



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	300567
Inspection date	14 August 2006
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 1999. She lives with her husband. They live in Hackenthorne, a large village on the outskirts of Sheffield. The whole of the ground floor, plus toilet facilities on the first floor of the premises is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She currently has nine children under eight-years-old on roll. The childminder walks to take and collect children from the local school. The family have a dog as a pet.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association, Sheffield Childminding Association and a local childminders group. She works on occasion with a registered assistant.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder actively promotes good hygiene practice, such as encouraging children to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Each child has their own individual facecloth and towel. Children know why germs make you ill and why we need to take care of our own personal hygiene. This prevents the spread of infection. The home is very clean and well maintained. Arrangements for first aid and administration of medication meet requirements. Therefore, children's health is further protected.

Children are well nourished as they enjoy a varied healthy menu of snacks each day. Mealtimes are social occasions where all children sit together at child-size tables chatting about what food they like and dislike. They talk with enthusiasm about what fruits they like. For example, 'I love star fruit'. This contributes to children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle.

Children have a very positive approach towards exercise and physical play. They have access to a very wide range of physical resources on the premises and regularly access parks to take part in large motor physical activities, such as playing parachute games, climbing, running and jumping. This successfully increases their confidence and develops the coordination of their bodies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder regularly assesses the safety of the home to ensure the premises remain safe and secure. The home is welcoming and is equipped with all necessary safety features. For example, socket covers, a fireguard and a safety gate are in place and exits are kept locked. The hearth has corner protective cushions fitted and low level cupboards in the kitchen have safe contents or locks fitted. Therefore, children can move around safely and securely. Children are carefully supervised and are encouraged to follow simple house rules to avoid accidents. For example, not to stand on toys, no running inside and to sit properly on furniture. Regular fire safety practises successfully promote children's awareness of evacuation of the premises. This results in children developing an awareness of safety and the importance of following procedures.

A very wide range of good quality equipment and resources are easily and safely accessed by the children. All items are of good condition and conform to safety standards. Equipment is carefully monitored to make sure they remain safe and appropriate for children's age and stage of development. Therefore, children independently and safely select toys.

Children are very well protected as the childminder is very clear about her role in child protection. She has a good understanding of signs and symptoms of abuse and is confident to report any concerns in order to ensure children remain safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the childminder's; they are very happy and settled. The relationship between childminder and children is very warm and caring. The children are very confident to approach the childminder to share their ideas and engage her in their play. For example, the children make a traffic jam with the cars, involve the childminder in the game, who encourages them to count the cars lined up. They count successfully to 88. The childminder makes good use of number, shape and colour during everyday activities. Children are effectively challenged and as a result have direction and interest.

Children are engrossed in their play and receive good levels of support from the childminder. She listens attentively, and responds by asking relevant questions to make them think for themselves. For example, 'are you including the aeroplanes and helicopters in the vehicle count'? Children are developing high levels of confidence and self-esteem because the childminder provides plenty of support and praise which clearly makes them feel good about themselves.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is beginning to be used effectively to plan for children under the age of three years. The childminder has a developing awareness of the components of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She understands the importance to provide a wide range of activities for the younger children. However, the use of resources made from natural materials for younger children is limited.

The childminder and children go out on regular trips to such places as the surrounding local parks, farms and toddler groups. These activities provide children with interesting days out and ensure they become aware and involved in their local community.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have a strong sense of belonging at the childminder's. She obtains very detailed information from parents prior to any placement commencing. This ensures she meets their individual needs and that they are settled in her care. Children are confident, play happily and approach the childminder for hugs. This results in children feeling safe and secure, through which they develop their self-confidence, a strong belief in themselves and healthy self-esteem.

Children have equal access to all resources and are beginning to learn about the wider world through the use of books, small role play people, dolls and jigsaws that positively address diversity. Although no children attend at this time who have learning difficulties or disabilities, systems are in place and the childminder has a good knowledge on how to ensure she provides appropriate care and to promote inclusion for all.

Children are encouraged to behave well. They play cooperatively and enjoy each other's company. The childminder has high expectations and sets consistent boundaries. This results in children knowing what is expected of them and helps them to take responsibility for their own behaviour. They learn right from wrong in a caring and sensitive environment.

The partnership with parents and carers is good which contributes significantly to children's overall well-being. Children benefit from the two way sharing of information between the parents and childminder. This increases children's sense of belonging and supports links with home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is well organised and has good daily routines which effectively contribute to the children's welfare and care. They move around the home freely and confidently. They are clearly settled in the environment.

Documentation is kept in a well organised and professional manner and confidentiality is maintained at all times. There is a very good range of written policies and procedures in place to support her practice and to help keep parents informed of their child's care and progress.

The childminder is very experienced and committed to the further development of her practice. She attends relevant training. For example, she has attended basic food hygiene, behaviour management, child protection and 'Birth to three matters' training and has recently been awarded her Quality First Kitemark. 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

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):

- provide a wider range of activities for younger children to explore and investigate using natural materials.

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