

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	209122
Inspection date	20 February 2008
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 1991. She lives with her two adult children and 15 year old in Sleaford, Lincolnshire. The whole ground floor of the home and one upstairs bedroom is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Amenities such as shops, schools, a pre-school and a park are within walking distance. The childminder uses her car to go further afield.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding three children on a part-time basis and another two during the school holidays. The family has one dog, four cats and five hens.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She has a childcare qualification and attends local childminding group meetings regularly.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming, clean home. They learn the importance of good hygiene to protect their health. For example, children always wash their hands after using the toilet and before lunch, after playing in the garden and messy play. They know hands are kept clean so they 'don't get germs' and ask for a wipe to clean their hands after using play dough. The childminder is able to deal appropriately with accidents since she has a current first aid certificate. However, there is not enough detail recorded in the accident or medication books. This may compromise children's health.

Children enjoy fresh air and exercise most days walking to and from school. The childminder knows it is beneficial for children's health to play outside and has a range of outdoor resources for children to use in the garden including ride-on toys and a climbing frame. Children regularly visit the park and indoor play areas to use large play equipment which strengthens their bodies and develops large muscle skills.

Children's food likes are met as parents provide a packed meal. The childminder has a good understanding of healthy eating and provides nutritious snacks such as fresh fruit and toast. Children are able to help themselves to a drink of water at all times which helps them become aware of their own needs. The childminder ensures she is aware of any special dietary needs children may have, to ensure their good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's home where they have space in the conservatory and lounge to enjoy different activities at the same time. A wide range of suitable toys are easily available to the children enabling them to make choices and develop their independence as well as promoting interest in their play. Children have their work valued and build self-esteem through their work displayed on the notice board in the kitchen. The childminder directly supervises the children in the garden at all times to ensure their safety.

The childminder is very aware of providing a safe setting for children. All safety equipment is in place and the childminder carries out regular safety checks. For example, safety gates prevent unsupervised access to the stairs, smoke detectors are checked regularly, the fire blanket and first aid box are easily accessible in the kitchen and sharp knives are kept out of reach. Children are kept safe when out as the childminder teaches them road safety and takes her mobile phone and contact numbers in case of an emergency.

Children are protected and their welfare safeguarded because the childminder has a good understanding of possible signs and symptoms of abuse and a secure knowledge of child protection procedures. She is confident of her role regarding child protection. Parents are made aware of the childminder's responsibilities through reading the child protection policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy being in the childminder's home where she creates a friendly, caring atmosphere. They interact confidently with the childminder. The childminder supports their play well by providing a range of accessible toys and joining in with them sensitively following their lead. She offers activities to develop the children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities such as play dough, books and a road system with vehicles.

The childminder listens to children and is interested in what they say or do. She promotes children's thinking and language skills by asking questions such as 'What are we going to make?' and 'Shall we make a pizza like yesterday?' when using the play dough. She and the children have fun using shape cutters and rolling pins to manipulate the dough. Children concentrate as they push dough through a tube and show perseverance in their task. When they successfully make a shape they show pride stating excitedly 'I got it out'. The childminder interacts with the children as they share a book. Children show high levels of involvement and enjoyment as they talk about the pictures and join in the repetitive phrases.

Children show imagination as they pretend to fill vehicles with petrol and mend the road with a sticker. They develop their hand-eye co-ordination as they use bricks to build a tall tower, carefully adding more with encouragement from the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a positive attitude to equal opportunities and diversity and would like to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She works closely with parents to ensure all needs are met. Children learn about our diverse society through books, resources and activities relating to different festivals such as Chinese New Year and Easter.

Children mainly behave well and are developing good manners since the childminder is a positive role model. She reinforces positive behaviour through praise and reward. For example, children get a sticker for wearing an apron or using the toilet when potty training. The childminder always involves the parents and works with them regarding behaviour management methods. However, the childminder is not fully confident developing behaviour management techniques to use with children with more challenging behaviour. This may not fully promote children's welfare and development.

Children are cared for very well according to parent's and carer's wishes. The childminder finds out as much as she can about the children to help them settle well. She ensures parents and carers know as much as possible about the setting and shares a clear, well set out portfolio with them at the initial meeting that includes her mission statement and policies and procedures. Written feedback from parents and carers shows they are very happy with the service provided. They state she is a professional, reliable childminder who is totally committed to the children and their children are happy in her care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's understanding of child development and how children learn. She organises the space and resources in the home very well to enable the children to have room for active play, relaxation and sleep as required.

Documentation is organised effectively, stored confidentially, is up to date and available for inspection. This provides a good framework for the care of children. The childminder has attended all necessary training and has recently been on courses including the briefing session on the Early Years Foundation Stage in November 2007 and 'Cooking up a Cultural Feast' in February 2008. She is an active member and vacancy co-ordinator of the local childminder's group.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop her knowledge of child protection issues including allegations made against herself and to increase an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

The childminder has attended a child protection course and has read all the information relating to this area. She now feels confident of the course of action to be taken relating to any child protection issue including an allegation made against herself. The childminder has increased the range of activities and resources promoting equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. There is now a better framework in place for the care of children.

Complaints since the last inspection

On 21 November 2007, Ofsted received concerns about the safety and supervision of children on school runs and that the childminder was not making information available to parents in terms of displaying her registration certificate. These concerns related to National Standards 2: Organisation, 6: Safety and 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers. On 05 December 2007, Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to investigate these concerns and found that the provider was not meeting National Standard 14: Documentation. The provider was issued with one action requiring her to maintain a daily record of attendance of all children looked after and their hours of attendance. On 11 January 2008, Ofsted received a response from the provider detailing what actions they had taken to meet the requirements. No further action was taken and the provider continues to be qualified for registration.

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

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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 sufficient detail is always recorded in the medication and accident record books
- increase knowledge and understanding of methods to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in ways which promote their welfare and development.

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