

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	208125
Inspection date	04 April 2007
Inspector	Tara Street
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 2000. She lives with her husband and two children aged five and 10 in Chesterfield. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five all day and two children over five on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and hygiene is effectively protected and promoted. Through the implementation of good hygiene procedures the childminder helps to protect children from any cross-infection. Babies and toddlers experience hygienic nappy changing routines and are assisted to wash their hands before and after meals. Older children confidently go to the toilet unaided, dispense their own soap and use individual towels to dry their hands. Children's progress towards independent personal hygiene routines is supported as the childminder encourages children to be aware of their own bodies and offers regular praise for all efforts. Children are appropriately cared for in an emergency as the childminder holds an appropriate first aid qualification and updates this regularly. Written permission for the treatment of accidents and seeking treatment in an emergency also supports children's welfare. All required medication permissions and records are in place and shared effectively with parents. However children's welfare is potentially compromised as written consent procedures are not consistent. A clear sickness policy offers parents information about exclusion periods for children who are unwell, ensuring children are not placed at risk of infection and illness.

Children's nutritional needs are well met. They experience a good variety of healthy snacks and meals which are freshly prepared to meet their individual dietary requirements, such as fresh fruit, carrot and cucumber sticks. The childminder takes time to get to know the children's preferences and provides food that they will enjoy. She ensures the safety of food through good storage, preparation and cooking routines and follows hygienic practices for baby's bottles and pureed meals. Children's awareness of healthy eating is effectively promoted as they regularly discuss the types of foods that are good for their bodies. Meal times are sociable occasions with babies, children and the childminder sitting and eating together. Children are encouraged to take their time and enjoy the food. They are provided with age appropriate utensils to experiment with and develop independent eating skills. Children are well hydrated as fresh drinks are available and freely accessible throughout the day.

Children are developing a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and physical fitness. They experience a wide range of regular activities, both inside and outside, which develop their co-ordination and balance skills. For example, children experience a range of ride on cars and different sized balls to develop catching and throwing skills. The childminder encourages children to be active and is developing their understanding of how exercise helps to keep their bodies strong. Babies and younger children enjoy music and movement activities and playing with push and pull toys. Older children experience regular trips to the local park where they play on the large climbing equipment and swings. Children are learning to become aware of their bodies' needs, such as using sun screen and hats on sunny days and putting on coats in cold weather to keep warm.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are welcoming and child orientated. Children experience a well organised space which is used effectively to allow them choice and free movement. The setting is well laid out to allow children space to play and rest comfortably. The childminder is aware of young children's needs and provides suitable furniture and equipment, which allows them to sleep comfortably and undisturbed.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. They experience a wide range of toys and resources that are appropriate for their age and stage of development. These are in a good state of repair and conform to current safety standards. Daily activities are suitably organised to enable children to make individual choices about their play. The childminder has a sound knowledge and understanding of risk assessments and carries out daily checks which enable children to play without risk of harm or injury. Children's understanding is raised as the childminder discusses potential hazards, such as crossing the road safely, on a daily basis. Their awareness is further developed as the childminder involves the children in helping to clean the outside toys and discusses the health and safety reasons with them. Children experience good levels of supervision and appropriate safety equipment is in place, such as safety gates and smoke alarms which are checked regularly. A clear emergency escape plan is in place which protects children in the event of an emergency. Parental permissions are obtained to use public transport and to take children on outings, which ensures children's continued safety.

Children are well protected as the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and who to contact for support or advice if she was concerned about a child. The childminder has attended appropriate training and is fully aware of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. She has written a clear policy, which is shared with parents, that clearly states her role and responsibilities to ensure children are protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children experience a wide range of suitable and challenging activities across all developmental areas. The childminder has a clear knowledge and understanding of child development. She uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan activities and ensure they meet children's individual learning needs. Older children experience a good selection of age and stage appropriate resources which are rotated regularly, such as games, puzzles and construction projects to offer challenge and build on their existing skills and achievements. Children's suggestions and requests are valued and planned activities are adapted to suit their interests, stimulating their play, learning and enjoyment.

