

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY348874
Inspection date	30 August 2007
Inspector	Christine Hands
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 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged six and three years in Navenby, Lincolnshire. Shops, parks, pre-schools and schools are within walking distance. All areas of the home are available for childminding although this normally takes place on the ground floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under the age of eight years at any one time and currently cares for a total of five children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in this family home because the childminder follows highly effective procedures and practices, which meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Children follow good personal hygiene routines and through discussion become aware of why hand washing is important and how this can help stop the spread of infection. The childminder ensures that nappies are disposed of appropriately and that changing mats are clean and hygienic being wiped down after each nappy change using anti-bacterial spray. Children rest and sleep according

to their individual routines and as previously discussed with parents. The childminder is fully aware that for children to benefit fully from their sleep they must be in comfortable surroundings where they feel secure and therefore babies sleep undisturbed in a travel cot in the dining room, whilst older children are made comfortable on the settee. Children can easily be heard and are checked regularly by the childminder.

The childminder has a clear administration of medicines and sickness policy which ensures that parents are aware of the procedures in place for administering medicines, as well as what illnesses may prevent their child from being cared for. She is very careful to explain though that should a child become ill whilst in her care she will make them comfortable and reassure them before contacting their parents. Accidents and emergencies can be dealt with quickly because as well as having a current first aid certificate the childminder has emergency contact details readily available, as well as a first aid kit and written permission from parents enabling her to obtain medical advice or treatment should this be necessary.

Children enjoy and benefit greatly from a range of activities which contribute to their good health and help develop their physical skills. The varied range of equipment in the garden enable them to learn and develop such skills as climbing, pedalling, balancing and throwing and kicking balls. Regular visits to the park further extend children's experiences. The childminder has a good understanding of how children develop and provides the equipment and encouragement for even the youngest babies to develop by stretching, reaching and rolling over. Toddlers and older children enjoy music and dance sessions in the lounge whilst the babies look on in wonderment, chuckling, smiling and babbling.

Children benefit from a healthy, varied and nutritious diet. They enjoy healthy snacks which include lots of fresh fruit and vegetables. All meals and snacks take account of the children's individual needs. Lunch mainly consists of sandwiches, yoghurts and fruits whilst pasta, shepherd's pies, vegetables and gravy meals are provided at tea time. Any food provided by parents is stored and prepared appropriately. Mealtimes are seen as a sociable time where adults and children eat and chat together.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very safe and secure environment where regular risk assessments are undertaken by the childminder who takes immediate action to reduce any that she observes. For example, because the ages of the children cared for has changed, safety gates are now in place at the bottom of the stairs to prevent unsupervised access. Children move around safely, freely and with growing independence. Children are beginning to learn to keep themselves safe as they take part in regular fire drills. The front and patio doors are kept locked at all times although the keys are kept close by.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. She explains to parents the importance of allowing children freedom to develop their independence and to learn how to keep themselves safe. This is all done in safe surroundings such as when playing on the equipment in the back garden where they are given the opportunity to try new ventures such as climbing a ladder or climbing across the climbing frame. This allows children to learn some sense of danger, develop their confidence and sense of adventure. All children are taught about road safety and whilst older children walk in front of the childminder, younger children if not in a push chair either use reins or hold the childminder's hands. The childminder has a high regard for children's safety, contact details

and first aid materials are taken on trips and written consent is obtained from parents to take the children off the premises as well as in the car. All relevant documentation is in place in relation to outings as well as various written permissions which enables the childminder to care for the children in the best possible way.

Children use a wide variety of good quality equipment, appropriate to their age and stage of development. Only resources and equipment that have the safety standards mark are used. It is regularly checked to ensure it is safe, well maintained and appropriate. Toys and resources are replaced and updated as required ensuring that all children are provided with the a varied selection which are safe for their age and stage of development.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted through the childminder's clear understanding of child protection procedures and her role and responsibility with regard to protecting children. She has a child protection policy and procedure in place which fully supports her practice. Parents are asked to sign this to show that they are aware of the contents. The childminder holds a current First Aid certificate and maintains appropriate accident records.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the childminder's home and very quickly become part of the extended family. Babies are entertained by the older children and gurgle and smile as they are talked to and offered different toys. The childminder has a very good understanding of how the emotional development of babies plays a large part in their overall development and ensures that even when caring for two babies at a time she gives each one some individual time for cuddles as well as being fully aware that each one is an individual. The childminder is familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and takes this into account when planning, ensuring she covers all areas of development. Babies lay on activity mats on the floor, are encouraged to roll over and reach for toys as well as listening to stories and singing. They are very much included in this family setting.

