

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	300396
Inspection date	07 August 2007
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 1990. She lives with her husband, two teenage children and younger son aged three years, in the Burncross area of Sheffield. They are close to all local amenities. The childminder works with her mother as an assistant on an occasional basis.

The downstairs only of the home is used for childminding activities, except for access to the bathroom. There is a fully enclosed garden suitable for outdoor play. The family has a rabbit, guinea pig and four hamsters.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She is currently caring for nine children, most of whom attend on a part time basis. Four of the children are aged over eight years. The childminder has completed the Cache Certificate in Childminding Practice. She regularly attends the local childminding group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy lots of activities and outings in the fresh air, which helps to promote a healthy lifestyle. The childminder encourages daily exercise, as she walks with the children to and from school and nursery and plans nature walks in the woods. Children use a range of large play equipment when they visit local groups and parks; they climb safely and swing upside down with care. They enjoy the soft play resources at 'playmania'. They enjoy riding around the garden on the bikes and clambering up and down the small slide. They hide in the tunnel and roll down the slope in the big tube. The childminder plans suitable activities to develop their abilities and gives them confidence to try out new skills.

The childminder's clear awareness of health and hygiene guidelines helps to ensure children are protected from infection. Children's understanding of the importance of good hygiene is promoted in their everyday routines. They remember to wash their hands before they bake buns and wonder why the children do not wash their hands before baking on a television programme. They understand why they wash their hands after handling the pets and need to use disposable towels, so they do not 'pass on germs'. Children learn why they need hats and sun cream to protect them when it is hot. Parents are aware that sick children cannot be cared for. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication meet requirements and protect children effectively. The procedure for emergency administration of medication is not sufficiently clearly agreed, in writing, with parents.

The childminder is well informed about children's individual dietary needs. Parents are asked to provide a healthy packed lunch and the childminder offers a choice of healthy snacks and ensures children always have access to fruit. The childminder provides a well planned and balanced main meal, so that children are well nourished. She promotes healthy eating, as she talks with children about which foods are good for them and why. She encourages children to become involved in food preparation if they are interested, for example, they make fruit smoothies and pizzas. Drinks are always available for children to access independently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and child friendly home. They use a broad range of good quality toys and equipment, which are checked regularly to ensure they meet safety standards. The childminder actively encourages children's independence and places high priority on safe supervision. She assesses risks effectively to promote children's safety and enjoyment. Space and resources are organised effectively to reduce potential hazards. For example, the childminder carefully considers the age range present when planning different activities and thinks carefully about ways to promote safety for younger children without limiting challenge for the older children.

Children's awareness of risk and safety is raised in everyday activities. They use the whole environment freely and older children can select toys and visit the toilet independently. Children learn to stay beside the childminder when they are out walking, to hold onto the pushchair and stop at the kerb when crossing the road together. The childminder talks with children all the time about the dangers of busy roads, risks in the park and 'stranger danger'. They talk about safe practice in the kitchen when they are baking. The risk of accidents is minimised by

consistently reinforced safety rules. The childminder has a well considered, written plan for safe evacuation in an emergency, which she practises regularly with the children. They discuss the evacuation plan as the smoke alarm goes off unexpectedly while they are baking.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder's clear awareness of her responsibilities within child protection procedures. She has recently accessed training to update her knowledge of the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. She is very clear about the action to take if she has concerns. She has acquired helpful information to enable her to update her child protection procedures appropriately, so that they reflect current guidance. She places high priority on the importance of developing ways to share her responsibilities regarding child protection issues with parents, so that they understand her role. She explains the requirement to keep a record of all accidents and incidents, but is only just developing procedures to record existing injuries.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children play happily and with confidence, making their own choices according to what interests them. They are content and settled in the child friendly environment. The childminder listens to children and encourages them to be fully involved in sharing their ideas for activities. Children access resources freely from the well balanced range available, which is based on her knowledge of their interests. The childminder offers lots of opportunity for children to enjoy exploratory play, such as creative activities, painting, play dough and baking. She has a good awareness of the needs of younger children and has familiarised herself with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She is using this to enhance planning of their daily play experiences and adapts activities to reflect individual needs. She observes children's activities and uses photographic records well to share their experiences with parents.