Children's learning needs are met as the childminder listens to their questions, comments and shows a genuine interest in their activities. Children are encouraged to experiment and explore with the materials available and develop their creativity and imagination. They enjoy a range of regular craft activities such as, collages and painting. Children happily glue paper chicks, baskets and eggs to create an Easter picture and eagerly try to arrange the sticky letters to spell out 'Happy Easter'. The childminder takes time to give children one to one support and assists younger children to achieve new skills, for example, helping children to recognise and name shapes and colours whilst playing a problem solving game. The childminder is effective in promoting language skills through the use of questioning and discussion. Children enjoy snuggling up with the childminder to have a story read to them. They take turns to turn the pages of the book, lift flaps, discuss the hidden pictures underneath and enthusiastically blow out the candles in the story. Older children are developing their reading and spelling skills because they are supported to write their own name on art work. Children are developing a good awareness of the world around them. They enjoy walks around the local community and exploring the nearby parks. The children regularly attend the local library and toddler group and are learning to interact with others.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being treated as individuals. The childminder takes the time to get to know the children well, enabling her to provide appropriate care and promote their well-being. She meets the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as she has a good awareness of how to adapt activities to offer suitable levels of challenge and works closely with parents to discuss children's needs. Children are encouraged to listen to and respect each other's differences and opinions. The childminder encourages both genders to join in activities such as baking activities and dressing up. Their awareness of diversity is raised well through a wide range of positive resources such as, books, puzzles, dolls, and role play equipment, which are available daily. This is further developed because the childminder takes the children on a range of outings in to the wider community, such as, Rother Valley Country Park, Pets Corner and visits along the canal to explore the environment around them.

Children are cared for in a secure environment where the emphasis is on positive behaviour. The childminder applies consistent boundaries and offers regular praise to promote good behaviour and develop children's self-esteem. A clear behaviour management policy is in place, which is shared with parents to ensure the care offered is appropriate. Children are very well behaved and respond well to discussions about behaviour. They happily share toys, take turns with resources and assist the childminder at tidy up time. Their knowledge and understanding of boundaries are promoted well through discussion and general day to day interactions with the childminder and other children.

The childminder builds professional and friendly relationships with parents, helping to ensure children are settled and secure. She exchanges information with parents on a daily basis when children arrive and depart. Information provided is clear and useful to parents, which promotes continuity of care. The childminder actively seeks parents views about the care and support offered and uses these comments to improve on her professional practice. A clear complaints procedure is in place and detailed policies have been written which are shared with parents to keep them informed of the setting's aims and objectives.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare is promoted as they are cared for by a suitably qualified and knowledgeable childminder who is effective in identifying her own training needs. She identifies and attends appropriate short courses which improve the care and learning offered to children. Recent courses include; child protection, child development and fire safety awareness training. The childminder works closely with other childminders in the area to share good practice and ensure she is up to date with recent changes to legislation. She maintains a clear system to monitor who is scheduled in over the week, which enables her to provide appropriate activities for the ages and numbers attending. She maintains accurate registers to ensure children's continued safety when in her care.

All required records and documentation are in place with good levels of detail to ensure parents are fully informed of the settings practices. Documentation is clear and easy to follow and is effectively shared; ensuring parents understand the childminders aims and responsibilities. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to develop further the information regarding the childminding provision and to make available to parents the contact details for Ofsted in the event of a complaint. The childminder has developed a good range of policies and procedures which offer appropriate information to parents about the childminding provision and the care offered. There is a clear complaints policy in place, which is effectively shared with parents and contains the address and contact telephone number for Ofsted. The childminder has a good understanding of the complaints process and regulatory response time which ensures any complaints would be dealt with appropriately.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 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:

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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):

- further develop medication procedures to ensure consistency.

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