



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	300100
Inspection date	04 April 2006
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 has been registered since 1989. She lives with her partner and son in Sheffield. Her son works with her as an assistant and may at certain times have sole charge of the children; this has been agreed in writing with the parents.

Only the ground floor of the home is used for childminding, except for access to the upstairs bathroom. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time, or eight when working with her assistant. She is currently caring for 16 children, most of whom

attend on a part-time basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder actively promotes a healthy lifestyle by planning a very varied range of activities in the fresh air each day, which contribute to keeping children fit and well. They enjoy a good walk to and from school and routinely visit the local park to use the large play equipment. They ride bikes, play throw and catch and set up the skittles, as well as organising a quoits competition. During the holidays they plan outings to the 'space zone' and to theme parks. They have 'great fun' on the water flume at Gulliver's Kingdom and love to splash in the paddling pool in warm weather.

Children are cared for in a clean and well maintained home and the importance of good hygiene is reinforced in their everyday routines. They get out the wipes to clean their hands before they have their picnic snack and understand why they need to wash their hands after using the toilet. The childminder protects children from infection and parents are clearly informed that sick children cannot be cared for. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication meet requirements, although prior consent to administer emergency medication is not sufficiently clearly agreed. Daily routines are flexible and follow children's individual needs, so that children are content.

The childminder liaises closely with parents so that children's individual dietary needs are met by nutritious meals and snacks. Careful attention is paid to special dietary requirements; snacks always include fruit and are mostly low in sugar or sugar free. Children often suggest menu ideas and help with the shopping. Meals are freshly cooked and provide a balanced range of healthy foods; children's likes and preferences are fully considered. The childminder encourages children to try new foods. For example, they sometimes plan a 'banquet' where they select their own choices from a variety of dishes. Drinks are always available for children to access independently. Daily conversations encourage children to think about which foods are healthy and why. They know that junk food often has 'too much fat'.

Children are very secure and confidently express their own needs and wants. The childminder's clear understanding of the needs of younger children supports their very good developmental progress.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The home is safe and very child friendly. The childminder plans effective use of available space to meet children's different needs. She organises space and resources very well to reduce potential hazards and actively encourage independence. The childminder carefully considers the age range present when

planning different activities and assesses risks effectively to promote children's safety and enjoyment. For example, older children know that small ball play indoors is only permitted in the hall area, because they may knock things over in the sitting room or disrupt younger children's play. Children learn about fire safety and know what to do in an emergency. Daily risk assessments help to ensure risks are minimised; however, the water tub in the garden, although made inaccessible to children, was not covered.

The children use a wide range of good quality toys and equipment, which meet safety standards. They are stored so that children can access them independently, taking into account the different needs of the younger children. This gives opportunity for all the children to make choices and enjoy a good variety of different play experiences safely. The childminder promotes children's awareness of risk and safety in daily routines. For example, they use the school crossing each day on the way to and from school. The children learn about the importance of crossing with the 'green man' when on outings. They talk about why they need to behave sensibly near busy roads.

Children are effectively protected. Their welfare is safeguarded by the childminder's comprehensive understanding of her responsibilities within required child protection procedures, which she shares effectively with parents. She has recently accessed appropriate child protection training and is aware of current guidance. The childminder actively promotes children's confidence to be able to say no and to seek appropriate help if needed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are happy and settled in the childminder's care; relationships are warm and trusting. They are able to select from a wide range of stimulating resources. The childminder feels it is important to find out what children enjoy and can do, so that they can plan experiences together which reflect their interests. Careful consideration is given to ensuring that the needs of children of different ages are met and children are actively involved in suggesting their own play ideas. For example, during the school holidays the older children choose and look forward to 'fun-time' special after-lunch activities. These are planned for when the very young children are usually sleeping.

