

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY332341
Inspection date	17 June 2008
Inspector	Alexandra Brouder
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 lives with her husband and three children aged 18, 14 and eight years old in Leicestershire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house, with the exception of the sitting room, is used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The childminder attends the local toddler group and takes children to the local library.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder has two dogs, a guinea pig, a cat and some fish. She is also a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a homely environment in which they benefit from clear hygiene procedures to maintain their health. For example, all surfaces are cleaned using appropriate household cleaning agents and toys are regularly washed to actively prevent the risk of cross-infection. Children's personal hygiene skills are developing well as they know to wash their hands before food, after messy play and when they have used the toilet. A choice of liquid soaps are available and individual, named hand towels are used to prevent the risk of cross-contamination and infection. A child was asked what they do when they have used the toilet; the child put their hands out and rubbed them together. When asked what they use to wash their hands the child responded, 'princess soap'.

Clear procedures are in place should a child become ill and a policy is shared with most parents and carers, but not all, informing them of this. Documentation, such as medication and accident records are in place and maintained appropriately to ensure that confidentiality is offered to all. Children are well cared for in the event of an accident as the childminder has completed first aid training and has two fully stocked first aid kits for the home and for use on outings. She is able to respond appropriately to serious incidents as all parents have given her consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

Children's physical skills are very well supported as the childminder ensures that children use the outdoors every day, weather dependant. A good range of indoor and outdoor activities and resources are used to develop children's coordination as they climb on the frame, jump on the trampoline, thread small beads, complete puzzles and kick footballs. Their large physical skills are extended through the use of large fixed equipment at the local park, which is at the back of the childminder's house.

Children rest and sleep peacefully according to parental wishes and children's individual needs. A sofa bed and travel cot are available at the bottom end of the through lounge/diner enabling them to be closely monitored. Children's needs are recognised well by the childminder, for example, she recognised when a child became tired, asking her to come on to her knee. The child did so and promptly fell asleep. The childminder lay the child down carefully with appropriate pillows for comfort and support.

Children's diets are well catered for and the childminder ensures that she works closely with parents and carers to identify a child's requirements and records these as needed. Children eat healthily with the childminder and are offered foods such as fresh fruit, cereals, home cooked meals and fresh vegetables. A child was observed to have a bowl of fruit to eat for their breakfast and a drink of juice, maintaining their health. Drinks are freely accessible to younger children throughout the day and replenished as required and older children are encouraged to help themselves to drinks when needed, enabling them to address their thirst needs as required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children access a warm and welcoming environment in which they are able to play safely indoors and outdoors. Rooms that children use are well organised to support the needs of all age groups, for example, toys and resources are strategically placed on shelves or in boxes around the room

to enable children to make choices in their play and increase their decision making skills. This enables them to play freely and easily. A child present was observed to self-select a range of toys, such as dolls and buggies, puzzles, and play food, using these to support and adapt their play as necessary. Good quality equipment is vigilantly maintained as the childminder conducts regular checks for wear and tear and washes all toys on a regular basis.

Most risks within the home and outdoors have been addressed, for example, sockets are covered, stair gates deny children access to certain areas, external gates are locked and all knives are stored out of reach. However, the front door remained on the latch for the entire inspection, compromising children's safety. Children's awareness of their own safety develops as the childminder talks to them about crossing roads when out in the locality and practises the fire drill with them on a regular basis, enabling children to know what to do in the event of an emergency.

The childminder has a secure understanding of local safeguarding children issues and reporting procedures, enabling her to support children's welfare appropriately. She has a clear understanding of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and ensures that parents and carers are made aware of her responsibilities in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children really enjoy their time at the setting and actively engage in a range of well-planned and presented activities, as well as being able to initiate their ideas to extend and develop their learning and curiosity as they play. Children happily play alone or with the childminder in a range of ways. For example, a child was observed to sit at the table and colour with a variety of crayons, chatting to the childminder as they did so and then take the childminder over to the play kitchen to 'cook' dinner for her, informing the childminder of what they were giving her; 'cup of coffee and a sandwich'. Children listen attentively to the childminder as she reads a story about 'Thomas the Tank Engine' to them, who then responds appropriately when a child remembers that they went to visit the trains and saw 'Thomas'.

