

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	302638
Inspection date	06 February 2008
Inspector	Jill Lee
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 1996. She lives with her husband in Barnsley. The home is within walking distance of the town centre, local schools and shops.

The downstairs only of the home is available for childminding, except for access to the bathroom. There is a fully enclosed small garden for outdoor play. The family has a cat.

The childminder may care for up to six children at any one time. She is currently caring for nine children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends the local childminding group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy outings in the fresh air each day. The childminder encourages daily exercise, as she walks with the children to and from school and nursery and to local groups. This helps to promote a healthy lifestyle. Children use a range of large play equipment when they visit local

parks, like Dearne Valley, and Fun World. They also routinely attend local toddler groups. They enjoy riding in the cars and pushing the dolls in the prams in the garden, when the weather is fine. The childminder plans suitable activities to develop their abilities and encourages them to try out new skills. Parents are reminded to provide appropriate resources for outdoor activities, like sun cream when it is hot.

Children's understanding of the importance of good hygiene is promoted in their everyday routines. They say 'it's hand wash time, because it's dinner time', as they kneel sensibly on stools to wash their hands at the kitchen sink. They learn not to touch the cat when they are eating. The childminder ensures children are protected from infection and parents are aware that sick children cannot be cared for. The childminder has recently changed all her systems for keeping required records, to enhance their clarity. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication mostly meet requirements, although the procedure relating to consent to give emergency medication is still not fully clarified. The childminder discusses the potential need to seek medical advice or treatment in an emergency, but parents' consent is not clearly recorded.

The childminder is well informed about children's individual dietary needs. Parents are asked to provide a healthy packed lunch and the childminder provides a choice of healthy snacks and a nutritious cooked meal at tea time. She obtained a food hygiene certificate in 2007. An example menu is shared with parents, with information about a balanced diet. She promotes healthy eating, as she talks with children about which foods are good for them and ensures they always have access to fruit. She encourages children to become involved in food preparation, for example, helping to cut up the fruit. Drinks are always available for children to access independently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and child-friendly home. They use a range of good quality toys and equipment, which meet safety standards. The childminder actively encourages children's independence, for example, teaching them to climb onto and sit safely in chairs for activities. She places high priority on safe supervision and assesses risks effectively to promote children's safety and enjoyment. Space and resources are organised effectively to reduce potential hazards. The childminder carefully considers the age range present when planning different activities and thinks carefully about ways to promote safety for younger children without limiting challenge for the older ones.

Children's awareness of risk and safety is raised in everyday activities. They use the whole environment freely and older children are able to visit the toilet independently. Children learn to stay beside the childminder when they are out walking, hold onto the pushchair and stop at the kerb when crossing the road together. She talks with children all the time about the dangers of busy roads. She helps them to think about risks in the park. The risk of accidents is minimised by consistently reinforced safety rules. The childminder has a well considered, written plan for safe evacuation in an emergency, which she has practised with the children.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder's awareness of her responsibilities within child protection procedures. She has information about the Local Safeguarding Children Board but has not accessed any training to familiarise her with their procedures. She has planned access to a course. She explains to parents the requirement to keep a record of all accidents

and existing injuries, and has recently updated all her accident, incident and existing injury recording systems.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very settled and content in the childminder's care. They play happily and with confidence. The childminder talks with children and listens closely to what they say. She is interested in what they are doing. Children are encouraged to contribute their own ideas. They become engrossed in activities that interest them, as they share small world play with the dolls' house and the cars. They have fun making the cars crash. They love reading stories and regularly visit the library to choose new books. They enjoy singing songs together and dancing to music. They love lying on the floor to draw pictures on the colouring mat. The childminder helps them to decide where the jigsaw pieces fit and how the lid can help them work out the picture. They name all the shapes in the jigsaw and become interested in numbers in the environment, for example, on the buses as they walk past the bus station to school. Children enjoy a varied range of craft activities, encouraging them to explore their own creativity and imagination, using lots of different ideas and resources.

The childminder has a good awareness of the needs of younger children. She has familiarised herself with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and is working on using this to enhance planning of their daily play experiences. She puts out a varied range of resources each day, based on her knowledge of children's interests, but does not systematically plan that activities in the everyday environment promote a balanced range of play choices in all areas of development. Children are able to select from these resources freely as they play. Many resources are stored in the cellar, which means children cannot easily select additional toys, although they confidently ask if they want something different out. The childminder plans exploratory play and creative activities most days, although children do not usually access these independently.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a warm and trusting relationship with the childminder. They are secure in her care. Daily routines are very flexible and relaxed, based on children's own needs and routines. Children confidently tell the childminder what they want to do next. They are able to access resources independently, from the range put out by the childminder, and plan their own play. The childminder responds sensitively and supportively to their non-verbal communications and understands their needs very well.

Children's behaviour is very good and is sensitively supported. They begin to understand right and wrong, as they share toys and learn to take turns. Children cooperate as they play. They are helped to feel good about themselves, as the childminder gives lots of warm encouragement. This reinforces caring behaviour, so that children learn to be kind to each other and to say sorry if they have upset someone. The childminder considers individual needs and plans activities to enable everyone to be involved. Older children learn to keep some activities out of the reach of younger ones. Children are involved in helping to tidy up, as they put toys away to make space for the jigsaws.

Children become familiar with their local community, as they regularly enjoy outings. They go to the shops, visit the parks and attend local toddler groups. The childminder visits the library

frequently to enhance the range of books for children. She ensures she always has books which reflect different faiths and cultures and she raises children's awareness of different festivals, like Chinese New Year, in planned activities. Children enjoy reading books in other languages and playing with multi-cultural dolls and small world people.

The childminder works in close partnership with parents. She encourages parents to take time to get to know her well as they settle their child. She shares written information about her childcare policies and talks with parents about her daily practice. She makes time to share the day's experiences, as parents collect their child. The childminder actively encourages parents to share any concerns and has received very positive references. She is aware of the importance of responding swiftly to complaints and displays the Ofsted poster for parents. She is fully familiar with current requirements regarding the management of complaints, although no complaints have been received. Her system for recording any complaints does not currently allow it to be readily shared with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for within a welcoming and homely environment, which is safe and well organised. Their individual needs are supported by flexible and child-led planning. The childminder routinely accesses appropriate training to update her practice, helping her to enhance the experiences of children in her care. She evaluates her own practice effectively.

Children are kept safe and their welfare is effectively safeguarded by the childminder's clear understanding and implementation of most required policies and procedures. She clearly understands requirements with regard to reaching agreements with parents, so that their wishes are understood. The childminder shares information very effectively on a daily basis with parents about children's activities and care needs. She has agreed arrangements with parents for back-up cover from another childminder in an emergency. The registration certificate is displayed along with the information poster for parents. The childminder's professional approach to her practice helps to ensure that children are well cared for.

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 the childminder was asked to ensure all pet feeding bowls are out of reach of children and to include in the child protection policy the procedures to be followed if concerns are raised or allegations made against herself or others.

Parents are fully aware that children have contact with the family's pet cat. The childminder has improved hygiene by removing the feeding bowls from the play area. She has updated the child protection policy to include the action she would take if any child protection concerns are identified. This includes appropriate and up-to-date contact details of other agencies. She is aware of the requirement to record and report any concerns to the social services or the police, and to Ofsted, without any delay. These measures have improved children's safety.

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.

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):

- clarify the procedure for the administration of medication in an emergency and obtain written parental permission for seeking any emergency medical advice or treatment
- become fully familiar with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- organise resources to further enhance children's independence and ensure a balanced range of activity choices is freely accessible within the everyday environment.

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