

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	302727
Inspection date	04 March 2008
Inspector	Lynn Masterman

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 registered in 1997. She lives with her husband and three teenage children in a small village in Barnsley. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. The children have access to a secure outdoor play area. The family have a dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is currently minding seven children under the age of eight who attend on a part-time basis. The childminder takes and collects children from the local school. She takes children on outings and visits local play areas and amenities within the area.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and welcoming environment. They are beginning to learn about appropriate hygiene practice through daily routines, such as washing their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating their lunch. However, children do not always wash their hands before eating snack. This poses a risk to children's health. The childminder has a sound knowledge of childhood ailments and incubation periods. Signs and symptoms are promptly recognised and parents are informed, which ensures children are cared for appropriately.

Appropriate use is made of the outdoor play area and children enjoy being out in the fresh air. They regularly visit the local park where there is large play equipment, which provides children with the opportunity to develop their physical skills and explore the environment. For example, they enjoy using the swings, slide and climbing frame, which helps children to develop their balance and coordination. They run, skip and jump and listen for familiar sounds, such as the cars driving pass and the leaves rustling beneath their feet.

The childminder has sound knowledge of the children's individual dietary requirements and works in partnership with parents. For example, she knows children's likes and dislikes and specific dietary problems. Children are well nourished as they have access to varied and balanced diet. They make choices from a range of cooked meals and snacks, such as pancakes, pasta, fish and vegetables. The childminder recognises the importance of children having access to fluids throughout the day. They are able to choose from water, milk and low sugar fruit juices. This contributes to children's health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure home environment. Appropriate steps are taken to promote children's safety and prevent accidents, for example, the childminder cooks food on the back two rings of the cooker when children are present. All fire safety equipment is in place and exits are free from obstruction. However, the fire evacuation procedures are not practised with the children. This compromises children's safety. Appropriate use is made of opportunities to develop children's awareness of road safety when walking to school and on outings. They are encouraged to stay close to the childminder and know to look and listen for cars.

Children have access to a satisfactory range of play resources and equipment, which are easily accessible, well maintained and meet the required safety standards. Resources are checked on a regular basis to ensure they are safe and do not pose risk to children. They are stored at child height, which promotes their independence, confidence and the opportunity to make informed choices about their play.

The childminder has sound awareness of child protection issues and the procedures. She is able to recognise potential areas and indicators of abuse. The childminder is fully aware of her role and responsibilities, which ensure children are appropriately safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled within a home from home environment. Time is given to ensure routines accommodate children's individual needs, such as care, play and exercise. Children relate well to the childminder and they share a warm caring relationship. They are listened to attentively; fun is encouraged and the childminder has a sound understanding of children's individual needs and preferences. For example, the childminder recognises some children need to observe other children at play before they feel confident to participate in a group activity. This helps children to feel safe and secure.

Children access an appropriate range of activities and experiences. They are supported in their play and the childminder ensures activities and equipment provide acceptable levels of challenge. For example, children enjoy playing a listening game. The childminder asks the children to listen to the sounds carefully and match the sounds to the picture. The children enthusiastically name the sounds, such as a guitar, a duck, an owl and a cow. The childminder makes appropriate use of opportunities to extend the children's learning. She asks the children 'Can you remember what we get from a cow'? The children reply 'We get milk from the cow'.

The childminder has a sound awareness of the necessary self-help skills children need to develop in preparation for school, such as putting on their coats and removing their shoes. This helps children to feel confident and promotes their self-esteem for the next stage in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are treated with equal care and concern. The childminder knows the children well and uses information effectively to respond to children's individual needs. For example, some children are afraid of dogs. The childminder talks to the children about staying calm and not to approach a dog unless an adult is present. This helps children to feel safe and secure. Children have a strong sense of belonging and enjoy being part of a larger group. For example, the younger children frequently ask if the older children are coming to play after school. This helps children to form meaningful relationships.

The childminder has an acceptable understanding of promoting children's awareness of equality of opportunity and children have access to a suitable range of play resources, which are not gender biased. However, the range of resources and the childminder's understanding of how to promote similarities and differences through play is limited.

Children are well behaved. The childminder has a consistent approach to the management of children's behaviour. They are encouraged to be polite, share and be respectful towards each other. For example, children are praised for using 'please' and 'thank you' appropriately when asking to play with a specific toy. This helps children to show consideration for others and develop their social skills.

Children benefit from the childminder's close and successful working relationship with parents. The childminder regularly exchanges information about the children's day and their achievements. She offers a flexible and supportive service, which effectively meets the needs of children and parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has sufficient knowledge of the National Standards to ensure children's safety and welfare is met. All statutory documentation is in place and meets the necessary requirements. Children's personal records and the necessary written consents are in place and are stored securely to maintain confidentiality. The childminder maintains child ratios to ensure children are well supervised and receive a satisfactory level of care.

Children's well-being is supported because the childminder organises her time, the play resources and the premises to ensure children's individual needs are appropriately met. They enjoy their time in the childminder's home as they move around with ease and confidence. Overall, evidence suggests that 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 given a number of recommendations. These related to children's safety, documentation and parental consents.

Since the last inspection the childminder has implemented suitable recording systems for the administration of medication, recording of accidents and children who may arrive with existing injuries. All recording systems are counter signed by parents and parental consents are in place. Emergency contact numbers for parents are accessible at all times when children are being cared in or outside the premises. These improvements ensure the safety and well-being of all children.

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 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):

- ensure children wash their hands at appropriate times of the day
- ensure children are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire

- develop further the knowledge and range of resources to promote children's awareness of similarities and differences through play.

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