



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY102643
Inspection date	16 August 2005
Inspector	Karen Cockings

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 2002. She lives with her husband and three daughters aged 13, 10 and 5 years in the High Green area of Sheffield. The ground floor rooms of the house are used for childminding together with the upstairs bathroom and the main bedroom. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The premises are within reach of local schools, parks and other amenities.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding four pre-school and school aged children who attend for a variety of sessions.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and comfortable environment. The childminder ensures that she follows good hygiene practice and raises children's awareness of personal hygiene by encouraging them with hand washing as part of everyday routines. Children also understand that they must wash their hands if they have handled the family's guinea pigs.

There are regular opportunities for children to enjoy fresh air and exercise. They often walk to and from school or visit local parks. There is an enclosed, child friendly garden where children have access to a varied range of outdoor play equipment. The childminder recognises the importance of physical activity for children and identifies this as an area for further development so that she can contribute more fully to their health and fitness.

Healthy eating patterns are satisfactorily promoted. Children know that they should eat their sandwiches before having crisps and sweet foods. They have fruit or yoghurts for dessert. The childminder makes sure that she is informed about any specific dietary needs and complies with parents wishes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder takes effective measures to keep children safe. She has suitable safety equipment, such as fireguard and socket covers in place and has carefully considered children's safety in the event of a fire at the premises. Children understand the procedures to follow because the childminder has talked through with them her fire safety plan. The childminder maintains children's security well by ensuring that outer doors are locked and by checking the identity of any unexpected visitors to the premises.

Children are kept safe when playing outside. The garden is secure and there is easy access between the indoor and outdoor environment. Risk assessments help to identify and address any potential hazards. During outings children learn about road safety and the childminder recognises the importance of careful supervision.

Children are well protected because the childminder has a clear understanding of her responsibilities and has attended recent training to increase her awareness of child protection issues and procedures. She has developed a written policy which she shares with parents and is confident to take the appropriate steps if she has concerns about any children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children take part in a varied and interesting programme of activities which allows them to learn new skills and develop their own interests. They particularly enjoy creative and imaginative play, making selections from a wide range of resources to complete their designs. For example, they make scarecrows, trying different techniques and materials to find out what will be most effective. They show initiative and resourcefulness as they devise pirate costumes for their role play. The childminder has a good knowledge of individual children's interests which helps her to ensure that she has a variety of suitable resources available to support their play and learning.

Children show good concentration skills as they work on their designs. They talk together about what they are doing and develop confidence in themselves because their achievements are acknowledged both by the childminder and by other children in the group. The childminder skilfully supports younger children, helping them to participate fully in activities. She plans the day well to ensure there is a balance of quieter and more active play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children clearly benefit from the positive partnership the childminder has developed with parents who are very well informed about the service provided. The childminder shares with them a useful information file which includes written policies to support the most important areas of her practice. She gives ongoing verbal feedback about daily events and also provides written information each term. These measures help to ensure that parents are kept up to date and that their views are sought about children's individual needs.

Children feel a sense of belonging and play an active part in the setting. They are confident to access resources for themselves and feel comfortable to make a mess for a while as part of the design process. They help to tidy away afterwards, demonstrating a growing sense of responsibility. Children's behaviour is good and they play cooperatively together. They comment positively on each other's work and are willing to help younger ones if they are struggling. There is lots of laughter and conversation as they play. They develop confidence in their abilities because the childminder gives meaningful encouragement and praise. She has a good knowledge of children's individual needs and interests which helps her to plan effectively for them. For example, she ensures that children who may be tired after a morning session at nursery have opportunities to rest and to play quietly. She gathers together suitable resources such as junk materials for children who enjoy making models.

Children become aware of the wider society through outings and through discussion. There are books and play figures available which reflect diversity within society although the range of such resources is at present not as extensive as the childminder would like.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well protected and cared for because the childminder has a professional approach and a good understanding of her responsibilities. She carefully considers her practice, attending relevant training and briefing sessions to increase her awareness. This helps her to identify ways in which she can develop her service further to improve outcomes for children.

The environment and resources are organised well to create a child friendly space where children have the freedom to develop their own play and can access many resources independently.

All required paperwork is in place and is maintained effectively. Written policies and procedures support the smooth running of the service and are shared with parents.

Overall, the needs of the range of children attending are being met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection the childminder was required to make the garden safe for children's play and to ensure that parents signed accident records. It was also recommended that the childminder give consideration to the ages and abilities of children attending when determining the level of supervision needed. She was asked to review the procedures for the administration of medication and to develop her knowledge and awareness of child protection issues.

The childminder has made significant improvements in her record keeping systems to ensure that all accident records are shared with parents and signed by them. She prefers not to give any medicines unless absolutely necessary but has paperwork in place to ensure that parental consents are clear and appropriate records maintained. She is careful to ensure that children of differing ages are suitably occupied and safe if she has to leave the room briefly and makes sure very young children are securely restrained. The childminder has attended a relevant training course which has increased her awareness of child protection issues, making her much more confident to deal with any such concerns. The rear garden is now fully enclosed and provides a secure area for children's play. All these measures contribute to the effective promotion of children's health and safety.

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):

- review and develop further the planning of activities to encourage children's enjoyment of physical and outdoor play
- develop the range of resources which reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability.

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