

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY276154
Inspection date	19 November 2007
Inspector	Maxine Williams
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 2003. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and 12 in New Mills, Derbyshire. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding five children under five during the day, four of them on a part-time basis, and two children over five before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has a pet dog and a rabbit.

The childminder regularly attends the local carer and toddler group and occasionally works with an assistant. She supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and is a member of the local childminding group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in warm, very clean surroundings where they learn the importance of good hygiene. They thrive because the childminder follows extremely effective policies and procedures which meet the children's health, dietary and physical needs. Their clear understanding of why they must have their hands wiped before snack and meal times and why they must wash their hands after using the toilet promotes increasing independence in their personal care. For example, three-year-old children sing the 'hand-washing song' when they wash their hands after going to the bathroom. Children independently carry out these tasks with little need to be reminded. Younger children are well supported in attending to their hygiene needs by the childminder. Comprehensive accident, medication and sickness policies are shared with parents, ensuring that all children are cared for within a very safe environment which is free from infection.

Children enjoy a wide and varied range of very healthy and nutritious meals, snacks and drinks throughout the day. Drinks are always available and the childminder actively encourages children to drink water regularly. The childminder takes account of the wishes of parents and the children's preferences to provide healthy meals that appeal to the children and meet their dietary needs. Nutritious meals are cooked from fresh produce, which are suitably stored and served. Children enjoy meal and snack times which are well organised, safe and present the children with nourishing healthy choices, such as wholemeal bread sandwiches, with chopped vegetables and cheese. The childminder's comprehensive knowledge of healthy eating and good nutrition guidelines contributes significantly to children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle.

Children are developing competent physical skills and abilities which are very well promoted through access to a wide range of activities both within and away from the childminding setting. Regular opportunities are made available during indoor and outdoor play for children to develop and build upon their existing good skills and range of physical abilities. Large movement activities are very well provided for; as a result children's physical skills and abilities are developing well. Children practice climbing and jumping skills as they successfully use the large, enclosed trampoline in the garden. They have plentiful opportunities to enjoy playing on ride-on-toys and using a variety of equipment at the local carer and toddler group. The childminder reminds them to have regular drinks and relax when they need to. Subsequently they develop knowledge of the way activity has an effect on their bodies and all are able to rest and be active according to their needs. Children extend their small physical skills as they proficiently use a variety of equipment. For example, they use crayons, play dough, paints and other creative materials during craft activities, developing hand-eye coordination and good finger control. The childminder has a firm knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Her secure understanding of each child's stage of development means the youngest children are confident to try out new skills, ask for help when needed and set their own limits within a secure environment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because the childminder is exceptionally attentive and uses detailed risk assessments to reduce possible hazards. This means they are

able to move around safely, freely and independently. The childminder has a good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. The childminder conducts daily checks of both indoor and outdoor play space prior to the children's arrival, this significantly enhances their safety. High priority is given to close supervision at all times, particularly when using the garden and when on outings. For example, when they go on trips each of the children wear a wristband with the childminder's contact number on it and she carries a mobile phone with parents contact details, to ensure that their welfare and safety is protected. Regular discussion and practice evacuations of the premises gives children a clear understanding of the importance of staying safe in an emergency. Children have taken part in a visit to the local fire station, they were able to sit in the fire engine and use the fire hose. This experience promotes children's understanding of the duties of fire fighters and the dangers of fire.

Children select activities from an extensive range of high quality developmentally-appropriate resources, which meet safety standards. These are organised effectively in storage containers at an accessible height to encourage independent access. Suitable furniture is available for children, to protect their safety and the regular checking of furniture, toys and equipment ensures that the children are kept very safe at all times. The childminder protects and supports children's welfare and has all of the necessary policies and procedures in place. For example, the childminder holds a current first aid certificate and has attended training in child protection. Her thorough understanding of child protection procedures, in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines, ensures children are very well protected from harm or neglect; this actively contributes to children's safety and well-being. Parents and carers are made aware that the childminder's ultimate responsibility is the safety and welfare of the children she cares for.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and extremely comfortable at the childminder's house. They respond very well to each other and develop their independence as they choose between a large assortment of toys, books and activities, which are interesting and appealing. They achieve exceedingly well because the childminder is highly skilled and uses her excellent knowledge of early year's guidance, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide high quality care and improve children's experiences. The childminder organises the childminding day well, so that children have opportunities to be active and to enjoy quiet time. During story time the childminder reads a story to children, they enjoy snuggling in and looking at the pictures as the childminder reads the story. The use of props, which children play with, helps their understanding and enjoyment of the story. Children share the soft felt strawberries and the mouse and pretend the mouse is climbing up the ladder to pick the strawberry, as it does in the story. Good questioning by the childminder helps children to think about the story as it is read, and afterwards, when two and three-year-olds are able to recall the events of the story.

Children delight in the creative experience of making music with the recorder, drum and triangle, singing songs and dancing around the room, as the childminder gives them lots of praise and encouragement. They enjoy singing 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star' and 'Wind the bobbin up', all joining in with the singing and the actions. Children are motivated, eager and actively participate in and enjoy the experiences offered to them. They negotiate well with each other in their play. Access to very good resources and interaction with the childminder prolongs children's interest and enables them to successfully develop their play. They develop their understanding of colours through daily routines and planned activities. For example, children are able to correctly identify the colours of the pieces of the construction set they play with, and when they make

play dough they talk about what will happen if they mix the different colours together. The childminder takes lots of pictures and makes written observations of children's progress in order to inform parents of children's improvements and development and document their enjoyment of activities in the setting. However, written records do not fully reflect children's individual progress.

The childminder has a very good awareness of the array of experiences which facilitate children to make better use of their intellectual and imaginative capabilities. For example, she encourages three-children to count the leaves when they go to collect leaves for the autumn project. Two and three-year-olds are encouraged to look for the initial letter of their names on the handprint tree picture they have made and find their own handprints. This encourages their letter recognition skills, whilst developing pride in their artistic creations. The youngest children make very good progress because the childminder recognises the uniqueness of each child. Close and considerate relationships provide children with a healthy dependence on the childminder, while enabling them to develop a strong sense of self. Children are offered an innovative range of diverse play experiences and activities which enables them to learn new skills and consolidate existing ones. For example, children attend a variety of child-centred settings away from the childminding premises, where they interact with other children and develop social, physical and musical skills. On one of the regular trips that children benefit from they visit a working farm and are able to go on tractor rides, feed the animals and take part in an abundance of opportunities for physical play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and have equal access to all activities and experiences offered which are stimulating and age-appropriate. The childminder supplies a high quality and wide variety of activities and resources to encourage a positive outlook to the wider world and raise children's knowledge of diversity and their understanding of others. The children have extensive opportunities to find out about themselves and each other, and to gain knowledge of the wider world through well-planned topics, organised activities and outings to places of interest. For example they take part in creative activities to celebrate a number of different festivals and cultural celebrations. Children's natural curiosity and questions are dealt with in a sensitive and considerate manner. They are cherished and appreciated as individuals; the childminder ensures that all children's personal needs are known, enabling the planning and adaptation of care accordingly to meet their individual needs. The childminder has a sound knowledge of disability and learning difficulties. She is pro-active in ensuring that all of the children in her care receive appropriate support and experiences. For example, when children with disabilities start to attend the setting she researches their illnesses to enable her to provide appropriate and suitable care. Children respond enthusiastically in creative and intellectual activities, representing what they see, hear, smell, taste and feel.

Children's self-confidence is evident and is very well promoted as they receive lots of positive praise and encouragement from the childminder. Their behaviour is very good because the childminder is clear about the need to promote children's positive behaviour and self-esteem. They take turns and demonstrate care and concern for each other, playing together amicably. Their understanding of right and wrong is increased as they respond to gentle reminders to care for their environment, the childminding resources and each other. The rules of the childminding setting are displayed and are regularly discussed with children. Subsequently, children start to take responsibility for their own behaviour and increase their awareness of their effect on others. The childminder fosters excellent relationships with parents, which

contributes considerably to children's well-being in the childminding setting. She actively seeks parent's views on their child's needs and interests before the child starts at the setting and on a regular basis during their time there, through questionnaires and regular discussion. Cards and letters of support from parents are extremely positive about the care the childminder provides for their children. Parents and carers have access to information on what the childminder has to offer, written policies and procedures and exemplary photographic evidence of the activities that children take part in when attending the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are comfortable and feel secure in the well-ordered surroundings. Indoor and outdoor space is organised well to provide extensive play opportunities for children. This enables them to initiate and extend their own play and learning. The childminder successfully uses the comprehensive policies and procedures to support the well-being, care and learning of children. She frequently shares information with parents to keep them up to date about her services and their child's development. This promotes stability and continuity in the children's care. The childminder is a member of the local childminding group. She makes good use of support and resources provided through the childminding group and the local toy library to ensure children have access to an exceptionally wide range of activities, resources and experiences. As a result children benefit from this dynamic approach.

The childminder is very clear about her role and responsibility in providing a high quality service to the children and their family. She has a high regard for developments in early years and successfully follows an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. The childminder has completed, and continues to undertake appropriate training to enhance her practice and knowledge, enabling her to provide high quality childcare. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed. Observations relating to the children's minded day, development and general well-being are fed back to parents and carers as they collect their children at the end of their minded day. Children benefit from the excellent communication between the childminder, parents and carers. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was agreed that the childminder should develop children's language and mathematical thinking. The childminder now goes to extensive efforts to develop children's language skills and their mathematical thinking through routine daily routines and planned activities. This approach promotes children development and learning in the setting.

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):

- develop written records to show individual children's progress.

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