Children play contentedly, engrossed in activities that interest them. Their play is quiet and absorbed; they weigh, count and sing to themselves as they bake buns. They enjoy 'making' best; they cut and stick, make 'junk' and models, collages and painted pictures. Children love reading stories, singing songs together and dancing to music. They enjoy dressing up and playing in the tent. They sell groceries in the supermarket and check if the customers want 'cash back'. They love playing with the garage and cars and make extended train tracks across the garden for their trains. They often choose to get out the play dough or clay to make models, using a range of different tools; they are proud of the prickly hedgehogs they make. They help care for the rabbit and guinea pig in the garden and grow sunflowers and pumpkins.

Children develop a strong sense of self-esteem. Their behaviour is very good and is sensitively supported by the childminder. They begin to understand right and wrong, as they learn to share toys and take turns.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident in the childminder's care and have high self-esteem. Their relationships with the childminder are warm and trusting. She finds out what is important to them, talking with them about their home life and special events, which helps them to feel secure. Daily routines are very flexible and relaxed, negotiated with the children and based around their needs and interests. The childminder works in close partnership with parents to ensure she responds sensitively and supportively to meet individual needs. Children confidently tell the

childminder what they want to do next, for example, going to the park or baking. They are able to access resources independently, as they plan their own play. The childminder works in close partnership with parents, to ensure she responds sensitively and supportively to meet individual needs.

Children learn to share and cooperate as they play. The childminder praises them and gives lots of warm encouragement, using star charts to promote positive behaviour. She reinforces caring behaviour so that children learn to be kind and considerate to each other, for example, they enjoy describing what they like about each other in the 'Feel good' book. The childminder plans activities to enable everyone to be actively involved. Older children learn to keep some activities out of the reach of younger children, for safety reasons. The childminder involves children in helping to keep the play area tidy, by encouraging them to put toys away when they have finished with an activity. They learn to care for their local environment by not dropping litter.

Children's awareness of their local community is raised well, as they regularly go to the local shops, visit the parks and attend local toddler and play groups. The childminder has some books and resources which reflect other cultures, but would like to extend these. She has some resources and uses the local library to enhance the range of books available, which helps children to become more aware of other cultures and abilities. She has identified that she needs to increase her own knowledge and confidence in planning activities which help to promote children's awareness of difference and diversity.

Relationships with parents are comfortable and relaxed. She talks with parents about her childcare practice and has developed a carefully considered information pack to help ensure they fully understand her policies. She makes time to share the day's experiences as parents collect their child. The childminder actively encourages parents to share any concerns and is aware of the importance of responding swiftly. She displays the Ofsted poster for parents and gives them a copy. She is familiar with current requirements regarding the management of complaints, although no complaints have been received. She has established a system for recording of any complaints, as required.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for within a well organised, homely environment. Their individual needs are supported by flexible and child-led planning. The childminder plans appropriate access to training to update her practice and clearly identifies training opportunities which she feels may help her to enhance the experiences of children in her care. She evaluates her own practice very effectively and reviews the effectiveness of her own professional development.

Children are kept safe and their welfare is effectively safeguarded by the childminder's clear understanding and implementation of most required policies and procedures. She understands requirements with regard to reaching agreements with parents, so that their wishes are clearly understood. The childminder shares information very effectively on a daily basis with parents about children's activities and care needs. She has appropriate arrangements for back-up care in an emergency with other childminders, which she has agreed with parents. The registration certificate is displayed along with the information poster for parents. The childminder's highly professional approach to her practice helps to ensure that children are well cared for.

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 ensure that parents have knowledge and understanding of the childminder's child protection procedures. She has attended recent training and is looking at appropriate ways to include this information in her policy and information for parents. She is very sensitive to the importance of ensuring that parents fully understand her role and responsibility regarding child protection issues. This helps her to monitor children's well-being effectively and ensure their welfare is safeguarded.

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):

- clarify written agreements with parents regarding administration of medication in an emergency
- develop a system to record existing injuries
- extend awareness of ways to plan activities to promote children's understanding of difference and diversity.

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