

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	302799
Inspection date	09 January 2008
Inspector	Angela Howard

Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1992. She lives with her husband and four children aged 19, 16 and 10 years and 16 months. They live in Wombwell, a large residential area in the borough of Barnsley. The whole of the ground floor of the premises is used for childminding. There is a secure garden available for outside play. The family have a dog and two cats.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She currently has seven children under eight-years-old and three children over eight-years-old on roll, of which, one child is accessing funded nursery education. The childminder walks to take and collect children from the local school.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and has been awarded the Quality First kitemark. At times the childminder works with an assistant.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean, welcoming and very well-maintained environment. Promoting children's health is given a high priority by the childminder. For example, children have a clear understanding of why they must wash hands after using the toilet. Good adult support helps children to gain a positive understanding of hygiene and helps to develop their independence in personal care. However, children do not always routinely wash their hands before eating snack. The childminder has a clear policy about the care of sick children, and arrangements for administering first aid and medication are rigorous. This further protects children's health.

Children enjoy a well-balanced, healthy and nutritious range of snacks in accordance with parents' wishes. They enjoy a wide range of nutritious snacks, which develop their awareness of healthy eating. For example, children enjoy a wide range of different fruits at snack time. They enjoy this time as it gives them the opportunity to enjoy their food and is a social occasion where children sit with their peers and the childminder, joining in conversations. Clear records show any dietary requirements are adhered to and children's preferences are catered for well.

Children have plenty of opportunities to participate in a good range of physical activities. They access the outdoor play area when the weather permits and visit soft play areas and the local park on a regular basis to access large climbing apparatus, which develops their gross and fine motor skills. They explore, test and develop physical control as they jump, pedal bikes, use scooters, catch and kick balls and dig and pour in the sand play. The childminder ensures that children enjoy regular fresh air and exercise, which contributes to their good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, vibrant and welcoming environment. The equipment is set out in a very attractive manner which encourages children to make choices and develop decision making skills. Children are cared for in a safe environment where identified risks have been addressed. For example, there are effective safety measures in place to protect children, such as the use of socket covers and safety gates, low-level cupboards have safe contents and there are no trailing wires. Therefore, children can independently access all areas of the ground floor. However, the main entrance to the premises is not secure. Children are well supervised as the childminder ensures they remain within her sight at all times. Good fire precautions are in place. For example, smoke alarms are in working order, exits are clear of obstructions and the fire evacuation plan is regularly practised with the children. However, the fire blanket is not appropriately sited.

The premises are visually attractive and are enhanced with posters and displays. Resources are clearly labelled and activities are presented in a very appealing manner which invites children to take part. Children access a very broad and extremely well-balanced range of equipment that is maintained to a very high standard.

The childminder has extensive knowledge and understanding of her responsibilities with regards to safeguarding children. She has a very good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow should she have any concerns about a child's welfare. The childminder ensures that her practice is underpinned by up-to-date knowledge of the possible signs of abuse and the procedures to follow. She has a well-written child protection statement which is discussed with parents before children attend. As a result, the childminder is able to act in the best interests of the children and ensures their welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children love coming to the childminder's. They share an extremely warm and caring relationship with the childminder and their peers. They relish the time at the childminder's and are eager to participate in the activities on offer. The excellent communication between the childminder and children ensures they enjoy and achieve to their full potential. Children's individual development is successfully enhanced with the childminder's highly effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Creative and imaginative activities, such as play dough, sticking, painting and domestic role play allow children to explore, have fun and have a good level of challenge.

The interaction between the childminder and the children is very good. She is very caring and is sensitive to their individual needs. She gives plenty of reassurance and stays physically close to help children feel secure. Children are very happy and settled in the childminder's care. They are familiar with the daily routines that allow time to play, rest and eat together. There are close and affectionate relationships where cuddles are reciprocated. Therefore, children's sense of trust helps them to develop a strong sense of self to enable them to build meaningful relationships. The childminder has a very high regard for what children say, she is interested in them, and listens, talks and extends their play through effective questioning, such as 'what has happened to the balls?', 'can you count the claws on the dinosaur?' and 'can you find the letter J?' The good communication with each child ensures children enjoy and achieve to their full potential.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The childminder has a good understanding and strong knowledge base of the early learning goals and uses this to provide a broad and balanced curriculum across the six areas of learning. This ensures children progress well through the stepping stones. She encourage children to participate, explore, problem solve and have fun whilst learning. She knows the children very well and uses this knowledge to support and provide activities that are age and developmentally appropriate. Much thought goes into providing a curriculum that is responsive to children's individual learning needs. The childminder interacts very effectively with children to stimulate their curiosity, reinforcing and consolidating their learning. This results in more motivation and challenge for children. She skilfully uses open-ended questions to challenge children's thinking and develop their language skills. The curriculum planning and assessment documentation contains plenty of relevant detail to enable parents to follow their child's progress.

Children are very self-assured and confident in their play. Their self-esteem is very good as they choose independently from activities and attend to their own personal needs very well. For example, they independently attend to their own toileting needs and spread butter on their toast at snack times. Children show utmost kindness and consideration for others as they share books and trains and help younger children put their glasses back on. They participate eagerly and with perseverance in chosen activities for quite long periods of time, such as building the train track or finding the letter J on the finger puppets.

Children are good communicators, speak confidently and are able to hold meaningful and interesting conversations. They express their own needs and ideas successfully. For example, they negotiate a turn with the balls, posting them into a moving toy. They clearly state, that 'they are hungry' or that 'I need the toilet'. Children listen attentively to stories and join in and retell the parts they know. The childminder is skilful at extending children's vocabulary as she listens carefully when children speak. Children initiate and participate in conversations, share information about themselves, describe past events, ask questions and plan their play. The environment is very rich in print, with alphabet cards and labels on equipment, which develop children's understanding that print has meaning. Children access a very wide variety of mark making materials freely. They love to write, draw and colour pictures and sound letters as they find the alphabet finger puppets and put them in the correct pockets on the display mat.

Children confidently and accurately count everyday objects up to 10 and in some instances beyond. They recognise some numbers in books and are beginning to compare two groups of objects. For example, they talk about left and right and that we have a pair of hands and a pair of feet, how they have changed since being a baby and the different skin tones of different people in the books.

The children are very active and move their bodies and handle tools and equipment very well. They move around confidently and safely. For example, they successfully negotiate space when they build the train track, crawl in and out of the tent, hop on one foot and successfully climb on and off chairs. Discussion with the childminder indicates children access a wide range of opportunities at soft play areas to develop their gross motor skills. However, planning and observation documentation does not clearly show what activities children are accessing, if it is a broad and balanced range or how children are progressing in this area.

Children show interest in simple information and communication technology. They confidently use telephones, a computer, cameras and electronic toys. Children show curiosity about how things work. They show interest in what happens when they put the soft toy cat on top of the tent and guess how high it is, and they guess what will happen if they put their hand over the hole where the ball pops up. Overall, children make good progress in all areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal concern and their individual needs are met extremely well. This is due to the childminder taking very good measures to get to know the children. She works in complete partnership with parents to ensure each child's daily routine is followed successfully. Very detailed records are kept which aid the childminder to enhance all aspects of children's

care. Children are encouraged to make their own decisions about their choice of play resources, which successfully develops their independence and confidence. This inclusive approach means children's individuality is strongly valued and nurtured. This results in children feeling good about themselves because the childminder knows them well and is interested in what they say and do.

Children's awareness of the local community is promoted extremely well through regular visits to the shops, local carer groups and parks. Children have equal access to all resources and are beginning to learn about the wider world through the use of a good range of equipment and activities that positively address diversity. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour in all age groups is very good. Strong adult support works extremely well. The childminder rewards positive behaviour by offering children an abundance of praise and encouragement. She gently reminds children of the house rules and uses distraction to successfully promote positive behaviour. She promotes the use of manners and as a result, the children are polite and well mannered. Children are provided with very clear explanations and are supported to manage their own behaviour, such as taking turns, and are learning to cooperate with their peers successfully. Therefore, children are learning right from wrong in an extremely warm and caring environment.

Partnership with parents and carers in relation to the provision of nursery education is good. Children's development records are always available, are very detailed and are further enhanced by the use of photographs. A written report is issued to parents on a regular basis about how their child is progressing and planning is prominently displayed.

A very successful relationship with parents and carers ensures that the childminder has an excellent knowledge and understanding of children's individual needs. Ongoing verbal communication ensures that parents are kept up to date about their child's care and progress. Due to this very positive relationship children's needs are continually met and children remain settled in the childminder's care. This clearly contributes to the children's overall well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The highly effective organisation of the environment allows children to initiate their own play and learning and develop independence skills. The childminder has a high regard for the well-being of all children. She clearly considers children's needs and it is very evident she has formed strong relationships with the children in her care. Clear aims for the children's care work well in practice promoting their sense of security and their emotional well-being.

The childminder has a vast amount of experience in childcare and is highly committed to the further development of her practice. She attends relevant training to update and extend her knowledge of childcare issues. For example, she has attended child protection training, introduction to using empathy dolls, fire safety, 'Birth to three matters', stepping stones, curriculum planning and fun with science training. Children's experiences are significantly

enhanced as the childminder uses training opportunities to improve the standard of care for children.

The childminder has a very clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and stepping stones. She has a high expectation of what children can achieve and is clear about her role for children to learn through challenging and interesting activities. Through discussion and observation of documentation it is clear that the childminder clearly evaluates her practice to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Documentation is kept in a well-organised, professional manner and confidentiality is maintained at all times. The comprehensive policies and procedures in place, which are reviewed, updated and shared with parents, provide a clear sense of purpose and direction. The childminder reviews her policies and procedures to address any changes made to the National Standards. For example, she has devised a robust system for recording complaints. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one recommendation was made. This related to keeping parents informed of their child's progress. The childminder regularly keep parents up-to-date about their child's progress via diaries and daily discussion. This promotes children's well-being and education.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 2 - Organisation. A childcare inspector visited the provision in March 2005. An action was raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for 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.

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- improve children's awareness of good hygiene practice
- ensure the premises are secure
- ensure the fire blanket is appropriately sited.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that children receive a broad and balanced range of physical activities.

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