



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	209177
Inspection date	19 January 2006
Inspector	Christine Linda Tomaselli

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 January 1998. She lives with her husband and three sons aged 15, 12 and 4-years-old. They live in a house in the market town of Spalding, Lincolnshire. The childminder uses most of the house for childminding however children mainly have access to the lounge, dining area, kitchen, conservatory and toilet facilities. Children sleep on the ground floor, with upstairs being mainly used for storage and access to play equipment for older children. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to provide care for 5 children under 8 years at any one

time and is currently minding a total of 8 children aged between 3 and 11-years-old on a combination of part-time and full-time contracts.

The childminder may walk or drive children to the local school or pre-school as required. She takes the children out regularly. These include the local toddler groups, music groups, swimming, walks to the park area to feed the ducks. During the holidays she plans outings suitable for children of all ages.

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 are cared for in an environment that is clean and well-maintained. Their health needs are known and met well by the childminder. She encourages and supports children's learning of good hygiene practices. For example, washing hands after using the toilet and before a meal or using effective cleaning of all surfaces where food is prepared or eaten. The childminder has a basic first aid certificate and an appropriately stocked first aid box. Her first response to any accident ensures the children's well-being is given priority. Recording of accidents and the giving of medication is maintained appropriately and ensures parents are kept informed on matters concerning their child. Children enjoy and develop their physical skills through regular walks and trips to local park areas. Activities in the garden also provide opportunities to be out in the fresh air which contributes to the children's healthy living.

Children's healthy growth is supported by the childminder's knowledge and understanding of healthy eating. The childminder provides appropriate snack items while parents provide packed lunches for their child. For example, cheese, cucumber pieces and 'Billy Bear' ham, a favourite with the children. Fruit is used regularly during the week. The children learn about foods that are good for them through general discussions with the childminder. Appropriate information on the dietary needs of the children is gained by the childminder to ensure their needs are met. Older children can freely access suitable drinks with younger children being supported by the childminder to ensure they drink well during the day, contributing to their good health.

Children are protected from the possible risk of infectious illnesses. The childminder informs parents through discussion and a written sick children's policy, that children with an infectious illness do not attend therefore reducing the risk of serious illness among the children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move around the childminder's home safely and independently under her

constant supervision. The risks to children's safety are minimised because the childminder uses good organisation of the space available to them. For example, security of the premises and checking callers identification on arrival. Children are safe when being transported in a car because appropriate seating is available to ensure their safety. When planning a trip, checks will be made on the venue as to their suitability for children of different ages. When out walking they are encouraged to wear a wrist restraint where it is appropriate. Children learn about keeping the play areas safe. For example, children picking toys up off the floor to ensure they do not slip or fall over.

Children are able to self-select play activities from a good range of age-appropriate toys which are regularly checked by the childminder to ensure they are in good condition. Storage available allows children to select toys from low shelves and see-through storage boxes helping to develop their independence. Children's comfort and ability to be independent in many tasks safely, is a high priority for the childminder. Furniture and equipment is very safe and suitable for all ages of children.

Children learn and understand what they should do in the event of an emergency situation such as a fire. The childminder has a clear written emergency evacuation plan on display which is discussed and practised with them regularly to enforce the importance of any situation that might arise. The childminder has a good understanding of child protection and is fully aware of what she should do if she has any concerns. Parents are informed of her duty to protect children and are kept fully informed of matters concerning their child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle very well at the childminder's house. They make themselves at home and relate extremely well to the childminder and each other. Children are encouraged to form good relationships, be caring of each other, independent and develop new skills. Activities and space provided enables younger children to play alongside older children which helps them in their learning. Additionally, space can provide older children with areas suitable for their individual learning needs when required. An extensive range of toys are easily accessible and enable children of all ages to make choices for themselves, with more toys and resources available upstairs that are used to rotate the play experiences available to support children's learning in all areas.

Children are enthusiastic, confident and involved in lots of activities which helps provide the opportunity to learn. Children have the opportunities to take the initiative and develop their self-esteem because of the way the childminder involves and encourages them to think for themselves and develop ideas of their own. For example, playing in the home corner and creating a meal of their choice followed by washing up of all utensils used. Older children are confident to hold conversations with the childminder and talk about things that have happened to them either at home or at pre-school. The childminder spends lots of time chatting to the children to help

develop their language and communication skills and is beginning to encourage younger children in sign as a way of communication. Children eagerly develop their ability to problem solve and build relationships through many of the activities provided by the childminder such as art and craftwork, junk modelling and play dough where the children are able to cut hair, made with dough, with scissors in a safe supervised environment. Activities at home are often freely chosen or planned by the childminder, for example, drawing or knitting bobbins and hammer beads providing an environment where the children gain knowledge and new skills while having fun. Children attend various social groups and local attractions where they continue to build on their social skills and learn about their local community.

Children's strengths and weaknesses are known to the childminder who encourage them to build on their achievements and abilities helping them to develop their confidence and self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder is committed to ensuring children learn, understand and respect differences for individual people and communities. All children have opportunities to access many activities and resources provided by the childminder to help them learn and understand about individual's differences. For example, glove puppets showing people from around the world, puzzles, posters on display and taking part in activities to learn about different communities. The childminder knows the minded children very well and ensures their needs are met. She always responds with smiles and encouraging comments. The childminder is committed to learning more about children with special needs and develop her awareness to enable children to feel valued and respected.

All children learn to behave well and understand what is expected of them through regular routines and consistent expectations. For example, they always sit together to eat meals or snacks. The childminder explains what she expects them to do in a way that they can understand and they learn about right from wrong. The childminder uses regular praise and encouragement each time the children achieve something good or new which helps build their self-esteem. She listens to their views and requests, putting into place when ever possible, so that they feel respected. Children are encouraged to work together and with the childminder through small tasks like tidying up and setting the table for a snack.

Children benefit from positive relationships between the childminder and their parents. The childminder gains the required information and consents from parents to ensure children's needs are met well. She offers pre-visits for new families so that the child can begin to feel settled. Individual progress is discussed daily with parents so that their changing needs continue to be met. Parents have access to a leaflet that provides information about the childminder, her aims, activities she provides and clear written policies and procedures can be seen on request.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has attended a large selection of training relevant to child care and has achieved a level 3 qualification. She continues to identify additional training workshops that she feels will enhance the care and education she offers the children. For example, first aid training and a food hygiene course. She is planning to attend training that will help support a practice for caring for children aged birth to 3-years-old.

The organisation of the childminder's premises ensures that the children's needs can be met. Space is planned and used very well and to the full, creating areas for play, rest and eating. Activities for the children's day are planned well and take account of rest times and for the children to be taken on outings and to group activities. Children arrive ready for an exciting and stimulating day of fun and learning in the care of the childminder.

The childminder maintains appropriate documentation and information. She uses standard recorded materials provided by the National Childminding Association, however, she has extended this by introducing self designed forms for additional information and details that contribute to the care and education of the children and the management of her business. For example, gaining parents signed consent for their children to use the trampoline and pool. She meets the needs of the children and keeps parents informed of matters concerning their child to ensure consistent care.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure that snacks provided were healthy and nutritious.

She now plans snack meals that she offers on a rota and foods include a selection of healthy snack options.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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 and extend the complaints policy and procedures to take account of recent legislations changes.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk