

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	317779
Inspection date	20 November 2007
Inspector	Angela Howard
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 2000. She lives with her daughter aged 10 years. They live in Edenthorpe, a large residential area in the borough of Doncaster. The whole of the ground floor, excluding the conservatory, plus toilet facilities and one bedroom on the first floor of the premises are used for childminding. There is a secure garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She currently has three children under eight years old on roll. The childminder walks to take and collect children from the local school.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and a member of the Doncaster Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The environment in which children are cared for is very clean and well maintained. Children are well protected from illness and infection as they follow good hygiene procedures. They are encouraged to learn the importance of personal hygiene through good practice, daily routines and active support from the childminder. This helps them to understand simple health and hygiene procedures. Effective measures are in place to prevent the spread of infection. For example, a well-written, clear sickness policy is shared with all parents, which ensures children who are ill do not attend.

Children enjoy daily access to fresh air and exercise. They walk each day to school and freely access the outdoor play area or visit the local park. There is a wide range of outdoor play equipment to develop a variety of skills, such as throwing, catching, digging and pedalling. Babies are offered a wide range of everyday objects to be sucked, pulled, squeezed and held to encourage exploration and development of physical skills. Children are developing good control and co-ordination of their bodies as they successfully dig in the sand, manoeuvre wheeled toys and climb up and down the steps of the climbing frame independently. As a result children are developing their physical skills and coordination.

Children enjoy a well-balanced, healthy and nutritious range of snacks and meals in accordance with parents' wishes. For example, they love toad in the hole, roast dinner and poached or grilled fish all served with fresh vegetables, such as broccoli, cauliflower, green beans and parsnips. This results in children being well nourished as they develop an understanding of the importance of healthy eating. Mealtimes are treated as an opportunity to help children enjoy their food and become independent in feeding themselves. Clear records show dietary requirements; children's and parents' preferences are catered for well.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Potential hazards are effectively addressed in order to maintain a safe and secure environment. For example, the use of safety gates, socket covers, fire blanket, smoke alarms and the completion of daily visual safety checks means that children can move around freely and safely. Children are cared for in very secure premises and good security ensures that access to the premises is carefully monitored.

The childminder uses clear explanations and discussion to teach children about keeping themselves safe. She has simple household rules and uses appropriate road safety procedures to ensure children learn to keep themselves safe when walking to and from school each day. This results in children being given the opportunity to practise what they can do in a safe manner.

All toys and equipment are of good quality, conform to safety standards and are well presented to allow children freedom to access them safely and independently. Play provision is checked on a regular basis to ensure it remains suitable and presents no hazards. This gives children the opportunity to self-select equipment and enjoy a wide variety of different play experiences safely.

Children are well protected as the childminder has a good understanding of her role and responsibilities with regards to child protection matters. She has a clear understanding of child protection procedures and recognises the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. This ensures that the safety of children in her care is always a priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and content in the welcoming environment. An extensive range of toys for free play are presented in an appealing manner. Children freely access equipment that interests them. They love coming to the childminder's, they are very settled and feel secure. They relate extremely well to the childminder and share a very warm and caring relationship with each other. This is due to the childminder showing that she values what each child has to offer by asking the children what they would like to do next and asks for their opinions, such as which flavour yoghurt they would like for snack. Children are learning good social skills and have formed good friendships with the childminder and other children. This results in them being able to build meaningful relationships.

Children make their own choices about their play from a very good range of resources. They are encouraged to access resources themselves, so developing their sense of self-assurance. They play happily because they feel very secure and settled in the childminder's care. Younger children engage in concentrated imaginative play in which they extend their language, try out new ideas and select suitable resources as they play with the train track and accessories, such as finding trees to go alongside the train track. They explain that the astronaut is exploring the moon and that the aliens are hiding in craters as they play with the space rocket. Activities provide good levels of challenge, appropriate to the age and stage of children's development and are what they are interested in. For example, the range of equipment is linked to the individual needs and interests of children attending. Therefore, children spend their time purposefully and enjoy playing with the toys provided. The children have good concentration skills, are independent and confident to make their needs known to the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Positive relationships are fostered through the childminder providing opportunities for children to play together in a caring environment. They have a strong sense of belonging and are at ease in the childminder's care. The childminder obtains an abundance of information from parents to help children settle in her care. This shows that the childminder is aware of the children's emotional needs and aims to make the transition from home to the setting a secure and positive experience. Children are familiar with daily routines and have formed very good relationships with the childminder and her family. She gives them her full attention when they speak to her. This results in children being independent and feeling safe and secure, through which they develop self-confidence, a belief in themselves and healthy self-esteem.

Partnerships with parents and carers are very good. Priority is given to getting to know the children and their families well. Children are very comfortable in the childminder's care because she works very positively with parents to ensure home routines are followed successfully. This results in children being cared for in an environment that is sensitive to their individual needs. Parents are kept very well informed of their child's care and progress verbally on a daily basis and comprehensive daily diaries are shared routinely with parents. These are personalised with

photographs of the children engrossed in activities. This highly positive partnership clearly contributes to the children's overall well-being. However, some written consents are not routinely obtained, for example, to take children on local outings.

Children's awareness of the local community is promoted well through regular well-planned outings, such as visits to local parks and shops. They 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 and acknowledge cultural differences.

The childminder has high expectations with regards to children's behaviour. She has a clear and consistent approach which is appropriate to the child's age and stage of development. Frequent praise is used to ensure children learn right from wrong in a secure, caring and positive environment. This ensures children feel self-assured and well supported.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Documentation is kept in an extremely well-organised and professional manner and confidentiality is maintained at all times. There are a number of very well-written policies and procedures in place. These are shared with parents to promote the children's welfare and care and contribute to the child's continuity of care. However, the system for the recording of complaints lacks sufficient detail.

The childminder is very keen to enhance her professional development. She regularly attends relevant courses, such as introduction to the Foundation Stage, visual impairment and 'Begin at the beginning', a racial equality course, which is reflected in her good practice. Further training is planned to ensure that she continues to improve her practice. She is very experienced and is fully committed to improving the service she offers.

Children are very well cared for in an environment which is well organised, child orientated and comfortable. Children feel very much at home and at ease in their surroundings. This means they are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. 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 two recommendations were made. These related to resources and safety of the windows on the first floor. The childminder has introduced a wider range of resources that reflect diversity and has made sure the windows in the bathroom and rear bedroom are safe. This promotes children's safety and understanding of the wider world.

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):

- obtain written permission from parents to take children on local outings
- develop further the system for the recording of complaints.

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