



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	300160
Inspection date	09 August 2005
Inspector	Sarah Gilpin

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 1992. She is registered to care for five children when working alone and eight children when working with a named assistant. She is presently caring for five children, who attend on a full and part time basis.

She lives with her husband and three children aged 17, 14 and 10 years. They live in a house in Sheffield. The property is close to local schools, shops and other amenities. The whole of the house excluding the office is used for childminding and children access the toilet facilities on the first floor. There is a garden available for

outdoor play.

The family have domestic fowl.

The childminder offers weekend and overnight care.

The childminder collects children from the local primary school. She attends the local carer and toddler group. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and the Sheffield Childminders Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a clean and well maintained home. Equipment and resources are in place to allow the children to begin to manage their own personal hygiene and develop their independence in this area. Children share the same hand-towel which increases risks from cross contamination. The childminder successfully meets the needs of the children when they are tired, there are suitable sleep facilities available.

The childminder has a good understanding of what is nutritious for children to eat. The children's awareness of healthy eating is successfully promoted through the use of 'five a day' wall charts, where the consumption of fruit and vegetables is recorded. The children's individual dietary needs are successfully met and their likes and dislikes taken into account when meals are provided. Children's health is at risk because the basic food hygiene routines of hand washing before food preparation is not always followed.

The children enjoy regular physical activities, such as trips to the local park and large play area. A particular favourite with the children are walks to feed bread to the ducks. The childminder provides many opportunities for the children to practise and refine skills, for example when drawing and writing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides a warm and welcoming home where children are safe and secure. She carries out meticulous risk assessments of all areas used by the children to ensure any potential hazards are significantly minimised. Space inside and outside the home is exceptionally well organised, which allows the children to move around freely and safely. The safety equipment currently in place reflects the age and stage of development of the children. Clear direction from the childminder means children have a growing understanding and know how to manage their own safety extremely well. For example, road safety awareness is discussed before and during outings, and children have considerable knowledge of this area.

Children can safely access the resources, toys and equipment, and these are regularly checked for broken or damaged pieces. In addition, the childminder checks each area of the home on a daily basis, and she ensures all dangerous items are removed before the children arrive. The very successful use of two registered assistants ensures that a high adult to child ratio is consistently maintained.

The childminder has a very comprehensive understanding of safety issues relating to the care of young children. There are clear and detailed policies and procedures which are clearly understood and fully implemented by the childminder, for example the very clear fire evacuation plan. She has a thorough knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse and demonstrates the ability to confidently and professionally deal with any concerns raised. Therefore all possible steps are taken to safeguard the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and well settled in the caring environment. They enjoy playing with an extremely varied range of games, resources and toys which the childminder provides for them. The children can easily access the toys and resources which are stored at their level to successfully promote their growing independence and help them to make choices. The children have free and closely supervised access to all areas of the home. For example, they play quiet games in the comfortable lounge, while the older children use a large playroom where they can construct large models using an abundance of plastic bricks.

The children are very confident communicators and enjoy asking questions, which are usually related to what they are doing. For example, they ask for details about their planned picnic and duck feeding expedition. Children thoroughly enjoy the company of the childminder and her assistants, and thrive in this warm and stimulating environment. Good use is made of materials such as the Birth to Three matters framework to prepare activities and experiences to meet the growing needs of the younger children.

Children's behaviour is very good. They play harmoniously together, seeking one another out for self chosen activities, such as playing with the sand. The childminder uses gentle reminders to reinforce boundaries, and praise and encouragement are a regular feature. The children know what is expected of them because the childminder is clear when asking them to complete certain tasks, such as tidying away the toys.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The children are cared for by caring adults who know them extremely well. For example, very detailed discussion around food likes and dislikes means that children's individual dietary needs are successfully met. The childminder is highly committed to developing children's understanding of the wider world and those

around. She has a comprehensive knowledge of the religious festivals throughout the year and plans activities to ensure children learn about how other ethnic groups celebrate. The children have access to an extensive range of books, toys and resources that successfully raises their awareness of culture, gender and disability.

Children behave extremely well and respond to the highly effective gentle reminders of the adults caring for them. Children have a thorough knowledge of the simple house rules, which are consistently used to ensure they know how to act responsibly around others. For example, taking turns and sharing popular resources. The children are exceedingly well supported as they make choices and operate independently within the provision.

There is a highly successful relationship with parents. The childminder offers a particularly flexible service, which allows parents who work shifts to be supported in their role as primary carer. The childminder offers a truly inclusive provision, where children feel part of an extended family, and excellent support is given to those children with special educational needs. She works very hard to care for the children according to their needs and the parents wishes. She obtains very detailed information about their children and ensures parental consent is sought, for example, before taking children on outings.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment, which provides them with space and freedom to move around. The childminder works with two suitable assistants to give the children consistent care and effective support as they play together. Regular training ensures that all adults working with the children have an up to date knowledge of practices, for example, when administering first aid.

The detailed documentation includes comprehensive policies and procedures which are routinely shared with parents. These procedures are carefully implemented to provide for children's safety and enjoyment. All required records are completed accurately and the childminder gives high regard to the confidentiality of children's personal information. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom care is provided.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the previous inspection, the childminder has made significant changes to her documentation. These ensure she is caring for children according to their parents wishes.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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 that children's hygiene is promoted when washing and drying hands
- make sure that good hygiene practices are maintained when preparing food for children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk