

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260496
Inspection date	24 July 2007
Inspector	Gill Ogden
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 last registered in 2000 but has been a childminder on and off for about 14 years. She lives with her husband and three children, aged nine, 10 and 14 in Ingham, Lincolnshire. Only the ground floor of the house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden suitable for outdoor play. There are limited amenities in the village so the childminder uses her car to transport children regularly.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is a member of the National Childminders Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a home where close attention is paid to their health needs. The childminder maintains a clean environment and has clear cleaning procedures, for example, ensuring there are certain cloths used for different purposes. Parents receive clear information about illness that will result in children being unable to attend. Children learn good personal

hygiene habits such as hand washing after using the toilet. All this helps minimise cross-infection. Although the childminder has a current first aid certificate she does not have clear written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

Children get plenty of fresh air and exercise by accessing the outdoors most days. The garden is well set out with some fixed play equipment such as swings which help children to develop their physical strength. Children also enjoy attending organised sports groups in the village which the childminder takes them to and go on outings to places such as a country park where they can walk and run around freely.

Children enjoy a varied, balanced diet. They are offered fruit regularly at both snack and lunch times and there is always water available for them to drink. A platter of cheese, fruit, raw vegetables and bread and butter is an option for lunch as well as sandwiches or 'on toast' meals. Children may also have ice cream, some cake or a biscuit either at lunch or for a snack. On occasions children help to make their own food by, for example, buttering bread and making fruit smoothies. The childminder is careful that children only eat what they are allowed to.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. The front door is kept locked and also has a security chain and alarm fitted to it. The childminder always looks through the window to see who is at the door before she opens it. All the necessary safety equipment is in place such as smoke alarms, a fire blanket and a safety gate. Because the childminder uses her car a lot she is vigilant about children's safety in the car, however she does not have clear written permission from parents regarding the use of the car. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe through the childminder prompting them, for example, about not running around indoors. They also take part in regular fire drills and as a result are aware of the importance of evacuating the house quickly in case of emergency. All toys and play equipment are suitable for their purpose.

Children are further safeguarded because the childminder has a solid understanding of her child protection responsibilities and has copies of national and local guidance. Parents receive written information about child protection procedures when they first start to use the childminder.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and settled with the childminder. They have very warm and loving relationships with her and her family. The younger children relish hugs and lots of interaction with the childminder. They love her to be involved in their play and she sits on the floor with them to, for example, help them fit the train track together and talk about 'Thomas the Tank Engine'. A mixed age group of children play dominoes co-operatively and effectively together because the childminder assists the youngest children to look for and match the pictures and older children are happy to go at a slower pace. Children take the initiative during these type of activities and the childminder supports and follows their lead carefully, ensuring that they are all very happy.

Even the youngest children are able to freely access a range of toys and play equipment because they are stored where the children play and the children know where things are kept. As a result

they can choose from an assortment of, for example, small world activities, books and games. The childminder is very skilled at extending and building on activities so that children remain engaged and their learning and development is promoted in a natural way. For example, after watching 'Dr Who' children go on to make a 'Tardis' from junk materials and when they have been to look at the river they come home and talk about and draw water and fish; after seeing Morris men during May Day activities they make shakers to reflect the instruments they saw being used. Other activities that children take part in and thoroughly enjoy are face painting, dressing up and role play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcome at the childminder's home. She gathers enough information from parents to ensure that their initial needs can be met and goes on to observe them for herself to build on this. Children who have additional needs are assured that if the childminder feels she can meet their needs then she will work with other agencies in their best interests. A good range of resources that promote positive images of all people and the wider world are available for children as part of their everyday play. Children's self-esteem and own culture is reinforced through activities such as celebrating their birthdays and events such as Christmas and Hallow'een. Children soon feel part of the local community by, for example, regularly visiting toddler groups and taking part in sports activities. Children behave well and according to what can be expected of them for their age because the childminder uses appropriate strategies to deal with any outbursts. For example, she talks calmly to the younger children and is consistent in reminding them about sharing and looking after toys.

Effective working relationships exist between parents and the childminder which are beneficial to children's continuity of care. They share information verbally together at the beginning and end of the day so all concerned are kept up to date. When children first start parents sign up to the service the childminder offers and keep their own copy of her policies and procedures as well as one staying with the childminder in their child's folder. Parents are free to look at the diaries the childminder keeps which reflect their children's day regarding the activities they have enjoyed and particular information regarding, for example, how their child has reacted to new minded children. However, not all written parental consents include enough detail.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder uses her home efficiently to care for children. They are able to move freely around the downstairs of the house, especially between the play room and the lounge, to find the appropriate space for different play activities. The garden is accessed from the utility room and is set out so that children can safely spend all day outdoors if the weather is suitable.

All adults in the household have undertaken the required checks to ensure they are suitable to be in contact with children. The childminder has managed to renew her first aid certificate as is required but she has difficulty accessing any other training because of the demands of her family life and parents' needs for child care. Most of the necessary paperwork is in place and stored very securely to maintain confidentiality. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the recommendation made at the last inspection the childminder has increased her resources that reflect positive images of people with disabilities. This ensures that children have more opportunities to help them learn about and develop respect for all members of society.

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 all written parental consents are in place especially regarding permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and transporting children in the car.

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