

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	317751
Inspection date	28 January 2008
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 1984. She lives with her husband in a village near Doncaster. The ground floor rooms of the house are used for childminding and there is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The house is within walking distance of local schools, parks and other amenities.

The childminder is registered for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. She currently minds four pre-school children.

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 have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise, which helps to keep them fit and well. They walk to nursery and like to play in the park nearby and in the garden. Suitable toys are available for them, such as tricycles, balls and paddling pool. Indoors, they enjoy dancing to favourite tunes, swaying their arms and jumping up and down until they are tired and need

a little rest. They develop good hand-eye coordination as they handle small world figures and press buttons on interactive toys.

The environment is clean and comfortable. The childminder takes appropriate measures to protect children from the spread of infection, including sharing her sickness policy with parents as part of the contract. Children are encouraged with hand washing and toilet facilities are easily accessible. There are opportunities each day for children to rest and sleep if they are tired. Records are maintained of accidents and any medication administered, although these lack important detail, such as the time of the accident and treatment given. Similarly, medication records do not include the time and dosage, which may have implications for children's well-being.

The childminder provides a range of healthy foods, including cooked meals, such as stews and pasta dishes with lots of fresh vegetables. Children try new tastes and often begin to like vegetables they have not enjoyed before. They tend to have a biscuit or breadsticks for snack, although they will eat some fruit. They enjoy regular drinks in their own special cups.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure and comfortable environment, where the childminder takes appropriate measures to keep them safe. For example, there is a safety gate fitted at the foot of the stairs, low level cupboards have locks fitted and there is an alarm device on outer doors. However, the wine rack is on the floor in the kitchen and so is easily accessible to children. Suitable precautions are taken to protect children from fire hazards, including having smoke detectors, fire blanket and fire extinguisher in place. The childminder ensures that escape routes from the house are clear, but does not practise evacuation procedures with children.

There is suitable equipment available to keep children safe and comfortable. They have access to a varied range of toys and play materials, many of which are stored in low cupboards, so that they can sometimes make their own selections. The childminder ensures that toys and equipment are clean and safe for children's use. They learn to keep themselves safe as they play, because the childminder gives gentle warnings about safety issues. During outings, they learn that they must stop at the kerb and watch for oncoming traffic.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder has a satisfactory understanding of her responsibilities with regard to child protection. She has attended some relevant training but does not have information about local procedures readily available, which hinders her ability to take prompt action if she has any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and confident in the childminder's care. They very much enjoy each other's company and play happily together, while younger children explore resources and show interest in what is happening around them. The childminder does not formally plan, other than for daily routines and outings to local children's groups. However, she takes children's individual needs into account when organising the day. For example, she knows which children need longer to eat their lunch and makes sure there is sufficient time for this so that children are not rushed.

Children engage confidently in a good range of activities. They particularly enjoy role play, using their imaginations well to develop their own ideas. For example, they cover themselves with blankets and then use them as cloaks when they pretend to be princesses. They like to play with the dolls' house and small world figures, talking together about where furniture will fit and what the toys are doing. They use language well in their play to give instructions to each other and develop stories. The sharing of books and stories is also a favourite activity; they cuddle up to the childminder on the sofa and listen intently. She uses this opportunity well to extend children's thinking and language skills, as she draws their attention to the pictures and asks them questions. They like to sing, dance and know lots of rhymes.

Children are encouraged to be kind to one another and consider each other's feelings. They build warm and trusting relationships with the childminder, which enhances their play and care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder finds out about individual children's needs so that she can provide appropriate care. Children feel a sense of belonging at the setting, where they are familiar with daily routines and know each other well. Regular outings provide opportunities for them to develop social skills and to learn about their local community. Children make choices about their play and the childminder ensures that there is always variety for them. They have access to some toys, books and play materials that increase their awareness of different cultures and varying needs.

Children behave well and play cooperatively together. The childminder teaches them to use good manners and to take some responsibility, for example, by putting their cups in the proper place when they have finished drinking and helping to tidy away toys. They begin to learn about care of the environment as the childminder talks to them about recycling and explains what this means. She uses appropriate strategies, such as distraction and explanation, to help children to manage difficulties.

There is a sound partnership with parents, which helps children to feel welcomed and valued. The childminder talks with them about her service and about daily events. She draws up written agreements with them, although contracts do not always clearly include permission for outings. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns with her, although the childminder is not fully familiar with current regulations regarding the investigation and recording of complaints.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has many years experience of caring for children. She ensures that required training, such as first aid, is completed but has limited time now for any additional courses. Routines are established to ensure continuity for children and the childminder organises her time effectively to provide children with a variety of experiences, both in the home and outside.

Record keeping systems are in place but lack necessary detail. The attendance register does not show times of arrival and departure of children, and accident and medication records do not include some significant information. The childminder follows correct procedures to comply with registration requirements. For example, she informs Ofsted of anticipated difficulties with numbers and requests that a variation be approved, to promote continuity of care.

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 agreed to keep a written record, signed by parents, of any medicines given to children. She now keeps required records, which she shares with parents, although all significant detail is not included, which means that children's welfare is not fully safeguarded.

It was also recommended that she obtain a copy of child protection guidance issued by the government. She now has some relevant documents, such as materials published by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), and she has attended some training. These measures help to increase her awareness of responsibilities and possible indicators, although information about local procedures is lacking.

The childminder also agreed to ensure that equipment and resources reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability. There are some resources, such as books and small world figures, which the children enjoy using and which help to raise their awareness of similarities and differences.

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):

- review accident and medication records to ensure that all significant information is included
- obtain and become familiar with Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures
- develop knowledge and understanding of current regulations with regard to the investigation and recording of complaints
- review record keeping to ensure that all written parental consents are in place and that the times of arrival and departure are included in the attendance register.

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