



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	208641
Inspection date	06 December 2006
Inspector	Beverly Kemp-Russell
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 1996. She lives with her husband and twin daughters aged 13 years in Lincolnshire, close to local shops and schools. The ground floor of the house is used for childminding purposes. There is a secure rear garden for outside play used by children under supervision.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding seven children aged between three and ten years, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The family has two cats, a ferret, a rabbit and a tortoise.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Children follow hygiene routines and their clear understanding of regular hand washing reduces the risk of cross-contamination. The childminder creates a healthy childminding environment by following regular cleaning routines. Children's health is promoted by the childminder holding a current first aid certificate and maintaining good accident records. Children's emotional well-being develops through the warm relationships they have with the childminder.

The childminder caters for children's individual dietary needs, likes and dislikes by liaising closely with their parents. Food brought from home is stored safely by ensuring the fridge is kept at the correct temperature and by storing food appropriately. The childminder encourages healthy eating. For example, children are offered a variety of snacks including fresh fruit such as apples and oranges on a daily basis. Drinks are freely available to children to ensure they do not become thirsty.

Children's physical development is promoted well by the childminder who encourages children to play outside in the fresh air on a regular basis. Children develop physical skills by using equipment such as the trampoline and by playing ball games. She walks children to the local park where they enjoy having picnics and to the river to see the ducks. The childminder is aware of young children's individual sleep patterns and ensures they can sleep without disturbance to ensure needs are well catered for.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure home environment. The childminder minimises possible risks by on-going checking of the premises and making sure that necessary safety equipment is in place. For instance, the glass panelled doors are fitted with safety film and a nursery type fire guard is provided. Children are always in sight or hearing of the childminder. This means they are able to move around independently which increases their confidence. The toys and play equipment the children currently use are suitable for their needs and are in good, clean condition. Children learn to keep themselves safe through the childminder giving clear explanations, for example, about holding hands and walking in twos on outings. Equipment such as a fire blanket is sited in the kitchen to promote fire safety and regular fire drills are completed and recorded to ensure children's safety.

Children independently select from a wide range of toys and play resources, which meet safety standards and are age and stage appropriate. Children's safety is promoted by the childminder carrying out regular checks on toys and equipment and she has comprehensive information about risk assessments to support this. Children are closely supervised both indoors and outdoors to ensure their safety at all times.

Children are protected and their welfare safeguarded because the childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of possible signs and symptoms of abuse and of child protection procedures. She has information recorded in her portfolio and has devised a policy. The childminder knows who is allowed to collect children and parents are clear about the action she would take in an emergency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's home. The childminder encourages children to try new activities and gives them lots of praise and encouragement which builds their self-esteem. Children initiate much of their play as the childminder ensures a variety of resources are easily accessible. This helps children learn about making choices and helps them develop their confidence. Children are interested in a good range of creative activities provided by the childminder such as making Christmas decorations, fridge magnets and collage pictures. The childminder places emphasis on children playing outside in the fresh air and going on regular outings to places of interest such as the river to see the ducks and the local park. She provides outdoor play equipment to develop large physical skills such as the trampoline and sports equipment.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder and are relaxed and content in her care. The childminder includes younger children in some activities to develop their skills but is not yet making use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Children's language skills are developed through the effective questioning techniques used by the childminder. Children are valued and the childminder listens and responds to what they have to say. Children feel a sense of belonging and are relaxed and comfortable in their surroundings.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have equal access to play resources and activities and their individual needs are well met. They have access to a good range of activities that promote anti-discriminatory practice and inform them about the wider world but resources are limited. The childminder is aware of the need to work closely with parents of children with special needs to ensure that appropriate care is offered. All children are made welcome by the childminder and she displays affectionate and warm relationships with children which ensures that they feel a sense of belonging.

Children's behaviour is managed well due to the childminder's consistent approach in promoting positive behaviour. Children show respect for themselves and others, encouraged by the childminder setting a good example. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement, and guidance is applied consistently to ensure they are aware of acceptable boundaries.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children's needs are met by daily verbal communication between the childminder and parents. Children are looked after according to parents' wishes and the childminder ensures she is aware of their opinions and attitudes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of children, is caring and is a good role model. She actively listens to children, is interested in what they say and do and is sensitive to their feelings which helps raise their self-esteem. Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation of the space available in the house and garden and the happy, homely, stimulating atmosphere created by the childminder. Children choose activities freely and have space for active play, relaxation and sleep as needed. The childminder keeps up to date with current trends in childcare through using the internet and reading relevant publications.

Policies and procedures are comprehensive and promote the welfare, care and learning of children. Parents are kept informed about the service provided by regular verbal communication. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has made positive improvements to ensure the safety and well-being of children in her care. She has developed documentation to include a sick child policy and a child protection policy. She has improved her knowledge with regard to child protection issues and is aware of who to contact if she suspected a child was at risk. She has improved fire safety by regularly practising emergency evacuation procedures with children and records them in her portfolio. She provides children with activities that promote equality of opportunity and inform them of the wider world. However, multi-cultural resources are limited.

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):

- ensure that the 'Birth to three matters' framework is used effectively
- ensure that children have an appropriate range of resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

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