towards one another's feelings and to follow the codes for working together. For example, they are encouraged to be kind to each other, to share fairly and not to hurt anyone. They are supported effectively in learning about the wider world. For example, they have access to resources that reflect positive images of diversity, including books entitled 'All kinds of people', and they celebrate festivals from around the world, such as the Chinese New Year. They also learn about their own community and its history through visits to the Street life and Transport museums. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are welcome to attend. There are none currently attending but the childminder has some previous experience in this area. For example, meeting the needs of children with hearing difficulties.

Children learn to behave well. The childminder is a very good role model for them to follow as she is very patient in her approach. She helps them to learn about sharing as they use resources, such as cottons reels, and she encourages them to use good manners. She values their achievements and rewards these with lots of praise and by encouraging them to give themselves a round of applause. As a result, the children use please and thank you with little prompting, readily help to tidy away the toys after use and are keen to take part in the activities which ensures their learning is fostered effectively.

The childminder pays good attention to developing positive relationships with the parents. Pre-placement visits are actively encouraged and good information is provided about the service. Detailed contracts are in place and information as to the child's care and the activities they have been involved in is shared effectively, through daily chats and the children's individual scrap books which show examples of their art work. Written testimonials show that parents

value the service highly, stating that the childminder is conscientious, and that she demonstrates a professional approach.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is enthusiastic about her role and shows that she is committed to improving her practice in a number of ways. For example, she is currently reviewing and updating her policies, she has a place booked on a course to ensure she is fully informed about the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage and she seeks advice from the local childminding network coordinator when necessary.

The childminder is well prepared for when the children arrive each day and offers them a good balance of activities, both inside and outside the home. All legally required documentation is in place and is kept up to date to ensure the service operates efficiently. However, this occasionally lacks the necessary detail. For example, attendance and medication records do not always include the child's full name. The registration certificate is displayed and appropriate insurance is in place.

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 it was recommended that the childminder improve some aspects of the safety. She has removed a chair that was damaged but she has not, however, fitted a smoke detector to the first floor to improve the fire safety precautions as was recommended.

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):

- improve the fire safety precautions by ensuring a smoke detector is fitted on the first floor

- ensure medication and attendance records detail the children's full names.

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