

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY363250
Inspection date	12 August 2008
Inspector	Alison Edwards
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?

This childminder registered in 2007. She lives in a detached house on a residential road on the outskirts of a town in south west Leicestershire with her partner and three children aged 11, eight and four years of age. Minded children use the ground floor of the house. There is a rear garden for outdoor play. A cat is kept as a family pet. The childminder is registered to care for four minded children under eight years. There are currently six children on roll of whom three are under eight years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a spacious, warm and hygienically maintained home, so helping to promote their well-being. They show an understanding of the reasons for following good hygiene practices within their daily routines. For example, they describe using liquid soap and clean towels to make sure their hands are free of germs, and explain why they clean their teeth after meals. The childminder recognises the importance of ensuring that any individual health, care and dietary needs are clearly understood and recorded to enable them to be met effectively.

She holds a current paediatric first aid qualification and obtains written parental consent to seek medical treatment in the event of an emergency. These arrangements help to ensure she is able to act in children's best interests in the event of any accident or sudden illness.

Children enjoy ready access to a wide range of energetic play opportunities in the rear garden, such as using slides, climbing frames, swings or ball games, so enabling them to exercise their large movement skills in the fresh air. Children use a good range of resources within the home to enable them to use their hand-eye coordination, such as drawing materials, construction toys and puzzles.

Children are well nourished because the childminder provides a varied and balanced range of meals and snacks, taking account of individual dietary needs and preferences. For example, she offers children healthy choices between a range of nutritious sandwich fillings, such as cheese, ham or tuna fish and provides a good selection of fresh fruit and salad vegetables to encourage children to eat five portions of these each day. Younger children are provided with readily accessible drinks, and older children freely use a chilled water dispenser throughout the day, so helping to ensure that all children take good quantities of fluids.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Use of the ground floor of the secure and well-maintained family home offers children ample space and facilities to safely and comfortably use a wide range of suitable and good quality resources and play materials. For example, children enjoy using the rear lounge to play with a range of small vehicles, buildings, play figures and accessories, and are easily able to use a play kitchen and accessories for simple role play. They show interest in looking at images of their recent activities on a computer in the central sitting area. They enjoy eating their 'picnic' lunch in a den in the adjacent playroom, where there are also seating and worktop areas where they independently draw or do puzzles. The childminder is vigilant in ensuring she keeps minded children within her sight or hearing at all times, so helping to ensure they are appropriately supervised.

An effective range of safety precautions help to minimise identified risks to children. For example, household chemicals and medicines are stored in high cupboards or protected with safety catches to prevent children accessing them. Use of a stair gate prevents younger children from accessing the stairs, and exposed electrical sockets are fitted with covers to minimise risks. The front door is kept secured, and the rear garden is fully enclosed with high boundaries, so helping to ensure that children are unable to leave the premises unaccompanied. The childminder actively helps children begin to gain an awareness of how to keep themselves safe. For example, she involves them in simple fire drills and talks with them about aspects of road safety, 'stranger danger' or how best to act should they lose sight of their carer in a shop.

The childminder has attended local training relating to child protection issues and recognises the possibility of different types of abuse and some possible indicators of these. She clearly understands her responsibility to act in accordance with locally and nationally agreed procedures in the event of any concerns about a child in order to safeguard their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are consistently involved and active in their play, for example as two groups of children cooperatively use different sets of figures and accessories to create their own 'small worlds' based on road and rail layouts. They show confidence and independence as they freely choose between a varied selection of readily accessible resources and activities, such as creating a den, making pictures with a range of creative materials, or using fixed play equipment, goal posts and footballs in energetic outdoor play. Daily activities are flexibly organised to take account of children's preferred care routines and energy levels, for example with regard to younger children's needs for sleep and rest. The childminder takes account of children's level of maturity and interests when organising activities and play opportunities. For example she enables a younger child to safely experience different materials and textures by providing a 'treasure basket' of natural and man-made objects such as feathers, wooden objects and crumpled paper, whilst supporting older children's confident and independent computer use, for example, to look at images of their previous activities with her. However, activities and first-hand experiences are not yet consistently planned to best effect to fully extend and build on children's existing abilities and skills across all aspects of development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

High priority is given to establishing effective partnerships with parents to help support children's care. Initial discussions and the use of written agreements help parents and the childminder establish shared expectations for business and care arrangements. Good systems are in place for the childminder to seek and record information about children's specific health, care and dietary needs, so enabling her to have regard to their individuality and preferences. On a day-to-day basis, the childminder spends time with parents discussing relevant experiences and events in children's lives, so helping to ensure there is a shared understanding of these issues. She makes use of written daily care records to help ensure parents are fully informed of younger children's activities and routines whilst in her care. The childminder recognises the value of ensuring that parents are confident to raise any queries or concerns with her should these arise, in order to enable them to be promptly addressed.

The childminder recognises the value of helping all children begin to recognise and respect individual and cultural diversity. For example, she encourages children's imaginative play using dolls and play figures with different skin tones and clothing, and with aids such as spectacles. She makes use of a selection of books reflecting different lifestyles, family circumstances and events and includes foods associated with different cultures, such as different types of bread, in daily meals and snacks. Consequently, children are helped to become familiar with varied aspects of their own and the wider community. The childminder recognises the importance of liaison with parents and other relevant agencies to support the inclusion of any child with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children are consistently busy and interested in their play. They readily begin to cooperate with each other as they begin to act out roles in simple pretend play, or as they decide what games to play in the garden. They develop growing independence within their daily routines, for example as they help themselves to drinks or remember to wash their hands before meals. The childminder is affectionate and interested in her dealings with them, for example, taking time to listen to and respond carefully to their ideas and suggestions, so helping them feel recognised and valued as individuals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are confident and relaxed in the childminder's care, readily participating in a varied selection of play opportunities within the comfortable and well-maintained family home. The childminder shows a high commitment to developing her awareness of good childcare practice by undertaking relevant local training. Required records, such as information regarding children's individual contact and personal details are readily accessible and methodically maintained, so effectively underpinning the organisation of children's care. 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 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 existing arrangements to plan and provide activities and first hand experiences to build on children's natural curiosity, develop their communication and mathematical thinking, and to extend their imagination and social skills.

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