Genuine care and affection is shown to the children who respond warmly to the childminder and the attention that she gives them. The childminder is very aware of individual children's personalities and comforts and reassures them as needed. For example, when the inspector arrived the child present became very shy. The childminder reassured the child and distracted them with various play opportunities, enabling the child to gain confidence and feel secure again. Children's communication skills are enhanced as the childminder spends time talking and to children and listening carefully to their responses. For example, when a child was drawing around a stencil the childminder informed the child of what it was and waited for the child to say this back to her.

Although no formal planning is in place, the childminder is aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and changing legislation, and is beginning to use this when thinking of ideas and ways of increasing children's early development. Older children's needs are well catered for as the childminder has obtained a range of games, such as picture lotto that develops their understanding of topics such as time, healthy eating and money.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well within the inclusive environment as the childminder ensures that she works closely with all parents and carers to cater for the needs of children in her care. For example, younger children's sleep patterns are noted and adhered to and children bring toys from home, enabling them to have familiar things with them, increasing and extending their sense of belonging within the setting. Documentation to support children's well-being, such as contracts and consents are completed with all parents before children begin, supporting their well-being. However, not all relevant information is shared with some parents and carers, impacting on their awareness of the childminder's expectations and procedures. Daily records are completed for children under five, highlighting what they have played with and eaten each day. In addition to this, the childminder shares daily feedback to all parents and carers, enabling them to be well informed of their child's day.

Children are valued as individuals and learn about diversity and the needs of others through having easy access to a good assortment of toys, resources and activities that promote a variety of cultures, lifestyles and abilities. For example, books, dolls of varying ethnicity, jigsaws and dressing-up materials. In addition to this, the childminder has a range of craft books that enable children to make things that are reflective of other countries or cultures, extending their knowledge of the wider world. The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of systems to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but has not yet had experience in this area of work.

Children benefit from the sensitive and pro-active methods used to promote positive behaviour. The childminder sets consistent boundaries and has basic house rules in place, to ensure that children can be happy and content. For example, being kind to one another and not throwing toys or equipment. This ensures that children receive consistent care as they learn to play with one another in the calm environment. Children are active and involved within the setting which leads to harmonious play and little or no disruption.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the welcoming and well-organised environment provided by the childminder. They are aware of routines in place and the childminder works hard to meet the individual needs of all children through a range of stimulating activities and play resources. Children's safety is well supported in the main; however, the front door remained unlocked during the inspection, impacting on their welfare.

Documentation is well maintained and contributes to children's health, safety and well-being. These are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that any changes are noted and acted upon immediately. A range of written information is supplied to all parents and carers, in the main, enabling them to be well informed about the childminder's policies and procedures. However, this is not shared with all parents and carers, hindering their awareness of some aspects of the childminding service offered.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to ensure procedures are in place to keep a record of complaints relating to the National Standards and any action taken; ensure she works in partnership with parents to meet the needs of the children, with regard to written agreements, which set out the expectations of both parties as to the care of the child, activities provided and business arrangements and to ensure she works in partnership with parents to meet the needs of the children with regard to records that include name, home address, date of birth, emergency contact details and GP contact details.

The childminder has established clear written systems to enable her to record complaints should they arise and full contracts have been established enabling the childminder to work in close partnership with all parents and carers. Information required to meet the needs of all children in her care are in place and updated on a regular basis, supporting their welfare and well-being.

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.

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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 the front door remains secure and that children are not able to leave the premises unsupervised
- ensure that parents and carers are fully informed of all routines and child care practices, particularly in relation to policies and procedures.

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