

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY357642
Inspection date	13 May 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 2007. She lives with her two children aged nine and 12 years in the Wombwell district of Barnsley.

The downstairs only of the home is used for childminding, except for access to the bathroom on the first floor. There is a secure, fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The garden has a pond, which is fully covered. The family has a pet dog and a rabbit, which lives in a hutch in the garden.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is currently caring for only two children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association. She worked as a teaching assistant in a local school for six years. She has gained a National Vocational Qualification level 2 in Early Years and Education and is working towards the level 3 Diploma in Pre-School Practice.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy lots of outdoor experiences and activities in the fresh air. The childminder encourages children to enjoy walking as part of the daily routine and frequently plans nature walks. They enjoy lots of active play in the garden, learning to use the large climbing frame and swings with care. They regularly visit the park, local playgroups and fun centres, where they develop their coordination using large play equipment. Children enjoy riding around on bikes and there are always push along toys available to support toddlers' developing mobility. The childminder skilfully interacts to help children master new skills and try out new challenges. She talks with them about the importance of a healthy lifestyle if they want to stay well.

The childminder follows effective procedures to meet children's physical, nutritional and health needs. She has a Foundation certificate in Food Hygiene. She uses daily routines to help children gain an understanding of the importance of good hygiene practices. For example, she explains why it is important to wash their hands after handling the pets and why she washes her own hands after changing the nappies. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication are agreed with parents and clearly recorded, so that children are protected, although agreements where emergency medication may be needed are less clearly defined. The care of pets ensures they do not pose a health risk to children.

The childminder provides a sample menu for parents' information and carefully considers children's individual dietary requirements. She plans healthy and nutritious meals and snacks and discusses her approach to healthy eating with parents. Children are offered fruit at snack time and are not encouraged to eat sweets, crisps or fizzy drinks. The childminder gives children opportunity to make healthy choices and promotes ongoing conversations about how to be healthy. Children are able to access drinks independently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder has a high level of awareness of safety issues and ensures that risks, both indoors and out, are identified and minimised. Children's safety and welfare are enhanced by vigilant supervision. For example, access to the area of the garden with the large play equipment and a covered pond is always kept gated, so that children use that area only when fully supervised. Children are cared for in a safe environment, where space is organised to allow them to move around freely. They have access to a wide and well-balanced range of good quality resources, which are stored so that children can select them without help. Appropriate risk assessments are systematically conducted and practice is consistently evaluated to increase all children's safe and independent participation in everyday activities.

Children's understanding of safety issues is promoted, because the childminder clearly explains limits and boundaries to them. She involves them in discussions about risks and dangers; for example, they talk about how they might fall over toys if they do not tidy up and why the gate must always be kept locked. They are reminded that they must hold hands or be on reins as they walk along busy roads and must always stop at the kerb. A parent commented in a reference that the childminder has the 'right balance between keeping them safe and allowing independence'. The childminder has a clear plan for safe evacuation in the event of an emergency and she practises this regularly with the children.

The childminder gives high priority to protecting children and to helping them feel confident and comfortable to make their needs known. She establishes supportive relationships with parents, using her written policies effectively to help explain her child protection responsibilities. She records existing injuries and discusses these with parents. The childminder is familiar with child protection issues, helping her to ensure that children's welfare is fully safeguarded. As she has not accessed any recent training, she feels this may be helpful to consolidate her understanding of her responsibilities as a childminder within the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children love spending time with the childminder and are very happy in her care. She knows them extremely well and is highly attentive to their individual needs. She has daily conversations with parents, to ensure planning of activities is based on their interests. The childminder provides a wealth of highly enjoyable experiences, which ensures that children are busy and contented in their play. She develops simple plans, based on children's current interests, so that activities are always very child-led. She follows children in their play, supporting their ideas. The childminder listens actively and with interest to what children say. She is familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which helps her to plan effectively to meet the development needs of younger children.

Children eagerly explore and enjoy the stimulating environment. They are interested and inquisitive. The childminder allows children time to explore independently, so that they become absorbed, for example, playing with the farm animals, counting them, making animal sounds and learning their names. She talks constantly with the children, reinforcing their language and introducing new words. For example, they wonder where the sun goes when it is cloudy and what happens to a caterpillar, as it turns into a butterfly. They enjoy a variety of imaginative, sensory and exploratory experiences. They love making music with instruments from around the world and regularly attend a local 'rhythm and dance' session with other children. They develop imaginary games with the small world people, 'talk to daddy' on the phone and make pretend cups of tea. They have planted petunias, lobelia, cabbage and carrots, and will water them and watch how they grow. They also help to care for the rabbit in the garden.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children settle well and have a real sense of belonging. The childminder takes time to get to know parents, as she recognises that they know their child best. This helps her to develop warm and trusting relationships with both parents and children. She finds out about their family, what they like doing and what is important to them. This helps them to feel special and secure. Daily routines are flexible and relaxed, and the childminder works very closely with parents to meet children's individual needs.

Children begin to learn respect for others, as they share special times and celebrations. They use resources which reflect different cultures and disabilities, and the childminder extends these by borrowing books from the library and multi-cultural toys from the 'Treasure box'. They learn about different faiths and cultures in planned activities. Children read books about people from other countries and play musical instruments from around the world. Many activities link

children to their local community. They routinely visit local shops and the supermarket, go to the library to choose books, attend a variety of groups and visit local places of interest.

The childminder is highly successful in helping children to become confident to make their own choices and decisions as they play. They select resources freely and confidently and ask for help if they cannot find what they need. The childminder gently and consistently reinforces the simple 'rules', involving children actively so they fully understand why certain behaviour is not allowed. Children behave well, supported by the childminder's calm approach. Politeness and caring behaviour are sensitively supported by praise and encouragement.

The childminder works very closely with parents to promote consistency with home. Arrangements about each child's care are carefully negotiated and agreed. She finds out from parents what children enjoy, what they already know and can do, and shares effective ways to build on this. Parents' views and comments are sought routinely and in a recent reference a parent commented that the childminder's care 'has totally surpassed my expectations'. The childminder shares lots of information with parents about their child's experiences and photographs are used well to give information about the activities they have enjoyed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by the childminder's caring and professional approach to her role. She organises space and resources very skilfully to engage children's interest and support their independent participation. Planning and routines reflect individual needs and interests, promoting children's welfare and development. The childminder has a very good knowledge and understanding of children's needs, so that they are completely relaxed and at ease in her home. The childminder consistently accesses a wide variety of relevant training to support her practice.

Children are kept safe and their welfare is effectively safeguarded by the childminder's clear understanding and implementation of most required policies and procedures. The comprehensive policies and procedures are shared with parents. Most required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place. Clear written agreements inform all aspects of the childminder's practice. Documentation is stored confidentially, but the childminder is reviewing the way she stores children's individual records, as they are currently kept in the parents' information folder. The childminder has arrangements, agreed with parents, for emergency back up care with another childminder. The registration certificate is displayed for parents.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 administration of emergency medication, if required
- consolidate awareness of the responsibilities of a childminder within the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- review storage of individual records to enhance confidentiality.

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