

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	208847
Inspection date	12 July 2007
Inspector	Sara Louth
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 1999. She lives with her husband and their three daughters, aged 12, 13 and 15 years, in a three bedroom semi-detached house situated in a quiet cul-de-sac in the town of Louth. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. Toilet and sleeping facilities are provided on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. The local schools, pre-school, toddler groups, library, park and shops are all within walking distance.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding two children, both of whom attend on a part-time basis plus a few children before and after school. The childminder has a pet cat.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and regularly attends meetings for childminder's and their children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and clean home. They learn the importance of good hygiene and are kept healthy well by the childminder ensuring for example that children wash their hands before eating. Children learn good manners to prevent the spread of germs by the childminder reminding children to put their hand over their mouth when they cough. The childminder uses antibacterial wipes to clean the mat after changing nappies to prevent cross-infection. She cleans kitchen surfaces and floors every day. Parents are aware the childminder does not care for children who are unwell to protect other children's health. The childminder is able to deal with accidents appropriately since she has a current first aid certificate.

Children enjoy plenty of fresh air and exercise daily through playing in the garden and walking to school. The childminder believes it is beneficial for children's health to be outside and has a wide range of outdoor resources for children to use in the garden including bikes, a trampoline, swing ball and a slide. Children are able to play safely on the drive and are also taken to the park. The equipment they use outside strengthens their whole bodies and develops large muscle skills.

The childminder has a good understanding of healthy eating and promotes nutritious food choices for children. She provides options such as bananas, apples, oranges, dried fruit, raisins and toast for snack and offers freshly prepared sandwiches with yoghurt and apple for lunch. Drinks are available with all snacks/meals and when children ask. The childminder ensures she is aware of any special dietary needs the children may have and provides food accordingly.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's home where they have space to enjoy different activities at the same time. The space is well-organised to meet their needs. A wide range of suitable toys are available to the children, stored so they are easily accessible enabling them to make choices and develop their independence. The childminder directly supervises children inside and outside the setting at all times ensuring their safety.

The childminder is aware of providing a safe setting for children. All safety equipment is in place and working such as smoke alarms, stair gates, socket covers and sharp knives are kept out of reach. The hazardous substances downstairs are stored inaccessibly to children and the front and back doors are locked at all times. However, the keys are left in the door locks and hazardous substances are within children's reach in the bathroom. This may compromise children's safety. The childminder keeps children safe when out by teaching the safe way to cross roads. She puts young children in pushchairs and older children walk close by.

Children are protected and their welfare safeguarded well because the childminder is confident about recognising possible signs and symptoms of abuse and has a secure knowledge of child protection procedures. She informs parents verbally about her role regarding child protection and has completed further training in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy being in the childminder's home where she creates a friendly, caring atmosphere. The children interact well with the childminder and she knows them all well. The childminder finds out what they are interested in and provides activities and toys that are stimulating and support their development. She joins in children's play sensitively following their lead encouraging their intellectual, emotional and social progress.

The childminder listens to children and is interested in what they say or do. She promotes children's thinking skills and extends their play by asking questions such as 'How many play dough hearts have been made?' and 'What colour is the play dough?' and supports them with their answers. The childminder involves herself in children's play and relates activities to their own experiences at their own level. For example, a child draws a person in the rain and asks the childminder to draw an umbrella, this leads to drawing the rest of the family, shared laughter about having no hair or lots of hair and development of language skills.

The childminder has good understanding of child development and is aware of appropriate activities to provide for a wide range of ages from babies to school children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a positive attitude to equal opportunities and diversity. She ensures all children join in, actively changes activities to help involvement of all and finds out the needs of every child through talking to parents and carers to promote their welfare and development. Children's emotional well-being is fostered by the childminder building caring relationships with them. They learn about our diverse society through activities such as painting eggs at Easter and using books to find out about the wider world. Positive attitudes to gender roles and disability are encouraged and the childminder talks to children to aid their understanding and acceptance.

Children behave well and are developing good manners since the childminder is a positive role model. She has a calm approach to behaviour management and takes into account children's age and level of understanding. When a child insisted on eating play dough despite repeatedly being asked not to the childminder calmly stated 'I'll put the play dough away if you are going to eat it', then occupied the child in a different activity thus resolving the problem. The childminder prefers to reinforce positive behaviour through keeping children occupied with things they want to do and praising them for being good. She works with parents on behaviour matters and children benefit from consistent behaviour management at home and at the setting.

Children are cared for according to their parents or carers wishes and benefit from the close relationship established between them and the childminder. The childminder collects all necessary information about the children to help them settle well. She shares a portfolio about the setting with parents and carers including her mission statement so they know what to expect from the service. The childminder has a complaints procedure in place. However, this does not contain up to date contact details for parents and the childminder is generally unsure of the requirements of the complaint procedure.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder enjoys being with children and is experienced in caring for them. Children benefit from the childminder's understanding of child development and how children learn. She organises the space and resources effectively to enable children to have room for active play, relaxation and sleep as required.

The childminder's documentation provides a good framework for children's care. It is organised well and available for inspection. The childminder uses the National Childminding Association documents to maintain accurate records. She has attended all necessary training and reads the National Childminding Association magazine to keep her knowledge up to date.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to update her knowledge and understanding of the procedures to be followed if any allegations of abuse were made about her or other people who have access to a child while the child is in her care.

The childminder has since attended Stage Two Child Protection training and is now secure in her knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures including what to do if any allegations of abuse are made about her or any other people who have access to a child while the child is in her care. This promotes children's safety since the childminder will now be able to put the procedures into practice and provides the childminder with the knowledge to deal confidently with any allegations that may be made.

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):

- update knowledge of the complaints procedure and ensure it states Ofsted as regulator and contains relevant contact details for parents and carers

- promote safety within the setting to ensure hazards to children are minimised and premises are kept secure.

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