

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY358035
Inspection date	11 August 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 eight and six years in a village on the southern outskirts of Lincoln, Lincolnshire. Shops, parks, a pre-school, a nursery and schools are within walking distance. All areas of the home are available for use. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family has a pet hamster.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and currently looks after three children.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is given high priority. They are cared for in a clean environment where they learn good personal hygiene habits. For example, children understand why they must wash

their hands thoroughly before eating or baking and after using the toilet, handling animals and playing outside. A pictorial reminder is in place over the wash basin. Children use individual towels for drying their hands. Parents are clearly informed about the childminder's sick children policy which contributes towards minimising opportunities for cross-infection effectively. The childminder is able to deal with any accidents effectively as she keeps her first aid box up-to-date and has a current first aid certificate.

Children get lots of fresh air and exercise because they have free access to the garden and go out on walks, to the park and a play area frequently, as well as approximately fortnightly to soft play centres. There are a variety of activities available that helps them develop their physical skills such as Hula Hoops, scooters, bikes, skipping ropes, bats and balls and a large netted trampoline. Inside children enjoy dancing, doing exercises and playing a 'Limbo' game. Children are able to rest and relax comfortably when they wish.

Children's nutritional needs are met well because the childminder gathers good information from parents about their children's dietary requirements, likes and dislikes and provides healthy balanced meals. Food provided by parents is stored appropriately. Children enjoy a variety of snacks including fruit, vegetable sticks, yoghurts, breadsticks, toast and cereals. On occasions they have cream crackers which they are encouraged to butter themselves and if they ask for biscuits they eat fruit first. Children have free access to their own water bottles ensuring they do not become thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a suitable home environment, where the childminder checks the premises prior to children arriving to ensure any hazardous substances or sharp implements are inaccessible to them. Safety equipment such as socket covers, a fire blanket, smoke alarms and cupboard catches are in place and safety gates are available for use when necessary. However, although the childminder remains with children when they are playing outside one of the side garden gates is not secure. This and the childminder not being clear about manufacturers' instructions for use of the trampoline may potentially compromise children's safety. Children know how to evacuate the premises quickly and safely should the need arise through regularly practising fire drills. There is a good variety of toys and play equipment which are easily accessible, checked regularly, kept in good condition and are suitable for the children who use them.

Children are satisfactorily safeguarded because the childminder has a suitable understanding of her child protection responsibilities and has leaflets detailing local procedures. A clear policy makes sure parents are aware of why and when any action might be taken.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled with the childminder who effectively fosters their emotional well-being through the caring relationships she develops with them. The childminder creates a relaxed, unhurried atmosphere where children enjoy a wide range of activities that support their emotional, physical, intellectual and social development. These include painting, marble art, role play, puppet shows, dressing-up, baking, playdough, making models and collages, listening to and acting out stories and construction. Children have many opportunities to explore the natural world when they go on walks, visit the park and a children's farm park. They often

collect items such as leaves to take home or use for collages with the childminder. They learn to socialise through attending various events with the childminder, such as family days at Lincoln castle and a 'hands-on' museum, music sessions, toy and book libraries and when appropriate for the age of children attending, toddler sessions. Children's interest in books is currently being actively developed through them being part of the 'Team Read' scheme at the local library where they receive 'Olympic' medals for progress. Children learn to play co-operatively together because the childminder is clear with them about the importance of taking turns and listening to each other, for example, when she and the children take part in a talent contest taking turns to be judges and competitors. There is lots of laughter and happy chatter as the children become fully engrossed in the activity. Two children have great fun creating an office situation and working as 'temps' before dancing happily to music they request and then making figures from mouldable sand.

The childminder has attended training for the forthcoming Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and is using the materials provided to help her begin to plan for each child whilst following their interests to help them reach their potential. Useful information is recorded about what children can do and how to further extend their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has an effective equal opportunities policy in place which includes reference to challenging any discrimination. She makes all children welcome in her home by treating them as individuals and with equal concern. The childminder helps children feel good about themselves and others by celebrating differences that make them unique. Children have a selection of toys and resources that they use as part of their everyday play that helps them to gain an understanding and appreciation of the wider world. They take part in celebrating festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Chinese New Year and Passover through appropriate activities. The childminder has a positive attitude to caring for children with additional needs.

Children behave well because the childminder is a good role model and has a consistent, but flexible approach to behaviour management. She is realistic in her expectations taking into account children's differing ages, levels of understanding and stage of development. She effectively uses praise, approval and rewards to help build children's self-esteem. She explains clearly when behaviour is not appropriate and helps children resolve their own disputes through negotiation. For example, when two children both want to wear the feather boa she supports discussion which leads to them both happily deciding to wear 'net curtain' shawls instead.

Parents write positively about the service the childminder offers in questionnaires that she sends out. Parents say the childminder makes children feel 'So happy and relaxed' and 'Part of the family'. They praise the good relationships she builds with children and the happy, safe environment she provides. The childminder works closely with parents exchanging information as they arrive and depart so she can offer the best possible care taking into account their changing needs. Daily diaries help support this.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a childminder who has a high regard for their well-being and is fully committed to her work. She has completed the required training and as well as reading

professional magazines and making most of local experienced childminders, she is keen to attend further courses to increase her knowledge and understanding of childcare.

The childminder makes good use of the space available in her home, helping children develop a sense of belonging through displaying their art and giving them a good choice of activities. Children move freely around the ground floor and garden receiving plenty of individual attention and being actively supervised. All the required paperwork is in place and kept accurately, helping provide a good framework for children's care. Confidential information is stored securely. 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

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 the rear garden is secure and children are not able to leave it unsupervised
- ensure you follow manufacturers' recommendations with regard to the use of equipment with particular reference to the trampoline.

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