



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY304940
Inspection date 24 August 2006
Inspector Karen Cockings

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 satisfactory. 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 2005. She lives with her partner and two children, aged eight and two years in a village on the outskirts of Barnsley. The house is within walking distance of local schools, shops and other amenities. The ground floor rooms of the house are used for childminding and the bathroom and rear bedroom on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The childminder is approved to provide overnight care for one child.

The family have a pet rabbit.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of five children and she currently minds two children of pre-school age.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and has links with local childminder groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy regular outdoor activities, which contribute to their good health. There is a varied range of equipment available in the garden to suit different ages and to promote active play. The childminder also plans visits to local parks and children's groups, where the children enjoy using equipment, such as large soft play cubes. She takes advantage of loan schemes to provide additional resources at home, including play tents and tunnels, so that children are able to learn and develop physical skills.

Children are protected from the risk of infection because the childminder adopts appropriate hygiene practices and keeps the environment and resources clean. She encourages children to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet and if they have handled the pet rabbit. Suitable arrangements are made for dealing with accidents and medication and parents are informed about the childminder's policy with regard to the care of sick children. She has completed first aid training and ensures that required accident records are kept and shared with parents. She has not, however, ensured that she has parental permission to seek emergency treatment.

The arrangements for meals and snacks are discussed with parents and the childminder makes sure that she is aware of any allergies and special dietary requirements. Children are offered regular drinks and fruit. They talk confidently with the childminder about their likes and dislikes and she offers them choices, while encouraging healthy eating patterns.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure environment, where the childminder gives priority to their safety. Outer doors are kept locked when children are present and the garden is fully enclosed with locked gates and secure fencing. The childminder takes appropriate measures within the home, such as using stair gates and socket covers. The available space is used to provide varied, safe play areas where children can feel relaxed and comfortable.

Children access a suitable range of toys and play materials, which the childminder is gradually extending as she develops her business. She regularly checks toys to ensure that they are safe and clean and makes resources easily accessible to

children. This helps them to make safe choices about their play.

Fire safety is addressed well. The childminder has arranged for the fire officer to visit the home and complete a risk assessment. Smoke alarms are fitted at both levels of the house and there is a fire blanket in place. A written evacuation plan has been developed. Appropriate arrangements are made with local childminders for them to provide cover in an emergency situation. Children learn how to keep themselves safe in the home and outdoors. For example, the childminder encourages them to hold hands or hold onto the pushchair during outings and they talk together about safe places to cross roads and the use of pelican crossings.

The childminder has sufficient knowledge of child protection issues and is aware of her responsibility to protect children from harm. She shares her written policy with parents, so that they better understand those responsibilities. She understands where she can seek advice if she has concerns about any child in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and quickly settle with the childminder, who interacts warmly with them. She provides a suitable range of activities for them, which includes both indoor and outdoor play. Regular outings provide opportunities for children to enjoy a wider range of experiences and help to develop social skills. For example, they make visits with other local childminders to indoor play centres and to nearby parks.

Children are interested and absorbed in activities, such as moulding play dough into different shapes and using tools and cutters. They spend time working out how to fit the train track together and explore new resources, such as dressing up clothes and small world toys. They talk confidently with the childminder about what they are doing and about events in their lives. For example, they look at the buildings on the play mat, identify the church and remember attending a christening. They talk about going to school and who their teacher will be. Friendly conversation with the childminder helps children to feel secure and to develop confidence in themselves.

The childminder helps children to settle in with her by providing a variety of toys to capture their interest. Although she has an informal plan for each day, she follows children's lead and enables them to make choices. For younger children, the childminder is becoming familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and has identified this as an area for further training.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn to play cooperatively together, developing an awareness of the need to share and to take turns. They understand, for example, that they have to share the dough machine as there is only one and they use another tool until it is free. The childminder has devised simple house rules with an emphasis on being kind and

helpful towards one another. She talks and listens to them as they play, which shows children that they are valued and important to her.

Regular outings help children to find out about their local community. The childminder also recognises the importance of providing resources to raise children's awareness of other cultures and different needs. She has borrowed some resources from a local loan scheme to help with this and children enjoy exploring the different dressing up clothes and utensils, prompting conversation about how they are used. Improved planning in this area would ensure that such resources are used to their full potential.

The childminder works closely with parents and is willing to be flexible in order to accommodate specific requirements. She shares written policies and procedures with them and she makes sure that she gives feedback each day about children's experiences. She has not developed information for parents about how they may raise any concerns and is not yet sufficiently familiar with recent guidance regarding the recording of complaints.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and secure at the setting, where space and resources are used appropriately to meet children's individual needs and interests. The childminder organises her day to ensure that children enjoy varied play experiences and have opportunities to be active or to rest and play quietly as they wish. She is building solid foundations for future childminding practice, attending relevant training to assist with this and developing links with other providers.

The childminder is aware of the importance of complying with regulations and conditions of registration and understands that she must notify the regulator of any changes in her circumstances. She has developed written procedures to support important areas of her practice and most record keeping systems are in place and used appropriately.

Overall 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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- review parental consents to ensure that written permission is obtained for seeking emergency treatment
- continue to develop the provision for younger children in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- develop the information provided for parents about how they may raise any concerns and become familiar with guidance regarding the recording of complaints.

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