



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY102073
Inspection date	23 May 2006
Inspector	Hilary Mary Mckenning
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 2002. She lives with her husband and two children. They live in the village of Staincross near Barnsley. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding along with the playroom and bathroom facilities on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She is currently caring for seven children on a part-time basis. The childminder uses the car to take and collect children from the local school. She meets regularly with local childminders and attends toddler and carer groups.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and the local sponsored network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well protected from illness and infection as they follow good hygiene procedures. They are cared for in clean and well maintained premises. They are encouraged to learn the importance of personal hygiene through good practice and daily routines. For example, very young children are given cloths and encouraged to wipe their hands. This results in children actively learning about the importance of personal hygiene.

Children enjoy a good range of challenging physical activities. Regular visits to parks, soft play areas and access to an outdoor play area allows children to develop their all round physical skills. For babies, there is a good range of every day objects to be squeezed and held to encourage exploration and development of physical skills. Children's access to a wide range of physical activities contributes to their good health in a positive manner and ensures that they develop confidence in their physical abilities. Children are well rested and alert and so enjoy their play. This is due to the childminder following children's individual eating and sleeping routines that are discussed with parents. This ensures children thrive as their individual needs are met successfully.

Children enjoy a good range of healthy snacks and drinks, which takes into account children's dietary needs and parents' wishes. This contributes significantly to children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle. Meal times are treated as an opportunity to help children to enjoy their food and become independent in feeding themselves. Babies share control as they are encouraged to feed themselves using fingers, forks and spoons. This provides opportunities for sensory learning and increased independence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very safe and secure environment. Positive steps have been taken to ensure children are able to move around play areas independently. Potential hazards are effectively addressed in order to maintain a secure environment both indoors and out. For example, the use of a fire guard, fire blanket, safety gates, socket covers, smoke alarms and a fully enclosed outdoor play area means children can move around freely and safely. Children are actively encouraged to be aware of their own safety and how to avoid accidents. For example, the introduction of road safety procedures when off the premises and the clear explanations given to children about safe practice indoors. This results in children being given the opportunity to practise what they can do in safe surroundings and young children learn some sense of danger. They enjoy a good balance between the freedom to explore and the childminder's setting of safe limits.

Good quality resources are easily accessed allowing children to make choices in a safe manner. Children's toys and equipment are very carefully monitored to make sure they remain safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development.

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 the 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, content and settled in the environment. There are effective daily routines in place, which help children to feel secure and at ease in their surroundings. The flexible routine allows children to follow their own daily patterns.

Children make their own choices about their play from an excellent range of resources that covers all areas of learning. They are encouraged to access resources themselves, so developing their independence and self-confidence. Good opportunities allow children to explore the immediate environment with interest, building on their natural curiosity. The childminder considers children's age and interests to ensure activities are suitably challenging and helps them make progress in all areas of their development. Younger children engage in concentrated play in which they extend their language and creative skills. For example, when completing hand prints, children suggest they are butterflies and display them suspended from the ceiling. Therefore, children spend their time purposefully and enjoy activities that promote their self-esteem.

Children relate very well to the childminder and enjoy their time in her care. There are close and affectionate relationships where cuddles are a regular feature. Children are learning appropriate social skills and enjoy being with other children and adults. This results in them being able to build meaningful relationships.

Children are developing good communication skills as the childminder actively listens and responds using every day routines. For example, when dressing to go out, at changing and meal times, she encourages vocalisation and takes part in early "conversations". She effectively uses the Birth to three matters framework and enthusiastically follows the babies' lead as they explore their environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal concern and their individual needs are met well. This is due to the childminder taking time to get to know the children and working with parents to ensure their daily routine is followed successfully. Children are very happy and content and are showing a strong sense of belonging. They are familiar with daily routines and have formed good relationships with each other, the childminder and her family. 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.

Children's awareness of the local community is promoted well through regular outings and visits. They have equal access to all resources and are learning about the wider world through the positive use of books, small role play people and dolls that positively address diversity.

A clear and consistent approach to managing children's behaviour effectively encourages children to behave well. They learn right from wrong in a warm and caring environment. Children are given clear instruction and guidance, which results in them knowing what is expected of them. For example, they are given clear explanations when they are asked to conform, or in the case of younger children distraction techniques are used successfully.

Partnerships with parents and carers are very good, which contributes to the children's overall well-being. Information is shared regularly with parents to ensure they are kept up-to-date with their child's care. Children are clearly benefiting from the positive partnership and are happy, comfortable, content and settled in the environment. There are effective daily routines in place, which help children to feel secure and at ease in their surroundings. The flexible routine allows children to follow their own daily patterns.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel at home and comfortable within their surroundings. The premises are well organised and space is used effectively to maximise play opportunities for children. This results in children remaining settled and feeling secure in their surroundings. The childminder has a good portfolio containing a selection of written policies and procedures, which contributes to the effective operation of her childminding practices. These are shared with parents to keep them informed about the service and how it contributes to the care of their children.

Most documentation is kept in a well organised manner and confidentiality is maintained at all times. However, there is no system for the recording of complaints. The childminder is enthusiastic and committed to improving her practice through relevant training opportunities. For example, she has recently attended a Birth to three matters workshop. Children's experiences are enhanced as the childminder uses training opportunities to improve her practice.

Space and resources are organised to meet the children's needs successfully. Children's daily written records are in place, which enables them to progress in their areas of development. The childminder has completed appropriate courses and has effective skills to care for children. They are well supported in their learning and care as the childminder provides good levels of supervision. Overall, the provision meets the needs of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to address a number of issues related to record keeping. She has reviewed all of her paperwork and now has developed a procedure for action to be taken should an allegation be made against herself or family. All other required documentation is in place and contains the required detail and is easily accessible. These measures help to safeguard children's welfare.

The childminder was required to address safety regarding the staircase. Appropriate safety gates have been fitted to the staircase to prevent access by children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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):

- ensure the required documentation is maintained, for example, a complaint record.

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