

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY260248
Inspection date	10 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 June 2003. She lives with her family in a semi-detached house in the Cottingham area 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.

The family has two hamsters, a rabbit, two guinea pigs, two budgerigars and a parrot.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and has completed steps one and two of a quality assurance award. She is registered to care for six children at any one time and there are currently nine children on roll, five of whom are under five years old. They all attend on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and well-maintained home where good steps are taken to ensure they remain healthy and well protected from the spread of infection. For example, the childminder follows good procedures when preparing and serving food, she routinely wears disposable gloves when changing nappies, and she asks parents to keep their child at home if they are suffering from any infectious diseases. Children are encouraged to follow good practices in their personal care. For example, hand washing routines are implemented before mealtimes and after toileting, with paper towels being provided to prevent cross-infection.

Children are well cared for in the event of an accident. The childminder has a valid first aid certificate and has three well-stocked first aid boxes, including one which is kept in the car for use on outings. Accidents are recorded in detail and shared with parents.

The childminder fully understands the importance of ensuring children have regular access to fresh air and physical exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. For example, they have opportunities to play in the garden, which has a range of outdoor resources, and they regularly visit the local park to use the large play equipment and play games, such as football. Photographs also show them having lots of fun joining in with activities, such as ten pin bowling, using the local soft play provision and playing in the paddling pool in the summer.

The childminder has a good understanding of meeting children's nutritional needs. For example, her written policy shows she does not provide items such as fizzy drinks as these may be high in sugar or additives. Most parents are currently providing their own food but the childminder is willing to provide a cooked meal if parents request, when items such as shepherd's pie, casseroles and pasta are included on the menu. Children sit at the table to eat, which promotes good manners and social skills, and they have regular access to drinks. For example, the younger children confidently access their individual cups as and when they are thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained and child-orientated home. For example, they have access to a bright and welcoming playroom where their artwork is displayed and low-level coat pegs are provided for their belongings, and the lounge is available for quiet activities. The children move confidently between the areas and are clearly at home in their surroundings.

Children have access to a very good range of toys and resources which are appropriate to the ages attending. These are presented very effectively at their level in labelled boxes, which depict both a picture and text to help them identify the contents. This enables them to make independent choices and to direct their own play and learning.

The childminder gives high priority to promoting children's safety. Regular risk assessments are carried out on all areas and action taken to minimise any identified risks. For example, equipment, such as safety gates, cupboard locks and socket covers, is used effectively, and the children are currently denied access to the garden as one of the fence panels has been damaged during the bad weather. Arrangements have been made for this to be replaced in the very near future. The childminder also checks the smoke detectors every month to ensure these remain in working order and she practises the emergency evacuation procedures regularly with the

children so they know what to do in the event of a fire. She also explains to the youngest children why it is important to use furniture correctly and about road safety when out in the community.

Children are well protected from possible abuse. The childminder attends training in safeguarding children and uses this effectively to keep her child protection policy updated. This ensures parents are kept fully informed of her responsibilities in this area. She fully understands the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and knows what to do if she needs to refer any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. They clearly feel at home and behave well. They develop good relationships with her and clearly feel part of the family. They play well together, and the younger children also have opportunities to socialise with others through their regular attendance at the local toddler group. They enjoy a wide range of learning opportunities, which are a good balance of both free play and planned activities, enabling them to learn in different ways. For example, they choose freely from the toys and resources and enjoy exploring musical instruments, dancing and learning new songs as they attend the weekly music group.

The childminder skilfully adapts activities to meet the ages of the children, making effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support the learning needs of the youngest children. Interaction from the childminder is good. For example, she provides tactile experiences, such as playing with dough for the younger children, which the older children help to make. The childminder encourages them to squeeze this through their fingers so they can explore the texture, and to describe what it feels like. She then extends their learning by suggesting they make handprints in the dough and count their fingers, and cut out different shapes. Photographs show the older children taking part in a range of art and craft activities, such as making spiders as part of their Halloween celebrations, and depict the younger children fully immersed in role play as they dress up as doctors and nurses.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder pays good attention to finding out about children's individual needs and to ensuring these are met. Pre-placement visits are actively encouraged to ensure parents have the opportunity to fully discuss their child's care and to help them feel confident in leaving their child. The visits also enable the childminder to find out about the children's interests and for them to gradually become familiar with their surroundings.

The childminder actively encourages the children to be accepting of others and to learn about the wider world and the area in which they live. A good range of resources is in place to raise their awareness of diversity, including a number of different dolls and a calendar depicting festivals and celebrations from around the world. The children also regularly visit various local attractions. For example, a children's farm, the beach, the toddler group and a farm shop where they learn about sourcing food, such as eggs and vegetables.

The childminder effectively supports the children in behaving well. She is a good role model for them to follow. She shows a very patient approach and uses clear explanations so children understand what is acceptable, and the effect any negative behaviour may have on others. As

a result, the children clearly understand the routines and boundaries within the home. For example, they readily sit at the table to eat their meals and help to tidy away the toys, reminding the childminder to play the 'tidy up' game as they do so.

The childminder fully understands the importance of developing good relationships with the parents and how this benefits the children's care. She provides detailed written information about the service and keeps parents well informed about their child's care and activities. For example, she completes individual daily diaries for children under three years old, where information about their personal care routines is detailed, and she provides copies of photographs showing the activities the children have been involved in.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is very well organised in all aspects of her service. Good use is made of the available space to provide a supportive environment and she is well prepared for when the children arrive each day, which means they have good care and attention. She is enthusiastic about her role and is committed to improving her practice. For example, she regularly attends training and has achieved steps one and two of a quality assurance award.

The childminder keeps written records of the children's progress and has written policies which clearly show how the service operates. Good attention is paid to keeping paperwork up to date. For example, detailed child, medication and accident records are in place and each child has a separate section in the childminder's file to ensure confidentiality is maintained. Parents' contact details are kept readily to hand both in the home and on outings and the childminder has a personal emergency plan. Her registration certificate is displayed and appropriate insurances are in place. However, written contracts have not been drawn up with all parents, nor has written permission been obtained for the seeking of medical advice or treatment in an emergency for all 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 it was recommended that the childminder improve some safety aspects. The recommendations have been successfully implemented. Cleaning materials have been removed from the toilet and the rear exit made easily and immediately openable without the use of a key so the premises can be evacuated quickly in an emergency.

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:

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):

- ensure a written contract and permission for the seeking of medical advice or treatment in an emergency is in place for all children.

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