Children independently plan and develop their own play. Imaginary role play is very popular with all the children, encouraging the older and younger ones to play together very co-operatively. They love pushing the dolls in their prams, developing pretend games in the outdoor playhouse and dressing up. Children have lots of opportunity to be creative as they make cards, draw pictures and create 'hot bead' decorations. They use big chalks to make 'pavement art' pictures on the flags outdoors. They bake buns and sometimes mix their own play dough. They love stories and enjoy a wide range of different books. The children learn to count in everyday activities. For example, they record their scores in the game of quoits and count how many pieces of fruit they each have for snack.

The childminder sensitively supports and reinforces good behaviour. She helps

children to think about right and wrong in their relationships with each other, by encouraging them to explain reasons for disagreements, so they begin to be able to manage situations independently.

She actively uses the Birth to three matters framework to enhance planning for the experiences of younger children. The childminder liaises closely with parents to ensure she responds to and develops their current interests and skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individuality is respected and valued. The childminder uses the local community very well to support children's experiences; she plans a wide variety of outings especially in school holidays. Children's awareness of other cultures and the wider world is raised very effectively as children mix with people from different backgrounds and learn to accept each other's different abilities. They have access to a good range of resources which reflect diversity. They learn to respect difference as they share special celebrations and find out about other festivals. The children have lots of books which help them talk about different feelings. They are organising a 'Chinese eating experience' at a restaurant in town.

The children are able to select play resources freely; the environment is organised very well to promote their independence. They are supported to make their own decisions, plan their own play and manage their own needs. Politeness and caring behaviour are strongly encouraged and children are actively helped to consider everyone's needs and ideas. For example, children remind each other about turns and older children encourage younger children to stand closer as they throw the quoits, 'because it's harder for them'.

She gives lots of praise and encouragement to help develop children's confidence and self-esteem. Rules are very clear and the childminder tries to reinforce children's understanding consistently in daily routines, so that they begin to take responsibility for their own behaviour. They learn to use 'time out and calm down' time to think about how their behaviour has made someone else feel. The childminder promotes lots of opportunities for children to contribute actively to their own everyday experiences.

The childminder has a close and relaxed partnership with parents, which helps her to respond effectively to meet children's needs. She recognises that sharing information on a daily basis with parents helps to support links with home and increases children's sense of belonging. She is respectful of children's need for confidentiality and talks to parents in the evening if concerns arise. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns and know what to do if they have a complaint, although the complaints information does not incorporate new guidance.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The environment is organised well to support children's individual needs. Their health and welfare are promoted by flexible and responsive planning and the childminder's ability to involve children and take account of their ideas. The childminder accesses a range of training and development opportunities, which contribute to her ability to plan enjoyable experiences for children, enhancing their learning and development. She evaluates her own practice effectively.

Children are kept safe and their welfare is fully safeguarded by the childminder's clear understanding and implementation of required policies and procedures. She clearly understands requirements with regard to reaching agreements with parents, so that their wishes are clearly understood. All required record keeping systems are in place and most agreements reached with parents are clear and fully recorded. The childminder shares information daily with parents about children's activities and care needs, enabling consistency and continuity of care.

Overall, the childminder actively promotes children's well-being and effectively meets the individual needs of all the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to update her awareness of child protection issues and procedures, to ensure full medication records are kept. She was asked to make available to parents the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint.

The childminder has attended recent Child Protection training and demonstrates a sound understanding of her responsibilities within required procedures. She has established a clear system for recording of the administration of medication. Both these measures enhance the childminder's ability to ensure that children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded.

She has a written procedure relating to how parents can share concerns and complaints, which is clearly communicated to all parents. This ensures that parents are able to deal effectively with any concerns, so that children's needs are met effectively.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints made to Ofsted. The childminder is required to keep a record of complaints made by parent, 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):

- ensure agreements with parents clearly include prior written consent if emergency medication may be administered
- ensure the water tub is always kept covered when children use the garden
- include detail of new guidance within the complaints procedure

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