

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	501534
Inspection date	25 July 2007
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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since May 2001. She lives with her husband and four children aged 17, 15, 14 and 12 years old. The family live in a village near Rotherham. 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 childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding nine children under the age of eight years and one over the age of eight years who attend on a part-time basis. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties.

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. She is member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have the opportunity to develop and observe good hygiene practice through a range of activities, which are part of the daily routine. They are familiar with appropriate hand washing procedures and have a clear understanding of the importance of good hygiene practice. For example, children are aware that regular hand washing prevents the spread of germs. Young children are given wipes after nappy changes to clean their hands. This helps children to develop an awareness of positive hygiene practice from an early age. The childminder has good knowledge of childhood illness and incubation periods. Clear policies about children who are sick or have infectious diseases ensure the risk of cross infection is minimised. The childminder has a good understanding of the procedures to be followed when administering medication and recording accidents. For example, parents receive a detailed copy of all accidents and the care administered to their child. Consequently, children's health is well protected.

The childminder has a positive approach to physical exercise and recognises the importance of fresh air and exercise, which develops their skills and maintains good health. Children have the opportunity to access a good range of outdoor play activities that develop their confidence, physical movement and social skills. Regular outings include visits to local parks and play areas. They are encouraged to explore the environment and use their senses to experience different sounds, textures and smells. Younger children enjoy action rhymes and songs. They dance to music and enjoy simple exercises, which incorporate bodily movements to promote jumping, pushing, pulling and squeezing. This helps to make exercise fun.

Children's good health is promoted by a nutritious and balanced diet, which takes into consideration the dietary needs of all children. Menus are produced on a weekly basis to provide parents with information about meal choices and nutrition. The childminder has a good understanding of the nutritional values of food and uses this knowledge to ensure children are well nourished. Children are beginning to develop an awareness of healthy eating. For example, they know fruit 'makes you strong'. Children explore different foods, such as salad, rice and sharon fruits through a range of well planned food tasting activities. Water and low-sugar fruit drinks are offered and easily accessible throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment where risks are identified and effective steps are taken to minimise potential hazards. The use of regular risk assessments ensures safety measures, such as the use of safety gates, dangerous substances stored out of children's reach and access to the premises are systematically monitored. All fire safety equipment is routinely checked and evacuation procedures are practised on a regular basis. Discussions about safety provide children with a clear understanding of safe boundaries both inside and outside the premises. For example, children know to stop, look and listen before crossing roads. There are effective procedures in place for planned outings. Parents receive written detailed information of anticipated times of arrival and departure, planned activities and personal items required, such as a packed lunch and sun protection. Children know they must stay close to the childminder at all times and wear a wristband with the childminder's telephone number in the event of getting lost. This helps children be aware of their own personal safety.

Children are independently able to self-select from a good range of age-appropriate play resources and equipment, which are easily accessible, clean, well maintained and of a high standard. Effective monitoring systems ensure resources remain safe and suitable. For example, there are no sharp or loose parts that may cause a child injury. This ensures children have access to play resources which are safe and suitable for their purpose. Resources are stored securely at child height, which promotes their independence, confidence and the opportunity to make informed choices about their play.

The childminder has a good understanding of her responsibility for the protection and care of children. Sound knowledge of the procedures and the use of relevant documentation for child protection ensure children are safeguarded and their welfare is paramount.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have access to a warm and welcoming environment, where they are happy and confident. They are encouraged to be independent, make informed choices and have fun through play. The childminder provides daily opportunities for children to have personal attention and spends her time playing and talking to the children. The childminder is beginning to prepare children for the transition to school. For example, children have the opportunity to develop pre-writing skills. They skilfully hold a pencil and write their name. This helps children feel confident and supported in their next stage of learning.

Children access a good range of well organised activities, which are purposeful and contribute to their overall development. For example, children plant marigolds and decorate their own flowerpot. Parents and children receive detailed written care sheets of how to care for the marigolds during the summer break. This helps children to develop a sense of responsibility and provides parents with the opportunity to take an active part in their children's learning.

Children enjoy the opportunity to use their imagination and create their own ideas. For example, children construct an island and use small world resources, such as trees, boats and various animals to create their own scene. The children build a turret on the island and search for a ladder. The childminder asks the children 'where shall we put the ladder?' The children reply 'we want to climb on the top of the island so we can see everyone'. The childminder provides the opportunity for all children to be actively involved.

Children's learning is promoted effectively because the childminder has a good understanding of child development and a growing awareness of the components in the 'Birth to three matters' framework. The positive use of children's observation records ensures all children have access to activities which are age appropriate and provide opportunities to extend their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal care and concern. They are valued as individuals and routines are discussed with parents, which ensure appropriate steps are taken to provide a positive environment. They are responded to with warmth, affection and understanding, which develops their sense of self-worth and feeling and confidence. The childminder has taken steps to develop a caring and meaningful relationship with the children. She 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 when near dogs.

They receive lots of praise for listening to the childminder. This helps children to feel safe and secure.

Children behave well and develop cooperative and thoughtful relationships with each other. Good strategies ensure the effective management of children's behaviour. They are offered reason and explanation with the use of distraction and alternatives. The childminder creates a positive and encouraging atmosphere where good behaviour is acknowledged and positively praised. For example, children receive smiley faces and achievement certificates for showing kindness to others and taking appropriate responsibility for unacceptable behaviour.

Children are beginning to develop an awareness of diversity through a varied range of play resources which reflect positive images, cultural backgrounds and varying needs. However, the childminder's knowledge of providing children with further opportunities to learn about the wider world through a range of planned activities is not fully explored. The childminder has good knowledge and understanding of providing care for children with additional needs. She actively supports a totally inclusive environment for all children. For example, all children help to tidy away toys and their contribution is valued.

The childminder works in close partnership with parents and carers. This contributes to the children's overall well-being. Effective communication systems and informative written observations ensure parents are kept informed and up-to-date about their child's care. Children are clearly benefiting from a positive partnership with parents. This ensures they are secure and happy.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is well organised and has a good routine, which contributes to children feeling safe, being part of a group and having a secure base. Space is well used and planned to ensure children are able to access a variety of play opportunities and experiences. They move around the home confidently and are clearly at ease with the environment. The childminder manages her time effectively, which ensures all children receive a good level of care, are well supervised and appropriately supported in their learning.

Documentation is presented in a professional manner and is stored safely. There is a good range of well written policies and procedures, which are used as a working tool and are shared with parents. This contributes to the effective organisation of the setting. The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards and regularly evaluates her practice to ensure good outcomes for children are effectively promoted. 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 was asked to improve children's safety with regard to the outdoor play area and to record fire evacuation practices.

The outdoor area has a secure boundary fence and is routinely checked as part of the daily risk assessment. Fire evacuation practice is appropriately recorded and evaluated to ensure children know how to evacuate the premises safely. Therefore, children are safe and secure.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- develop further knowledge of how to promote children's awareness of the wider world through a range of planned activities.

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