Children achieve well because the childminder is highly skilled and uses her extensive knowledge of child development to provide high quality care. They relate well to each other and the childminder, chatting, asking questions and confidently approaching the childminder for support or to show her what they are doing. Children's confidence and self-esteem is given high priority as they are offered praise and acknowledgment for their efforts and achievements. Their pictures and works of art are valued and displayed in various areas of the home which further boosts their self-esteem. Children's independence is fostered as they make their own choices and decisions, choosing which area they would like to play in as well as selecting their own resources.

Children's learning is actively promoted through stimulating and challenging resources and activities such as cooking, a selection of different sized hamma beads which ensures that all children can take part on an equal basis, constructional toys, games and a vast selection of imaginative play equipment. They show interest in what they do and become absorbed in playing and listening to stories. Children are excited and eager to decorate cakes, tasting the ingredients as they go. They play games such as snakes and ladders whilst learning the importance of sharing and taking turns. Activities and day to day experiences enable children to learn and talk about numbers and colours. Photographs show children having fun forming their own band and playing a selection of musical instruments which further develops their creativity as well as providing a focal point for the babies. Craft activities involving messy hand printing proved to be a very popular activity with children delighting in looking at their painted

hands. They play independently but also receive support from the childminder, who is confident enough to know when the time is right to observe and when she needs to be actively involved. Children experience trips to parks, the library, shops and also toddler groups giving them a clear insight into their own and wider community.

Children achieve well and make good progress in all areas. One child played a game of snakes and ladders with the childminder and at the same time two babies were also receiving attention and stimulation through the use of different rattles, toys and books that made sounds. Two way communication between the childminder and the child with regard to the number of spots on the dice as well as the support given to count the number of spaces not only added to the child's enjoyment of the game but proved to be a great learning experience as she became familiar with the concept of number. Although the childminder plans her activities on a daily basis she is flexible, taking into account the weather as well as the wishes and needs of the children. Early communication skills are extremely well supported through spontaneous, but high quality adult to child interactions with all the ages of children cared for. Children's individual needs are catered for as the childminder is very aware of the stage they are at and knows them well. Children's ideas are listened to and if possible are incorporated into the day. Children may do various activities around a particular topic such as people from different communities which involved a great deal of discussion as well as story telling and art and craft work. One such activity focussed on the different colours of people's skins such as black, pink and brown and provided further opportunities to develop children's understanding of people of differing cultures. Children acquire new knowledge, as the childminder organises a project about different countries which involved learning about them and their animals and people, whilst looking at a map or a globe to see where they were. This actively promotes children's awareness of the wider society.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are met and respected with all children being fully included in the life of the setting. They learn and develop at their own pace regardless of race, religion, disability or gender and activities are adapted to accommodate the needs of all the children attending. Children are encouraged to develop a respect for themselves and others as well as appreciating diversity through books, puzzles, pictures and posters. This enables children to gain an understanding of the diverse society in which we live. Tasting foods from around the world and celebrating a variety of festivals provide further opportunities for discussion and understanding.

This is a calm household where children behave extremely well and play together harmoniously. They learn by having a positive role model and understand the clear and consistent boundaries. Children are given clear explanations as to why some behaviour is unacceptable and the consequences should they persist whilst also allowing time for them to reflect on how they could have handled the situation differently. For example, they could have asked to share something that another child was playing with instead of snatching it from them. Children benefit from a childminder who notices and acknowledges when they are being good and is committed to giving them her time and attention.

An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being. Parents are given a wealth of information, in the form of a parent pack. This is about the service the childminder offers and includes policies, procedures and information about the childminder and training she has attended. This ensures parents are well informed and made to feel welcome

from the beginning. A communal diary is used to detail information about the children's day, and daily chats with parents keep them up to date with their child's progress and welfare. The childminder has a settling in process which enables children to do so gradually and to become familiar and feel safe in their new surroundings. She acknowledges that parents are the experts of their own children and firmly believes that good relationships, mutual understanding and trust are the basis of the shared responsibility in the development and care of their child. Parents have made very positive comments about the care their children receive whilst at the childminder's.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a childminder who has a high regard for the well-being of all children and their care is greatly enhanced by her excellent organisational skills.

The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of how children develop and has attended further training ensuring she keeps up to date with current practice as well as increasing her knowledge and expertise. This continuing development is reflected in the childminder's practice and children benefit greatly from this.

Children are happy and settled in a calm and well-organised family home where they can move around safely and independently whilst under effective supervision. They easily access the toys and resources both inside and in the garden enabling them to decide for themselves what they would like to play with, however the childminder is also aware that at times children may need direction.

The childminder is meticulous in her record keeping and ensures her records are purposeful and effective. However, although a register of children's attendance is kept this is not always accurate with regard to times. All policies, procedures and children's records are regularly reviewed to ensure that there are no changes, which contributes to children's health, safety and well being. Each child has their own plastic wallet with all necessary information contained inside. Parents views and comments are welcomed and positively encouraged, as the childminder obtains feedback via verbal comments as well as providing a comments book.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

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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 records relating to children's times of attendance are in place at all times.

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