



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY331644
Inspection date	15 August 2006
Inspector	Sheila Dawn Flounders

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 2006. She works with her co-minder in the village of East Goscote, to the north of Leicester. The whole ground floor of the house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children when working alone, or six children when working with her co-minder at any one time. She is currently minding one child under five all day, and three children over five before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group. She is a member of the National

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Currently all the parents provide the food for their children, which is then prepared and served to the babies by the childminder, who has previously undertaken food hygiene training, or her co-minder. This ensures that the children are well nourished and that good food handling procedures are adhered to. Older children are able to take responsibility for their own packed lunches, after first washing their hands, which are stored appropriately in the fridge. Children have good access to drinks throughout the day and are either able to help themselves, or are offered drinks frequently by the childminder. They have their health and dietary needs met because the childminder works with parents to establish exactly what these are before they attend. All necessary details and consents are obtained from parents for emergency medical treatment and before any medication is given, and the childminder holds an appropriate first aid certificate.

Simple good health and hygiene practices are a routine part of the children's day, they know that they need to wash their hands before eating and after toileting and the younger children co-operate well. Babies use their own nappies and creams as part of a robust changing routine, when they each use a different mat and soiled nappies are disposed of appropriately. The children stay healthy because there are good, thorough cleaning routines in place for the premises and the toys they play with, particular attention is paid to things babies put in their mouths. There is also a sickness policy in place so that parents know that children do not attend when they are ill, and that collection will be necessary if they become unwell during the day. Regular discussions take place with parents about the children's individual routines, so that children are able to rest and sleep according to their need.

Children enjoy regular opportunities for physical play. Older children play with the equipment in the local park, walk to and from school daily and access various ball games in the garden. Younger children make frequent use of the slide, various wheeled toys and hoops. The babies delight in exploring the contents of the toy boxes in the house or garden, taking every opportunity to crawl around in the free play space, to pull themselves up on the furniture and play 'peek a boo' or get an adult to hold their hands so they can practise their walking. All this access to fresh air and exercise helps children learn about healthy living and the childminder joins in with them to ensure that they take part.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe environment where they have had no serious accidents. The space is used appropriately to promote children

safety, for example the use of the conservatory to sleep babies in the pushchair, so that they are not in the way of other children playing, but they are still easily visible to the childminder for checks and within her hearing. Children have no need to access the first floor and they all learn as they grow older what things they are allowed to play with in the house. Measures are in place to ensure that the children use only suitable and safe equipment, such as locks to prevent access to some of the cupboards, covers in the unused sockets, harnesses on the highchairs and the pre-selection and placing of toy boxes by the childminder according to which children are attending. Anything that gets broken is thrown away. The premises are kept secure at the front and back and children are kept safe in the garden through a mixture of constant supervision, careful choices of equipment and attention to the type of plants and shrubs which are used.

Children are kept safe on outings, which involve either walking or the occasional use of public transport. Younger children and babies always use harnesses or reins and are encouraged to hold onto the pushchair. Procedures for outings further afield include the taking of a small first aid kit and a mobile phone to ensure children's safety at all times. The children learn to protect themselves through regular practising of the emergency evacuation drill and also by the use of hats and creams during warmer weather. They are further protected because the childminder has a sound understanding of her role in child protection and knows what procedures to put in place if necessary

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

All of the children have access to a wide range of resources, presented to them in a child centred environment by a practitioner who is very experienced in working with young children, particularly babies. She uses her knowledge of child development and the 'Birth to Three Matters' framework to provide the youngest children with activities which help them to progress in all areas of development. They are particularly encouraged to make connections in their environment, such as joining bricks, putting lids on containers or matching sounds to animals. They explore all areas of the world around them, inside and out, yet are made to feel safe and secure with lots of cuddles and constant reassurance to develop their self-esteem. This socialisation helps them in the early stages of the use of language and the childminder responds to their efforts, giving them good eye contact and repeating simple words for them. As a result the babies constantly acquire new knowledge and skills.

The over three's are provided with lots of creative opportunities, in which they become deeply involved, and they enjoy sharing their pictures with the others in the setting. They have excellent opportunities to develop their imaginative play, during which times they interact with the older children or adults in the setting, asking questions, such as how much something would cost and use their initiative to decide which direction their play will progress in, including the idea of using two stencils to represent a laptop computer. They also play a range of co-operative games together, learning to take turns and share, responding very well to the challenge these provide,

for example to complete the longest caterpillar from the shapes they select. Children are offered very good first hand experiences, for example cooking, gardening, or visits to the local shops and the childminder uses the daily routines to encourage them towards independence. The older children greatly enjoy the social side of their time at the childminder's premises. They relish the time they spend with the younger children, enjoy playing with them in the water or with ball games and fondly recall events that they have done together in the past. The strong positive relationships which all the children have is a feature of the setting and helps to ensure that the children's language, thinking and imagination are well fostered.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All the children make choices, and decisions for themselves all the time. Older children choose what activities they want to take part in, often making up games for themselves. Babies are free to explore, as they like, from the range of toys put out on the floor, or in a box for them, with the childminder acting as a catalyst to aid their discoveries. All the choices they make are accepted by the childminder which boosts their self-esteem, she joins in with the direction they wish to take, making suggestions and asking questions such as 'would you like to' in order to sustain their enthusiasm at times. Even the youngest babies are asked if they want to go to sleep and playfully shake their head to indicate 'no' which the childminder accepts for the time being. The children often choose to play together, sometimes in a separate area away from the babies but at other times purposely playing with them. Thus all the children are aware and understand that the needs of the babies sometimes have to take priority over their needs, whilst also being confident about making their own needs known. Children become aware of wider society through their access to a sufficient range of resources which provide positive images of ethnicity and gender, although less are available which promote disability.

Children have their individual needs met well because the childminder ensures that she obtains sufficient information from parents before they attend so that she is fully aware of what these are. She has some experience of working with children who have learning difficulties in the past and ensures that all children are valued and included. Children are made to feel welcome in the setting, are happy to join in the activities available and are very aware of the household routines. They understand reasonable behaviour as the childminder always acts as a positive role model for them. She uses distraction mainly with the younger children and ensures that older children are given an explanation about why certain things are unacceptable. She uses lots of praise to encourage good behaviour and children respond well to this, resulting in very good behaviour generally, as the children genuinely like spending time in the setting and get on with each other. Parents are kept fully informed about their child's day through verbal exchanges, with a written sheet for babies detailing all about their daily routines.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has high regard for the well-being of the children in her care. She makes good use of the space available in the premises to provide the children with an environment, where they feel safe and secure, are offered activities that interest them and allow them to make progress in all areas of their development. She maintains all necessary paperwork, including consents from parents, in such a way that it is easily available and yet ensures confidentiality. She has policies and procedures in place which work to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and their positive contribution to the setting. There are systems in place to cover emergencies, both through her co-minder and others in the village who are familiar to the children. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints 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.

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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):

- increase the access children have to positive images of diversity, particularly disability.

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