

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY245867
Inspection date	18 December 2007
Inspector	Susan Hoult
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 2002. She lives with her three children aged 17, 15 and seven in North Hykeham, Lincolnshire. Shops, parks, pre-schools, nurseries and schools are within walking distance. All areas of the childminder's home are available for childminding except two bedrooms on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family has two pet rabbits.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She currently looks after 12 children on a part-time basis, eight of whom are aged under eight years.

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

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm home where the childminder minimises the potential for cross-infection. She has a thorough cleaning routine including disinfecting the nappy changing mat after use. Children learn good personal hygiene habits such as washing their hands after using the toilet, playing outside, touching the rabbits and before eating or baking. The childminder encourages parents to provide tooth brushes so that children can clean their teeth after meals. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and clearly records any accidents so that parents are fully aware of any injury and the treatment given. Written permission to obtain emergency medical advice or treatment is in place for each child so suitable action can be taken if needed. Children's emotional well-being is fostered by the very warm, caring relationships the childminder develops with them.

Children get plenty of fresh air and exercise through regular walks and playing outside in the garden. They enjoy climbing, sliding, bouncing on the small trampoline, using bikes and sit-and-ride toys. They take part in a variety of games including 'tig', football, catching and throwing balls, using racquets and having egg and spoon races. Children frequently visit the local park and occasionally visit soft play areas. When the weather is not suitable for outdoor play, children enjoy activities such as dancing and action rhymes inside. All these activities contribute to children's good health, developing their large physical skills and strengthening their bodies. Children rest and sleep according to their needs.

The childminder has attended healthy eating training. She ensures children are well nourished and learn about the benefits of healthy eating through activities and discussions. They enjoy snacks such as fresh fruit, cheese, crackers, and raw vegetables with dips. When children have been baking they eat what they cook. Parents currently provide meals which the childminder stores and serves appropriately. When she does provide meals she ensures they are nutritious and well balanced. Drinks are freely available for children to access ensuring they do not become thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure, welcoming home environment which is well maintained. Effective use is made of the space available so children can enjoy different activities at the same time. Children independently select from the wide range of good quality toys and equipment. The childminder makes good use of the childminder group's toy lending scheme to increase the choice of resources available for children. She carefully stores small items out of reach of young children to prevent accidental injury.

The childminder helps children develop an understanding of how to keep themselves safe through daily routines and explanations. For instance, she gently reminds children not to run in the house in case they hurt themselves or someone else. Children know how to evacuate the home quickly and safely if needed as fire drills are practised regularly. These are recorded clearly by the childminder. Smoke alarms are tested regularly and exposed electrical sockets and hazardous substances are inaccessible to children. The childminder closely supervises children at all times and does not let them go into the garden unless she is with them. However, there is an uncovered raised drain in the garden and the cover on the water butt is not secure therefore

children's safety may potentially be compromised. When taking children out of the home the childminder reinforces road safety and makes sure children walk close to her with younger children either holding her hand or wearing reins to ensure their safety. Children use appropriate seating when travelling in the childminder's car for which she has parental permission.

The childminder safeguards children's welfare as she has attended training and has a good understanding of possible signs of abuse and child protection procedures which she shares with parents through a written policy. The childminder never leaves children with unvetted persons, knows who may collect each child and is clear with parents about the handing over of responsibility for children as they leave and collect their children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the childminder's home where she creates a friendly, welcoming atmosphere. She refers to the 'Birth to three matters' framework when working with children aged under three years. The childminder collates written observations of children's achievements. She uses these and her understanding of how children learn and develop through play to plan and provide a wide range of activities to stimulate their interests. The childminder supports all areas of children's learning well helping further develop their skills through activities such as a treasure box, singing, reading, threading, matching games, construction and water play. Children look at insects in pots with magnifying glasses, relate them to pictures in books and then draw them or make them. For example, creating worms from pipe cleaners. Children take part in a variety of craft activities such as painting, making fridge magnets, using moulding foam, playdough and paper mache. They use easily accessible materials to draw, make cards and create Christmas decorations. Children often go on local nature trail where they collect natural items to use for collages. The childminder encourages children to try new things for themselves supporting them as needed. She promotes older children's thinking skills by asking questions and joining in their play whilst encouraging them to take the lead.

The childminder relates well to children. She listens to them and is interested in what they say and do. She uses a gentle voice, eye contact and body language well when chatting and responding to the young child who curls up on her knee to listen to a story. The child falls asleep. When she wakes she happily plays with a shape sorter pig. She then giggles and squeals with delight as she and the childminder play hide and seek with a figure in the dolls house.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of equal opportunities and diversity which is reflected in her policies. She makes all children welcome, respecting and valuing their individuality and helping them develop a sense of belonging by displaying their art. She supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities through gathering as much information as possible from parents and attending relevant training. Children learn about a wider society through having access to a range of books, dressing-up clothes, dolls, craft cards, skin tone pencils and small world toys that reflect diversity positively. They are learning basic signing from childminder who has introduced the concept to children following training. Children learn about their local community through for example, walks, visits to the shops, the book and toy libraries, a nature park, a children's farm park, toddler's groups and meeting with other childminder's and the

children they care for. The childminder also takes children on visits to the Cathedral, the Castle and the Lawn complex in uphill Lincoln.

Children behave well through the childminder being a very good role model and setting simple house rules which are displayed in picture form. She has attended behaviour management training and sets clear, consistent boundaries, using praise and encouragement, discussion and negotiation effectively, taking into account children's ages and levels of understanding. When rarely children need 'time out' this is done in the childminder's presence.

Children are cared for according to parents' wishes. Parents respond positively to questionnaires given out by the childminder. They write that they are very happy with the service offered which is 'magnificent', that the childminder has a professional attitude, is approachable and very caring. They feel comfortable as they know their children are safe and happy. The childminder acknowledges parents as central to their children's life and develops professional but friendly and trusting relationships with them recognising good communication is crucial to children's well-being. A gradual introduction and the opportunity to meet the childminder's family is offered to new children to help them settle. Children's welfare, development and progress is enhanced through daily verbal exchanges of information for all children, home diaries for babies and young children and newsletters as needed. The portfolio and copies of the childminder's policies, which form part of the contract with parents give good information about the service the childminder provides.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder moved house three weeks ago and has worked hard to maintain continuity of care for minded children. The childminder enjoys working with children, is experienced and has a high regard for the well-being of all children. She is currently working towards extending her childminder practice certification. The childminder regularly attends relevant training and has received a gold star award for attending 38.5 hours additional training in 2006. In addition to this she keeps up to date with current trends in childcare through meeting with other childminders and reading professional childcare magazines. The childminder has recently attended a briefing on the recently published Early Years Foundation Stage.

The childminder organises the space in her home to enable children to enjoy active play, relaxation and sleep as needed. Documentation is organised effectively, stored confidentially, is up to date and available for inspection. This provides a good framework for the care of children. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to further develop the policy about children who are sick or infectious. This has been done effectively helping to actively promote the good health of children.

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 hazards to children in the garden are minimised with reference to the raised drain and the water butt.

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