

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	300186
Inspection date	04/12/2008
Inspector	Geneen Yvonne Hulse-Brown
Type of setting	Childminder

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 1998. She lives with her family in a terraced property in Sheffield. Local schools, shops and parks are within walking distance. The childminder has two children aged 15 and 17 years. The childminder works in partnership with another childminder at her home in addition to her own home.

Children have access to all downstairs rooms including the kitchen/dining room, lounge and hallway, with upstairs access to the bathroom and three bedrooms for sleeping. There is a fully enclosed area to the rear of the property for outdoor play. Premises are accessible via steep steps to the front door and to the back door. The family has a pet cat and rabbit.

The childminder is registered for the care of six children under the age of eight years. She works in partnerships with a co-childminder and they are registered to take up to 12 children when working together. The childminding partnership presently cares for 12 children in the early years age group and 10 children in the later years age group. The childminding partnership is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is also registered to provide overnight care for two children. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She is also registered to work with an assistant.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is accredited with the Sheffield Children Come First Childminding network, holding a National Vocational Qualification level 3 in Childcare and Education.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are highly stimulated and eager to learn as they enthusiastically undertake a wealth of exciting experiences in a challenging and inspiring environment. Activities are purposeful and tailored to the individual child due to the cohesive working practice of the childminding partnership. Children achieve their full potential, attaining new skills due to the skilful extension of experiences by their childminders. Individual children's needs are successfully addressed due to the childminder's excellent knowledge of their starting points and her ability to plan activities to continually challenge them. Excellent partnerships with families effectively support children's ongoing development and provide a holistic approach to their care. The childminding partnership's reflective and evaluative assessment of the excellent service offered effectively supports their ongoing development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- further build upon the links established with other settings providing for

children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

A first-rate knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework enables the childminder to complete extensive observations for all minded children. The childminder and her colleague have established an exceptional working partnership that is exceedingly well organised to ensure they complement each other in their daily practice. A major strength of the provision is their reflective approach to self-assessment. They are proactive in evaluating practice, identifying areas for development and planning the way forward. Their high commitment to professional development significantly enhances the provision. They effectively consolidate their knowledge and understanding through use of research at the library and on the internet, as well as accessing numerous training opportunities. The childminding partnership is dedicated to finding fresh and creative ways to extend their provision, whilst being flexible to respond effectively to individual family requirements.

Excellent systems are in place to facilitate the effective sharing of children's progress and achievements with parents and carers. Purposeful, established relationships provide a consistent approach to individual children's care and development. Comprehensive activity plans identify the learning objectives for individual children. Extensive information about the service offered, forward planning and progress reports ensure parents keep up-to-date regarding their children's development. Inventive use of children's records includes examples of their work and photographs of them engrossed in numerous activities and experiences. Frequent record reviews ensure the provision continues to meet the changing needs of the families and ongoing development of the service provided.

Comprehensive and meticulously maintained observations and assessments accurately identify the next steps in the learning process. The childminders and other professionals work cooperatively together to ensure children with learning difficulties and disabilities receive high levels of support to achieve their full potential. The childminder has established links with other providers, although this process is in its infancy and does not entirely show how the services will work together to extend children's all-round development.

The childminder's extensive experience effectively contributes to her significant understanding of her role in promoting children's safety and well-being. Extensive policies and procedures, consistently shared with parents, effectively support working practice.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children flourish as they eagerly participate in an extensive range of self-motivating activities. They play cooperatively together in a dynamic and child centred environment, due to creatively planned routines that meet their individual needs. Extensively resourced activities build on the children's ideas and

suggestions, as the childminder adds additional resources to extend their play and broaden discussions. Freely accessible high quality resources provide children with numerous opportunities to make independent choices as they plan their own time, for example, choosing a storybook then finding dressing up clothes to act out being a belly dancer or superhero. Children make active choices from clearly labelled boxes and drawers, requesting additional items to enhance their play, such as asking for spoons to use with melting snow. Imaginatively planned activities ensure children have space to work at their own pace and all are included proportionate to their individual ages and abilities. Successful use of play materials and excellent interaction provides children with extensive opportunities to think and reason how things work and make rapid progress given their starting points.

Children display high levels of self-esteem and access numerous experiences due to the innovative use of the environment. They demonstrate excellent concentration spans as they squeeze play dough through shapes to make patterns and pour melted ice into funnels with increasing skill. The childminder is adept at extending and building on activities to sustain children's curiosity and create fresh learning opportunities. This in turn successfully promotes all areas of learning and development.

Children join in familiar storylines with relish, listening attentively before they act out well-known roles. They are confident as they engage visitors in conversation, chatter together and proudly show off their achievements, for example, talking about ice being smooth and eagerly showing off how they can peel bananas. Children carefully count the number of currant buns as they pay a penny to buy one. They demonstrate a keen interest in number and mathematical language as part of everyday tasks, counting the number of children at the table and when pairing up shoes. Early problem solving skills are used as the children talk about how snow melts and try to chop ice using a variety of tools.

Children's natural creativity is fostered as they enjoy numerous opportunities to paint, make models and explore textures as they play with shredded paper, stones and animals. They relish opportunities to extend their physical development through animated singing and dancing sessions, which are enjoyed by all as children and adults dance together to music and join in action rhymes. Children's understanding of their environment and the wider world flourishes as they are increasingly motivated to investigate indoors and outdoors. Frequent outings to parks, the Botanical Gardens and further afield increase their knowledge of the natural world. Consistent praise and encouragement ensures that children develop high levels of self-esteem. Children are highly valued and respected as they learn how to manage their own behaviour and respect each other, mirroring the excellent role models provided by their childminders. Excellent photographic evidence demonstrates how children's progress and achievements are effectively supported.

Daily routines include healthy eating topics and discussions about what foods are good for us, which in turn ensures that children's health and well-being flourish. Children make good choices as they enthusiastically choose what fruit they will have for snack. Meticulously completed risk assessments are consistently implemented to maintain a safe and secure environment for children. They

demonstrate an excellent understanding of their capabilities as they explore their surroundings with increasing confidence. The childminder uses sensitive reminders to reinforce good practice, for example, to take care when using knives and not to put scissors in mouths.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

Ofsted received concerns in relation to Early Years Foundation Stage welfare requirement: Suitable People. An Ofsted inspector conducted a visit to the provision on 8 September 2008. At the visit the inspector found that the welfare requirements were being met and a variation was also agreed to allow the childminder to work with another childminder at the same address. The provider remains registered with Ofsted.

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.