



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	300426
Inspection date	23 August 2005
Inspector	Trudy Scott

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1989. She lives with her husband in Sheffield. The whole of the ground floor and a bedroom and bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She currently provides day care for three children under 5 years and out of school care for three children aged 5 to 8 years. At the time of the inspection, no children under 8 years were present.

The family have a number of pets, including four dogs, ferrets, guinea pigs, chinchillas, rabbits and tropical fish.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She visits local playgroups with the children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean warm home where the childminder helps them stay healthy. She uses her sound understanding of health and hygiene procedures to help children attend to their own personal care needs. For example, she reminds children to wash their hands and encourages them by providing handwash and wipes in attractive, child-friendly containers. This, together with regular cleaning routines, contributes to protecting children from infection. However, the protection is, potentially, reduced as the childminder does not provide clear information for parents about her sickness policy. Children's individual care needs are suitably met, as the childminder make sure she has necessary information, such as dietary needs and sleep routines, from parents. Children are offered a range of foods that they like, which include some healthy options.

Children have regular opportunities to engage in physical play, which contributes to a healthy lifestyle. For example they play outdoors in the garden, go on walks around the area and visit places such as a ski village where they can be physically active.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept safe as the childminder identifies risks and take steps to reduce them. She has in place effective safety measures, such as safety gates, window locks and covers on electric sockets, which enable children to move around freely. The childminder helps raise children's awareness of safety with discussion and explanation. For example, she teaches road safety when taking children out and safe practice when handling animals.

Children have access to a good range of toys and play materials, suitable for different children of age and stage of development. Resources are stored so that children can see what is available and reach them easily. This supports their independence and encourages them to make choices about their play.

The childminder makes sure she keeps up to date with first aid training to enable her to deal with accidents and emergencies. She is not fully familiar with current child protection procedures and so children's welfare is not fully safeguarded in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are offered a varied range of activities and experiences to help them enjoy their play. These include creative play, construction, relaxing activities such as looking at books, helping with household tasks, outdoor play and outings. The childminder helps stimulate children's imagination by providing good role play opportunities and resources. For example, she provides a tent, cutlery and crockery so that children can make a picnic in the garden. Children's experience is extended with a good range of outings to local places of interest and opportunities to socialise at local playgroups.

The childminder considers children's age and ability to make sure she provides activities which are suitable and interesting. Few activities, with the exception of outings, are organised in advance, as the childminder prefers to wait and see what children want to do on the day. Children receive appropriate levels of support and attention from the childminder. For example, she gives individual attention to younger children during the day and allows older children some privacy, whilst staying within hearing distance.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are helped to feel familiar and comfortable in the childminder's home, as they have their own space to hang their coats and know where to find favourite toys. Although there were no children under eight years present during the inspection, the childminder shows clear understanding of how to help children feel good about themselves. For example, she gives them praise and encouragement for their attempts and achievements. Children's confidence is promoted as they have opportunities to make choices about their play, such as selecting activities independently and choosing to play inside or outside. The childminder encourages children to participate in all the activities she provides and to consider the feelings of others. However, she is not secure in her knowledge of how to help children learn about equality as they play. The childminder ensures parents receive sufficient information to share in their children's care, by talking to them daily.

Children are encouraged to develop good behaviour through the appropriate strategies the childminder has in place. She supports children in managing their own behaviour by providing clear boundaries and helping them resolve disagreements with discussion. They are learning to be responsible as they care for the animals and tidy away after themselves.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care and well-being is appropriately supported through generally effective

organisation. The childminder manages her time to ensure she gives children the attention and care they need to help them feel content and secure. She has in place all required documentation, such as daily registers, written agreements with parents and accident records. She provides parents with necessary information about the childcare. For example, she displays her childminding certificate and a poster with Ofsted's details. However she does not share information in a variety of ways to ensure parents are fully informed about all aspects of the childminding.

The childminder has sound knowledge and understanding of childcare through many years experience of caring for children. She uses her knowledge to provide a balanced range of activities to help children make progress in all areas. She does not see training as a priority but makes sure she has the necessary qualifications, such as a current first aid certificate. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection, the childminder has improved the partnership with parents in a number of ways. For example, she obtains all necessary parental permissions in writing, such as consent for transporting children. She makes sure parents know the complaints procedure by displaying the Ofsted poster with information about how to complain.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- improve knowledge and understanding of current child protection procedures
- provide more activities to help children learn about equality through their play, for example activities to help them appreciate each other's similarities and differences

- ensure parents are fully informed of all aspects of the childminding, such as the sickness policy, by providing information in additional ways.

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