

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY350381
Inspection date	14 April 2008
Inspector	Susan Hoult
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 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged six and four in a village to the north of Lincoln, Lincolnshire. There are schools, a pre-school, a nursery, shops and parks within walking distance. All areas of the home are available for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family has a pet cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and currently looks after 10 children on a part-time basis.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends local group meetings.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Children understand, when and why they must wash their hands through explanations from the childminder supplemented by pictorial representations. Good arrangements are in place to prevent infection through cross-contamination. For example, the childminder uses antibacterial spray to clean surfaces, dedicated chopping boards for food preparation and children have individual hand towels. Children's health is well promoted by the childminder who has a current first aid certificate and has clear procedures in place should a child become ill or need emergency treatment or advice. Children's emotional well-being develops through the warm relationships they form with the childminder.

Children enjoy plenty of fresh air and exercise throughout the year. Regular walks, visits to parks and physical play in the garden such as skipping, football, throwing, catching, crawling through the tunnel, playing on the large netted trampoline, using sit and ride toys and rockers help children develop their large muscle skills and hand-eye coordination. Children also enjoy dancing in the home and visits to soft play areas which further strengthens their bodies.

The childminder has a good understanding of nutrition as she has previously worked as a catering supervisor, and has attended a basic food hygiene course and an information session relating to food and nutrition. She liaises closely with parents to ensure she meets children's individual dietary requirements, likes, dislikes and understands any allergies they may have. Children are well nourished and learn about which foods are good for them because the childminder promotes healthy eating through discussion and individual 'healthy eating' charts. Children benefit from a balanced, nutritious diet and enjoy healthy options such as fresh and dried fruit, carrot and cucumber sticks, fromage frais, toast and plain biscuits for snack. Any food brought from home is stored and served appropriately. Drinks are readily available ensuring children do not become thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel secure in the well-maintained, very welcoming home environment where they have space to enjoy different activities at the same time. As well as using the large kitchen/diner, conservatory and study they enjoy playing in the extremely well laid out playroom where they freely access a wide range of good quality, developmentally appropriate toys and resources. These are regularly checked by the childminder to ensure they are safe and clean. Sleeping babies and children are checked regularly to ensure their safety. The childminder makes sure children are safe when going on walks and outings by reminding them of what is expected, reinforcing road safety and using appropriate restraints when using the car. Children know how to evacuate the home quickly and safely if needed as fire drills are practised regularly and are recorded. The childminder prevents unsupervised access to the stairs through using stairgates and has a door protectors on ground floor doors to prevent children trapping their fingers. Children are always in sight or hearing of the childminder enabling them to move around independently which increases their confidence. However, although children cannot access water in the pond as it is securely covered, standing rain water is not always drained from two large plant pots. Therefore, children's safety may potentially be compromised.

Children are protected and their welfare safeguarded because the childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of possible signs and symptoms of abuse and who to report any concerns to. She is on a waiting list to attend child protection training and has attended an information session on the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). The childminder shares information about safeguarding children with parents through discussion and a clear policy. She never leaves children with unvetted people, knows who may collect each child and makes sure parents are aware of the action she would take in an emergency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and enjoy the time they spend with the childminder. She takes an active interest in what the children say and do, and uses her knowledge of how children learn through play to provide a stimulating variety of activities and experiences. The layout of the playroom helps facilitate this. Children are able to snuggle up in a comfortable book corner where they can easily access books. Two children have great fun looking through the rail of dressing up clothes and the accessory drawer before proudly twirling round and showing off the outfits they have chosen to put on. They smile as the childminder admires them and happily chatter amongst themselves. The childminder plans activities in advance making use of the training she has attended and is flexible in its implementation. Children enjoy a wide range of activities including jigsaw puzzles, puppets, drawing, painting, hand and face painting, building with a variety of construction items, role play, making items such as cards and crowns from a variety of craft and natural materials, exploring the 'treasure chest', helping in the garden and painting pots and planting bulbs in them for 'Mothers' Day'. Children help the childminder with household tasks such as hanging out the washing. Two children excitedly tell the childminder they have found frog spawn in the pond. She looks at it with them and sensitively questions and reminds them about the life cycle of frogs. The childminder ensures older children are happily occupied whilst she attentively holds a baby to feed them their bottle. Later the older children march around playing a variety of musical instruments they have chosen themselves whilst the baby is fed in a highchair. The childminder gives appropriate attention to the baby whilst ensuring the other children are happily occupied.

Children enjoy socialising with other children at several toddler groups, the local childminder group meetings when visiting the local library for 'story time'. They enjoy going to the shops, the post office, the pet shop and occasionally trips on a bus. Trips further afield include the beach, farm parks and arboretum. The childminder recently attended a music sounds workshop which participants then involved children in a follow up session. The childminder supports children's play well, extending their learning through effective questioning and making suggestions of what they may like to do next taking into account children's varying ages and abilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children and their parents are treated with equal concern by the childminder who works hard to meet their individual needs and has a positive attitude to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A welcome poster in several languages is enhanced by photographs of the children minded. Children's self-esteem and confidence is raised through the childminder gathering relevant information from their parents, getting to know each child well and valuing them as individuals. She has a good understanding of equality of opportunity, diversity and

anti-discriminatory practice which is reflected well in her policies. A good range of toys, books and activities promote a positive view of the wider world and increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. For instance, some children recently attended a 'cooking up a cultural feast' session with the childminder.

Children play harmoniously together and behave well helped by the childminder having realistic expectations of individual children. They respond positively to the childminder's good role modelling and her sensitive, calm, consistent approach to reinforcing good behaviour. She helps children understand the effect of their behaviour on others through explanation taking into account children's individual ages and levels of understanding.

The childminder respects parents as the prime carers of their children. She has an open door policy and works closely with parents to create a trusting partnership which enhances children's well-being, development and progress. Parents write positively about the childminder and the service she provides. For example, they say she is 'reliable', 'understanding', 'thoughtful', 'caring' and 'very supportive'. They are pleased with the 'home from home' atmosphere and the range of 'lovely activities and toys' that their children enjoy. The childminder exchanges information with parents on a daily basis, supplementing this with written information for babies and when she has time completing a diary for each child. However, these are sometimes stored in view in the hall which may potentially compromise confidentiality. An effective parents' notice board, information table and a detailed portfolio including detailed policies give parents a good understanding of the service the childminder offers.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder enjoys working with and has a high regard for all children. She has a good understanding of child development and creates a calm, homely, stimulating atmosphere where children feel valued. Effective organisation of time, space and resources enables children to enjoy a variety of activities and make progress in their learning through play.

The childminder has been proactive in accessing information and attending a briefing about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and relating the 'Every Child Matters Outcome Framework' to the National Standards. She intends furthering her knowledge of the EYFS through training later in the year. She keeps up-to-date with current trends in childcare through on-going relevant training and workshops, meeting with other childminders and reading professional childcare publications.

Extremely well organised documentation including records of checks relating to safety of the premises and resources, updates of children's records and reviews of policies, procedures and parental agreements create a very good framework for children's care. Paperwork is up to date and is available for inspection. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

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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 any collection of natural water is inaccessible to children
- ensure confidentiality is maintained at all times with reference to the storage of daily diaries.

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